

GCA Newsletter - Edition 10



Meet the CCO – David Ward, Code Compliance Officer Tesco Stores Limited

Question: Tell us something about yourself and your path to becoming a Code Compliance Officer.

I joined Tesco in 2004 as a senior competition lawyer. Back in the day, we also advised on GSCOP's predecessor as part of our competition law work. Fast forward to 2013 and I took up the newly created role of Regulatory, Ethics & Compliance Director with oversight of many of our compliance programmes. I took on the CCO role because, by then, I was no longer responsible for the day-to-day management of GSCOP and could therefore play a more independent role as CCO. Outside of work, I'm married with three children and live in north London

Question: What are the most challenging aspects of your CCO role?

We've come through a very challenging year, given the GCA investigation into Tesco. Beyond that, the challenges fall into two groups: ensuring that buyers know and understand GSCOP and can apply it every day and helping suppliers reach an amicable resolution to any GSCOP complaints they bring to my attention. My Food Legal colleagues, led by Emer Kelly and her team, do a great job every day to guide the buyers on how to navigate both the letter and the spirit of GSCOP.

Question: If you could change one thing about the groceries market, what would it be?

I was a supermarket geek long before I worked for Tesco and can still spend hours looking around foreign supermarkets. Collectively, I think the British grocery sector provides an exceptional offer for customers with a range of stores – from Polish delis, hard discounters, convenience formats and large supermarkets – to cater to all tastes and budgets. So it's hard to identify something that I would change, though across the industry I think there is more that we can all do to minimise food waste in the supply chain.

Question: What achievement as CCO are you most proud of?

It's a collective achievement rather than a personal one, but I would call out our response to the GCA's investigation and particularly the implementation of the report's conclusions. A large team of Tesco people, led by my Legal colleagues and their Product (Commercial) counterparts, mobilised to implement the recommendations, which have resulted in wide-ranging changes to our processes for payments, complaints and disputes (among other things). I think it's fair to say that both the GCA and Tesco are pleased with our progress to implement the recommendations from the investigation.

Question: What 3 things do you want to achieve in the next 12 months?

1. For us to continue to simplify our processes and operations to the benefit of suppliers;
2. To maintain a robust GSCOP compliance programme across the business;
3. To come first in the GCA's annual supplier survey.

Question: Is there anything else you would like to share with readers of News from the Adjudicator?

Only that I welcome suppliers contacting me if they have any concerns about Tesco. We can generally help to facilitate a resolution between the supplier and the buying team and the contacts also give me helpful insight into issues that might not otherwise be on our GSCOP radar.