

March 2017 Quarterly CCO meetings

Record of the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) Quarterly Meetings with Code Compliance Officers (CCO)	
Location	Purpose of meeting
GCA, Victoria House, Southampton Row, London	Quarterly progress meetings
Attendees	
<p style="text-align: center;">GCA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Christine Tacon (the GCA)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Helen Gordon–Lee (HGL) <i>All except - Iceland Foods Limited and Marks and Spencer plc</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matthew Sabourin (MS)</p>	<p><u>6 March 2017</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asda Stores Limited – Sarah Dickson and Alex Simpson • Tesco plc – David Ward and Emer Kelly • Waitrose Limited – David Roberts, Sarah Tomsett, Catherine Hasler <p><u>8 March 2017</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operative Group Limited – Saleem Chowdhery, John Leyden and Peter Fenton • Lidl UK GmbH – Tim Belser, Katharina Landbrecht, Judith Sebald <p><u>20 March 2017</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marks and Spencer plc – Max Gillibrand and Robert Steadman • Iceland Foods Limited – Duncan Vaughan <p><u>22 March 2017</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc – Steven Butts, Denise Harris, and Andrew Clappen • J Sainsbury plc – Susannah Parden and Dafydd Pugh • Aldi Stores Limited – Chris Young
Key Points Raised	
<p><u>Issues from the previous set of minutes</u></p> <p>There was an update on any issues arising out of the previous set of minutes.</p> <p><u>BEIS review of the GCA and call for evidence</u></p> <p>The GCA gave an overview of her understanding of next steps on the statutory review of the GCA and call for evidence on remit extension.</p> <p><u>Arbitration policy</u></p> <p>The GCA had recently made a small update to its arbitration policy, as part of its regular review of published policies. The only change was to reinsert a paragraph that was in the original arbitration policy to make clear that the GCA has no retrospective powers to regulate conduct taking place before its establishment, whether through its collaborative approach to business as usual, investigation or arbitration.</p>	

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GCA annual survey

The GCA annual survey was launched on 6 March. Retailers were asked to encourage suppliers to respond.

Overseas suppliers

The GCA had produced an introductory letter explaining her role to overseas suppliers. This had been provided to retailers to use as part of their role in raising awareness of the GCA. This year's annual survey would ask suppliers in which country they were located to give the GCA and retailers an understanding of where overseas respondents were based.

Top 5 issue: Consultation on payments for better positioning of goods

The GCA had published its response to the consultation on *part 5 (paragraph 12)* of the Groceries Supply Code of Practice (*No Payments for better positioning of goods unless in relation to Promotions*). The issue would now be classified as a monitored Top 5 issue to allow retailers to consider the contents of the consultation response and continue to demonstrate Code compliance in this area. The GCA would carry out formal monitoring in twelve months' time to see whether retailers had decided to make any changes as a result of the consultation response and evaluate whether what suppliers are telling the GCA means the issue needs to be considered further.

Top 5 issue: Forecasting

The GCA had asked all retailers to provide an update on progress in responding to the best practice statement on forecasting which was published in March 2016. The GCA was concerned that forecasting remained an issue for suppliers. The GCA would review the responses received from retailers and was holding two workshops with suppliers on this issue.

Top 5 issue: Delay in payments (specifically drop and drive)

The GCA had assessed the information that retailers had provided in relation to their progress in eliminating the risk of breaches of the Code occurring under *part 4 (paragraph 5)* (*No delay in Payments*) arising as a result of drop and drive practices. The GCA would be writing to each retailer to set out her view on their progress.

Top 5 issue: Margin maintenance

The GCA had considered retailer responses on a number of scenarios she had set out in which concerns on margin maintenance might arise for suppliers. The GCA would now consider how to take this issue forward.

Top 5 issue: Pay to stay

The GCA was holding two workshops with suppliers on the issue of pay to stay.

Other issues in the retailer's quarterly report to the GCA

The GCA discussed any other issues covered in the retailer's quarterly report to the GCA.

Issues raised by direct suppliers

The GCA highlighted any issues being raised by direct suppliers.

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Any other business

GCA Levy: The GCA had submitted a request to the Secretary of State for approval of the proposed levy for the financial year 2017/18.

Annual report and accounts: The GCA was in the process of drafting her annual report and accounts. The GCA welcomed submissions from retailers on steps they had taken to improve compliance with the Code to be included in the annual report.