



News from the Adjudicator

Edition 3

Welcome from the Groceries Code Adjudicator



My team and I are currently working hard on a highpoint in our calendar: the second Groceries Code Adjudicator annual conference to mark the end of another busy and significant year for the GCA.

This year the conference will be held on June 22nd at the Church House Conference Centre in the heart of Westminster. [Registration](#) for the conference has just opened on the GCA website, so please sign up for this important event.

The conference will provide the platform for publication of the GCA Annual Report, bringing together all that has been achieved during the past 12 months. It will also feature expert speakers. These include John Noble, Director of the British Brands Group, on the role that trade associations can play in supporting my work and industry specialist David Sables giving advice on “savvy use of the Code”.

We are putting the final elements of the conference programme in place. There will be question and answer sessions for you to take part in and opportunities for networking. My team and I are also setting time aside after the conference ends for a number of surgeries to meet with suppliers who want to raise issues directly with the GCA. If you are a supplier and would like to take part in one of these sessions please book when you register for the conference.

Another highlight of the conference will come with YouGov releasing the results of the GCA’s annual sector survey. I am very much looking forward to this session. I meet many suppliers and others face to face during the year but the survey cannot be beaten for giving me a panoramic view of the relationship between retailers and their suppliers.

For this second survey I am particularly looking for evidence of how retailer practices have changed over the past 12 months.

There is still time to take part in the survey and help shape my work programme for the coming year. The deadline for responses is May 1st and this [link](#) will take you straight to the YouGov site. Please take the time to complete it. The more



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- The Top 5 – Report on Progress
- Meet the CCO – Tim Belser, Lidl UK GmbH



Have you completed the GCA Survey? [Click](#) the link to follow and complete now.

Closing date 1st May

suppliers taking part the better as it will help me identify the practices that suppliers are currently experiencing so that I can prioritise my work with the retailers to achieve change.

Away from the conference, work is underway on the Tesco investigation. The date for initial submissions of evidence has now passed but if you have information about the areas I am investigating – delays in payments, and payments for better positioning of goods unless in relation to promotions - please send your information to me.

This month I published a policy [document](#) detailing how the GCA will continue to apply its collaborative approach during any investigation. This includes continuing to hold quarterly meetings with Code Compliance Officers (CCOs) and making them aware of information brought to the GCA about practices which might not be consistent with the Code. The GCA will not discuss the progress of any investigation during those meetings.

The latest round of CCO meetings is now complete and the minutes will be published on the GCA website shortly.

I hope you found this newsletter useful. I look forward to hearing your views through the survey and hope to meet you at the conference.

Christine Tacon.

Christine Tacon

Making progress on the Top Five Issues

In the last newsletter I announced that I had decided to add charging for consumer complaints to my top five issues. I am focusing on 2 areas at the moment; forecasting and consumer complaints.

Retailers are responding to my request for information about how they handle consumer complaints and how they undertake forecasting. This was a detailed piece of work and the GCA team is currently analysing the responses.

For consumer complaints we are looking at how the retailers apply the Code, which does not permit retailers to make a profit from these charges. We are looking at how the charges are determined as well as how they are applied.

In the area of forecasting I am interested in the retailer's general approach to forecasting and the way forecasts may be revised and come closer to an order as well as how retailers engage suppliers in the forecasting process and compensate them for any costs resulting from forecasting errors by the retailers, as the Code sets out.

Improving forecasting is one of the key ways that retailers can change the supply chain for the benefit of all and reduce waste. So I am keen to get a clear picture of the current state of forecasting, including whether it is improving and whether some product requirements are more difficult to forecast than others.

Meet the CCO

Tim Belser – Compliance Director for Lidl UK – has answered News from the Adjudicator's questions about his role at the retailer. Read more [here](#) about the challenges of being a CCO, his work with Lidl's buying team and what he wants to achieve in the next 12 months.

Contact: compliance@lidl.co.uk