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Dear Member,

ABC Regional Publications Reporting Standards

The ABC Council has ratified changes to the ABC Regional Publications Reporting Standards. The changes are effective from the July to December 2009 reporting period.

The latest Reporting Standards – 2009 version 3 incorporate the changes and are available to download from the ABC website www.abc.org.uk.

1. Reporting Periods

Occasionally there are circumstances where changes to a publication during an audit period (such as merger, change of frequency, change of format etc) mean that reporting the publication's figures continuously as a six-month average can lead to confusion and a lack of transparency. In such cases it may improve clarity to issue a certificate showing the circulation data for the period up to the point of the change and another from the point of the change to the end of the mandatory period (or between further changes if applicable).

The following clause has therefore been added to section Q1 (Mandatory Reporting Periods):

- In exceptional circumstances changes to a publication during an audit period (for example merger, change of frequency, change of format etc) may mean that reporting the publication's figures continuously as a six-month average would lead to confusion and a lack of transparency in the data certified.

If the use of the normal mandatory reporting period in such cases would in ABC's opinion lead to the issue of misleading and/or confusing data ABC may allow or require, with the agreement of the Regional Publications Reporting Standards Group on a case by case basis, the issue of more than one certificate covering the mandatory period in order to show separately the circulation data for the period up to the change and after the change(s).

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Industry agreed measurement

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2. Multiple Copy Sale/Free Pick Up: where a combination of publications are distributed at a particular location

The following change, added to appendix two, clarifies the application of a cap at a particular location where two or more publications are distributed.

- If the sale or distribution of a combination of publications reporting in the ABC Regional Publications sector results in the cap (as detailed in this section) at a particular location being exceeded, ABC reserve the right to reduce the quantity that may be claimed by all publications to the total cap for that location. If an increased cap has been specifically agreed by ABC for a specified location the effect of this across the combination of publications will be assessed on a case by case basis.

3. Free pick up copies – clarification relating to distribution points

It has been clarified that for reporting purposes a distribution point is defined at the micro level, i.e. a single dispensing bin or single hand merchandiser as opposed to say a group of bins/merchandisers at a particular train station.

This definition must be used when calculating the average number of distribution points used across the period and for the analysis of the last issue in the period.

It is also clarified that with ABC's agreement the signed and dated delivery evidence obtained on an issue by issue basis may be maintained on a team basis for a group of merchandisers or for a group of dispensing bins/racks at a designated location (for example a train station).

Please see sections J1, J3, J5.1 and J5.2 for the detailed wording.

These changes were discussed and approved by the ABC Regional Publications Reporting Standards Group. If you would like the Standards Group to review any current reporting standard or if you would like more information about how the above changes affect you, please contact your ABC Account Manager, Eric Mayers (eric.mayers@abc.org.uk), Lynn Lacey (lynn.lacey@abc.org.uk) or Allison Conlon (allison.conlon@abc.org.uk).

Yours sincerely



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