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## ABC Bulk Distribution Publication Reporting Standards (UK)

Changes have been agreed to the ABC Bulk Distribution Reporting Standards. We have updated the latest Reporting Standards – 2011 Version 3 – to incorporate these changes and you can now view or download these from our website [www.abc.org.uk](http://www.abc.org.uk).

### Bulk Distribution: documentation requirements and controls

Changes have been made to clarify the information and requirements for bulk distribution claims. These include ABC's right to contact distribution points, the information on the Master List of Distribution Points and audit treatment following the assessment of management controls. ABC will agree and work with publishers to ensure these are achieved.

The changes, summarised below, are effective from the January 2012 period.

1. It is now specified that ABC must have the right to call as well as visit distribution points to verify the distribution process (section 6.2).
2. The information relating to the Master List of Distribution Points which must be maintained has been revised as follows (section 6.4.3):

You must maintain a Master List of Distribution Points. We would expect this to include the following for each distribution point:

- Unique point ID (to enable clear identification when changes are made).
- Address, including postcode.
- Audience Type. *For example airline, hotel – as analysed on the certificate.*
- Whether the point is a manned point, an unmanned point, or a hand distribution point.
- Point description. *For example: type of bin, location at address.*
- Point restrictions. *For example it is particularly important to identify any points which can only be accessed via security barriers such as airport airside locations, some office buildings.*
- Name of responsible person:
  - Name of recipient for manned/hand distribution points.
  - Name of deliverer for unmanned points (in-house or name of delivery company).
- Telephone number of responsible person.
- Normal day/date of delivery.
- Approximate time of delivery.
- Method of delivery. *For example: in house, name of 3rd party distribution company.*
- Normal supply quantity.

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- Normal day/date of collection of returned/damaged copies (net copies of daily publications only).
- Additional details as above for all regular top-up supplies

The master list of all distribution points must be supplied to ABC at the time the distribution point and process is submitted to ABC for approval prior to certification.

All changes to the above details for existing distribution points, any removal of distribution points and all additions to the distribution points should be notified to ABC as and when they occur. See also section 6.3 for details regarding changes to the overall distribution quantities.

### 3. Audit treatment relating to management controls has been added as shown by the shaded text below (section 6.4.4).

#### 6.4.4 Management controls

The publisher is responsible for ensuring that the copies they claim have been delivered and if applicable returns/copies not picked up are accounted for. This requires a publisher to have appropriate management controls and processes in place to ensure that this is happening. For each publication the detail and extent of these controls and processes will vary as they should be appropriate to the type of distribution. These could include training of staff, spot checks, customer complaint handling etc. These controls and processes are reviewed by ABC as part of the joining process and continuing audit of a publication. These help underpin the audit in that they form part of the consideration of risk and consequently the type and extent of audit work done.

If weaknesses in management controls are found during the audit work, the publication's circulation auditor / ABC will inform the distributor and the publisher of defined improvements to be implemented and a timescale to ensure copies are still eligible for ABC purposes.

The ABC Bulk Distribution Reporting Standards Group discussed and approved this change. If you would like the Standards Group to review any current reporting standard or if you would like more information about how the above change affects you, please contact your ABC Account Manager [eric.mayers@abc.org.uk](mailto:eric.mayers@abc.org.uk).

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