



Setting the standard

Reporting Standards

Consumer Events

Version 1 2019

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INTRODUCTION

This document contains the Reporting Standards for events registered in the Consumer Events sector.

The PDF versions of the Reporting Standards are issued at a certain point in time. As Reporting Standards are updated periodically, please check the website www.abcstandards.org.uk to ensure you are using the latest applicable standards.

Each category of attendance in the Reporting Standards has the following:

- Definition
- Principles
- Requirements
- Guidance

If you are after a quick understanding of the key points of any section then the definition and principles will provide an overview – you can download an Executive Summary containing just these sections from our website.

The guidance sections provide examples of how the requirements might be complied with. We will add to or amend these over time where we consider there may be a benefit following the identification of specific circumstances or requests for advice.

If you have any queries regarding how the Reporting Standards affect you or any specific queries please contact the ABC Client services team on 01442 870 800 or email info@abc.org.uk

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND RECORD KEEPING

INTRODUCTION

This section sets out some key requirements relating to the overall reporting and auditing of your ABC claim.

PRINCIPLES

1. **The event must be eligible to report under the Reporting Standards**
2. **Your claim must comply with the Reporting Standards**
3. **Transactions related to the claim must be bona fide 'arms length' arrangements**
4. **Evidence to support the claim must be retained and available for a minimum period**

REQUIREMENTS

1. **The event must be eligible to report under the Reporting Standards**
 - a) You may apply to register an event under the Consumer Event Reporting Standards if entry to the event is controlled in a manner that records attendance and enables it to be verified in accordance with these Reporting Standards.
 - b) Each occurrence of an event will be certified separately.
 - c) Once we have issued an event's first ABC certificate we must continue to issue certificates for subsequent events (i.e. so there is no gap in certification) while the event remains registered.
2. **Your claim must comply with the Reporting Standards**

No additional requirements.
3. **Transactions related to the claim must be bona fide 'arms length' arrangements**
 - a) Transactions or arrangements (such as sales of entrance tickets or stand space) with your own organisation or Related Parties can be included if you are able to demonstrate to our satisfaction that these are bona fide 'arms length' arrangements.
 - b) Related Parties for ABC purposes will include where:
 - i) One party has direct or indirect control of the other party; or
 - ii) The parties are subject to common control from the same source; or
 - iii) One party has influence over the financial & operating policies of the other party to an extent that the other party might be inhibited from pursuing at all times its own separate interests; or
 - iv) The parties, in entering a transaction, are subject to influence from the same source to such an extent that one of the parties to the transaction has subordinated its own separate interests.

This means the following are considered Related Parties for ABC purposes:

 - The organiser, its subsidiary, parent and fellow undertakings (and Directors of these)
 - Associates and Joint Ventures (and their investors)
4. **Evidence to support the claim must be retained and available for a minimum period**
 - a) You must retain and be able to provide all records supporting the claim, including but not limited to:
 - i) An analysis of the event attendance by day by attendance type. *For example: Paid Attendance, Complimentary attendance.*

- ii) Evidence supporting the number of attendees claimed by type
 - iii) Evidence supporting additional information certified. *For example: Stand Space if claimed.*
 - iv) Financial records relevant to the claim.
- b) Records supporting the claim must be retained until we have completed the audit of the certificate for the subsequent event unless we agree otherwise. There is an exception for registration documents, tickets and vouchers collected in paper form which may be disposed of once we have confirmed the audit is complete
 - c) Records supporting the claim must be retained and made available to us, on request, in accordance with the ABC Byelaws.

GUIDANCE

G1. The event must be eligible to report under the Reporting Standards

- a) Each occurrence of an event will be certified separately: What determines the occurrence of an event is a mixture of time and location, influenced by how it is promoted. *For example: Event X running from 1st to 5th March and Event X running 1st to 5th September would be certified separately. Similarly Event X running 1st to 5th January held in London and Event X running 1st to 5th January held in Manchester would be certified separately.*

CERTIFICATE TYPES

DEFINITION

The ABC Certificate is published by ABC for a specific event and contains the data and information that is subject to audit.

PRINCIPLES

1. **You must report using a mandatory Certificate type**
2. **You may choose to report using an optional Certificate type**

REQUIREMENTS

1. **You must report using a mandatory Certificate type**
No additional requirements.
2. **You may choose to report using an optional Certificate type**
 - a) An optional Certificate, available in addition to the mandatory Certificate, is:
 - i) A Group Certificate that combines the attendance from 2 or more Consumer Event Certificates providing the events are not running concurrently at the same venue.
 - ABC will produce Group Certificates from the data submitted for the constituent events.

GUIDANCE

None.

REPORTED DATA

INTRODUCTION

This section sets out other data and information that is reported on the ABC Certificate.

REQUIREMENTS

MANDATORY INFORMATION

The following will be reported on each Certificate:

1. Total Attendance

a) You must report the Total Attendance, analysed into:

i) Total Visitor Attendance analysed by:

- o Paid Attendance
- o Complimentary Attendance

ii) Total Other Attendance analysed by:

- o Exhibitor personnel
- o Organiser staff
- o Press

If claimed, you must include a statement identifying whether Exhibitor personnel are counted on a single or multiple visit basis.

2. Event name

a) The name must reflect the event certified. This will take into account how the event is promoted to visitors and/or exhibitors. *For example: two co-located shows where there are no physical barriers between the two and no means of identifying attendance at either of these. In this case the registered name of the event for ABC purposes may include both of the shows.*

3. Date(s) and Venue(s) of event

a) You must report the date(s) and venue of the event certified.

4. Date(s) and Venue(s) of next event

a) You must report the planned date(s) and venue of the next event.

5. Year the event was established

a) You must report the year the event was established.

6. Event frequency

a) You must report the event frequency. *For example: Annual.*

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

The following may optionally be reported on the Certificate:

7. Trade Visitor Attendance

a) If you opt to report Total Trade Visitor Attendance this will be broken out on the certificate as follows:

i) Trade Visitors – Paid

- ii) Trade Visitors - Free

8. Participating Company Data

- a) If you opt to report participating company data the following will be included on the ABC Certificate:
 - i) Total Net Stand Space Occupied (square metres); and/or
 - ii) Number of Participating Companies.

9. Main Product Groups/Services Exhibited, Target Audience – Organiser Statement

- a) You may opt to report these statements, which are to be used to describe the Main Product Groups/Services Exhibited and Target Audience.
- b) The statements must be restricted to a reasonable description of these items and not include other information or claims.

Examples of statements that will not be permitted include:

- *Claims that attribute numbers or percentages to a description or profile of the target audience, e.g. 25,000 AB's attend, 70% male 30% female etc*
- *The reproduction of what appears to be visitor research e.g. average spend per visitor at the show £242*
- *Quotes from exhibitors/others*
- *Comparative claims in relation to the market/other shows e.g. The largest/market leading show etc ...*
- c) We do not audit the accuracy of the organiser statements. However we will review them to ensure that they are reasonable and meet the above requirements.

10. Event Attendance affected by circumstances outside the organiser's control

- a) If the event attendance is affected by circumstances outside the organiser's control, then you may apply for a statement to be added to the certificate detailing the circumstances that have affected the attendance figures.
 - i) We will confirm if we approve the inclusion of the statement or provide reasons if we reject it.
 - ii) The circumstances and information surrounding the statement are subject to audit.

GUIDANCE

None

ATTENDANCE

DEFINITION

Individuals who have attended the event.

PRINCIPLES

1. **Individuals have attended the event**
2. **Reported by type**
3. **Optional reporting**

REQUIREMENTS

1. Individuals have attended the event

- a) You must be able to demonstrate the individual has attended the event and on which day(s).
 - i) Any one individual (as represented by a specific entrance ticket for example) may only be counted once per day.
 - ii) There is an exception for press attendance – see section 2c.

2. Reported by type

a) Visitor attendance

Defined as individuals who are attending not as exhibitor personnel, organiser staff, or members of the press attending free of charge.

Visitor attendance will be analysed by:

- i) Paid attendance
 - You must be able to demonstrate the individual attending has gained entrance to the event through payment of an admission charge. Note: The payment need not be made by the attendee themselves.
 - The admission charge paid for each attendee must be at least 10% of the highest single ticket price advertised by the organiser, otherwise it will be treated as complimentary attendance.
 - The following apply to bulk ticket sales:
 - o Must be sold in advance of visiting the event
 - o The total amount paid will be pro-rated by the number of individuals paid for to determine the price paid for ABC purposes.
 - The following applies to family tickets:
 - o Must specify, on the ticket, the preset discount for a defined number of adult and child visitors. From this you can determine the price paid for ABC purposes.
 - The following applies to season tickets:
 - o The total amount paid will be pro-rated by the number of days the season ticket allows entrance to determine the price paid for ABC purposes.
- ii) Complimentary attendance
 - You must be able to demonstrate the individual attending has gained entrance free of charge or the admission charge paid is less than 10% of the highest single ticket price advertised by the organiser.

- For those who have gained entrance free of charge you must be able to provide contact details of either:
 - o The individual who attended; or
 - o The third party individual to whom the ticket(s) were distributed for onward distribution to the attendee(s).

b) Other attendance

Defined as individuals who are attending as exhibitor personnel, organiser staff, or members of the press attending free of charge.

Other attendance will be analysed by:

- i) Exhibitor personnel
 - o You must be able to demonstrate the individual is a member of an exhibitor's team of staff and is attending free of charge.
 - o You may choose to report exhibitor personnel on one of two bases (which will be identified on the certificate):
 - Single visit basis: each individual can only be claimed once for the event.
 - Multiple visit basis: each individual can be claimed for each day they attend.
- ii) Organiser staff
 - o You must be able to demonstrate the individual is a paid employee of the organiser and is attending free of charge. *Examples include security, caterers, floor management and exclude stand contractors and venue staff.*
 - o You must be able to provide the name, job title and contact details for the organiser staff claimed.
 - o Organiser staff must be counted on a single visit basis. i.e. each individual can only be claimed once for the event.
- iii) Press
 - o You may report attendance of members of the press on one of two bases:
 - The number of press passes issued: each pass is claimed once for the event.
 - Multiple visit basis: each press attendee is counted on each day they attend providing this is recorded and capable of verification with the attendee or recipient of the press pass.
 - o You must be able to provide the name, company name and contact details for recipients of press passes.

3. Optional reporting

- a) You may choose to report Trade Visitors
 - i) Trade Visitors are defined as individuals within the market served by the event who either pay for or receive a specific trade ticket from the organiser.
 - ii) Trade visitors will be analysed by paid and complimentary.

GUIDANCE

1. Individuals have attended the event

None.

2. Reported by type

a) Visitor attendance – paid

- i) To help reconciliation at audit you are advised to collect and retain different ticket types in separate bundles for audit. For example retain bulk ticket sales separate to season tickets, onsite tickets etc.
- ii) For all ticket sales you are advised to keep clear records and processes that identify how many tickets are sold, at what price and there should be an audit trail to track the payment through to bankings. This may involve various procedures such as sequentially numbered ticket books, ticket machines, cash sheets, daily banking sheets etc. Revenue from other sources, for example as catalogue sales, should be separately identified.
- iii) For advance ticket sales you will need to be able to reconcile those attending with tickets sold. You are therefore advised to ensure the attendance of those tickets purchased in advance can be verified, for example by retaining ticket stubs at the entrance or barcode scanning.
- iv) For those visitors that obtain a discount on the entrance fee by using a voucher you are advised to maintain the following to aid the classification into paid and complimentary attendance:
 - o Keep a record of all voucher types issued and their value
 - o Retain the vouchers redeemed by type and day, with a bundle count, so that they are easily checked at audit.

b) Visitor attendance – complimentary

- i) To help reconciliation at audit you are advised to collect and retain separately, in counted daily bundles, those tickets that are paid for at less than 10% of the highest single price, those that capture the individual's name and address and those that do not capture name and address (but for which you can identify the 3rd party to whom they were distributed).
- ii) If an electronic method of recording attendance is used eg barcode type scan, this must enable the attendance to be traced back to the individual attending or the 3rd party to whom they were distributed.

PARTICIPATING COMPANY DATA

DEFINITION

You can choose to report, as an option, the total net stand space occupied and/or the number of participating companies.

PRINCIPLES

- 1. You can optionally report the number of participating companies**
- 2. You can optionally report total net stand space occupied**

REQUIREMENTS

- 1. You can optionally report the number of participating companies**
 - a) You must be able to provide contractual evidence for each company claimed, that demonstrates its involvement with the event.
 - i) This includes companies occupying event stands, whether paid for, free or obtained through contra deal.
 - b) You must be able to provide a list of participating companies and details of their stand number(s) or other involvement as appropriate.
- 2. You can optionally report total net stand space occupied**
 - a) Net stand space occupied (in square metres) will:
 - i) Include all event stands that are available for attendees to visit, whether paid for, free or obtained through contra deal.
 - ii) Exclude rest areas, restaurants, conference rooms, exhibitor lounges etc.
 - b) You must be able to provide contractual evidence for each stand included in the claim.
 - c) You must be able to provide a list of exhibitors and details of their stand number(s), stand dimensions and stand space occupied:

GUIDANCE

None.

RETURN FORM SUBMISSION, AUDIT, CERTIFICATION

DEFINITION

The Return Form is a submission in which the event claim is reported to ABC for certification. Each attendance claim is subject to audit.

PRINCIPLES

1. **You must submit a Return Form by the Submission Deadline**
2. **ABC will issue a Certificate based on the Return Form**
3. **Each attendance claim is audited to verify it is in accordance with the applicable Reporting Standards**

REQUIREMENTS

1. **You must submit a Return Form by the Submission Deadline**
 - a) You will submit your Return Form to us, authorised by an appropriate individual representing your organisation.
 - b) Estimates and assumptions must not be made on the Return Form unless the Reporting Standards allow for them, or we have authorised them.
 - c) The Submission Deadline is 30 days from the last day of the event.
 - d) It is your responsibility to ensure Return Forms are submitted by the Submission Deadline. Failure to do so can result in a penalty and/or cancellation of your product's ABC registration under the ABC Byelaws.
2. **ABC will issue a Certificate based on the Return Form**
 - a) We will publish the certified data on our website subject to any timing criteria applicable to the sector. We may also make arrangements to provide our data to be published via commercial data providers and to those who subscribe to our data services.
 - b) We will confirm when attendance figures will become publicly available, normally 5 working days after a draft Certificate has been sent to you.
3. **Each claim is audited to verify it is in accordance with the applicable Reporting Standards**
 - a) The audit must be carried out by ABC Staff Auditors.
 - b) Requirements in relation to the auditor and audits will be covered by the ABC Byelaws, ABC Audit Programmes and contractual arrangements.
 - c) Your first event claim will be audited prior to certification.
 - d) Once an event is registered you are committed to the completion of the audit and issue of the certificate unless the event is cancelled.
 - e) If following an audit we identify material problems with the Return Form or Certificate then we will propose to revise the claim. If a Certificate has already been issued we will issue an updated certificate that identifies the changes. This replaces your original Certificate and must be used in its place. The process is as follows:
 - i) We will send you a letter detailing the reason/problem giving rise to the amendment.
 - ii) You will have 10 working days from the receipt of this letter to provide any further information to us, or object to the revision of the claim.
 - iii) If you wish to object to the revision of the claim you must do this in writing to the Director of Audit who will investigate and provide a decision within 10 working days. If the objection is to a decision by the

Director of Audit or the Chief Executive then the first level of appeal will be in accordance with the Review Procedure detailed in the ABC Byelaws.

- iv) Subsequent Certificates will not be issued until we have resolved all queries on a previous audit and issued the updated Certificate, if applicable.
- v) We identify updated certificates on our website.
- f) Subsequent Certificates of Attendance will not be issued until all audit queries on a previous certificate have been resolved and the Audit Report issued, if applicable.

GUIDANCE

None.

To check you are using the latest ABC Reporting Standards and obtain information about recent changes, visit www.abcstandards.org.uk

www.abc.org.uk



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