



Setting the standard

# Reporting Standards

## Email Distribution

Version 1 2017

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## SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

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This document contains the ABC Reporting Standards for products registered with ABC and reporting Email Distribution. As Reporting Standards are updated periodically, please check the website [www.abcstandards.org.uk](http://www.abcstandards.org.uk) to ensure you are using the latest applicable standards.

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](mailto:info@abc.org.uk).

## SECTION B: REPORTED DATA

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### INTRODUCTION

This section sets out the data and information that is reported on the Email Distribution certificate.

### PRINCIPLES

- B1. You must report email distribution for a defined Reporting Period**
- B2. You must report using a standard certificate type**
- B3. You must report the mandatory metrics**
- B4. You may report optional metrics**
- B5. You must report a product name**
- B6. You must report a description of the product and its content**
- B7. You may include other information**

### REQUIREMENTS

#### **B1. You must report email distribution for a defined Reporting Period**

- a) The Reporting Period may be either:
  - i) In the case of a single mailing the date(s) on which the mailing was sent; or.
  - ii) A whole calendar month or any combination of consecutive calendar months (up to a maximum of 12).
- b) You must report email distribution for certification at least once a year, as follows:
  - i) Within 12 months of registering with ABC
  - ii) Subsequent certificates must have Reporting Period end dates that are within 12 months of each other. *For example: a certificate for November 2016 must be followed by a certificate ending no later than November 2017.*

#### **B2. You must report using a standard certificate type**

- a) The mandatory certificate will include mailing(s) related to a single email product.
- b) You may as an option additionally combine two or more certified email products on a Group Certificate.
  - i) The Reporting Period for the Group Certificate must cover all mailings included on the certificate.

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### B3. You must report the mandatory metrics

- a) For a mandatory certificate you must report:
  - i) The Net Distribution and date(s) of each mailing in the Reporting Period.
    - Net Distribution is defined as the total number of emails successfully sent as part of a single mailing to all email addresses on the distribution list, de-duplicated by email address.
    - Net distribution excludes hard bounces - see section C2.
  - ii) The total number of mailings and the average Net Distribution of all mailings in the Reporting Period.
- b) For a Group Certificate you must additionally report:
  - i) The Combined Net Distribution of each of the mailings included on the certificate.
    - The Combined Net Distribution is defined as the combined total Net Distribution of each of the separate mailings included on a Group Certificate, de-duplicated by email address between the last mailing on each email distribution certificate included on the Group Certificate.

### B4. You may report optional metrics

- a) You can additionally report for each mailing and as an average:
  - i) Emails Opened
    - Defined as the total number of emails included in the Net Distribution that have been opened.
  - ii) Registered Addresses
    - Defined as contactable email (SMTP) addresses in the distribution list that have requested the email service.
  - iii) For a Group Certificate: Combined Gross Distribution
    - The combined total Net Distributions of each of the separate mailings included on a Group Certificate, but without removing duplicate email addresses between the last mailing on each email distribution certificate included in the Group Certificate.

### B5. You must report a product name

- a) The name must be appropriate to the email services included on the certificate.

### B6. You must report a description of the product and its content

- a) This statement will be verified at audit. *For example: 'A newsletter with attachment that contains a digital magazine' or 'Newsletter with features and news items aimed at Doctors'.* Note: This statement is not to contain market comparisons or distribution claims.

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### B7. You may include other information

- a) You may include the following information on your certificate with the agreement of your certificate provider:
  - i) Relevant product logos.
  - ii) Further data analysis (e.g. averages, ratios) derived from the metrics certified.
  - iii) Media owner contact details.

# SECTION C: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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## INTRODUCTION

This section sets out the requirements relating to the reporting of email distribution.

## PRINCIPLES

**C1. Email distribution must comply with the Reporting Standards**

**C2. Email distribution will comprise emails delivered to a valid and deliverable email address**

**C3. Evidence to support the claim must be retained and available for a minimum period.**

**C4. Each email distribution claim is audited to verify it is in accordance with the applicable Reporting Standards**

## REQUIREMENTS

**C1. Email distribution must comply with the Reporting Standards**

No additional requirements.

**C2. Email distribution will comprise emails delivered to a valid and deliverable email address**

- a) You must exclude emails that generate a hard bounce or Non-Delivery-Notice (NDN) measured at least 24 hours after the time of the last email sent in that mailing.
  - i) A 'hard bounce' is defined as a permanent reason that an email cannot be delivered, generating a delivery failure message. *For example: 'mailbox not found', 'host unknown'.*
  - ii) 'Soft bounce' responses can be ignored. *For example: 'delivery delayed', 'out of office'.*

**C3. Evidence to support the claim must be retained and available for a minimum period.**

- a) The logged records provide the specific data regarding each file or transaction processed by the server.
  - i) You must retain and be able to provide for audit the logged records supporting the claim.
  - ii) You must retain the logged records for a period of 6 months following certification of the claim or until the audit of the certificate for the subsequent Reporting Period has been completed if sooner.
- b) The logged records must contain sufficient information to identify the email distribution to be counted and audited.
  - i) For each mailing you must record:
    - The mailing start date

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- The mailing end date
  - The total emails sent
  - Email addresses and date sent
  - The number of hard bounces (see section C2)
- ii) You must retain and be able to provide for audit a list of the email addresses for each mailing, including the date sent and coded to identify any hard bounces.
- iii) You should not change the format of your log files during the Reporting Period. Please contact your auditor regarding any planned changes.
- c) You must retain and be able to provide for audit a copy of the email (and its contents) used for each mailing.

### **C4. Each email distribution 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) 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 a revised Certificate with an Audit Report 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 revised Certificate, if applicable.
  - v) We publish details of Audit/Inspection Reports on our website.



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