



Setting the standard

# Reporting Standards

Republic of Ireland  
Paid Newspapers

Version 1 2017

Issued January 2017

## CONTENTS

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction	2
General Principles and Record Keeping	3
Retail Sales (Sale or Return)	6
Retail Sales (Limited Sale or Return)	11
Retail Sales (Firm Sale)	15
Single Copy Sales	19
Publisher Controlled Direct Delivery	21
Paid Employee Copies	24
Single Copy Subscription Sales	26
Voucher Subscription Sales	31
Multiple Copy Sales	33
Special Editions	36
Sports Editions	38
Digital Editions	40
Reported Data	44
Basic Cover Price	45
Editions	47
Issues to be included / excluded	49
Reporting Periods	51
Certificate Types	53
Return Form Submission, Audit, Certification	54
Caps by Supply Type – Multiple Copy Sales	56

## INTRODUCTION

This document contains the Reporting Standards for print and digital edition of products registered in the Republic of Ireland Paid Newspapers 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](http://www.abcstandards.org.uk) to ensure you are using the latest applicable standards.

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

- Definition
- Principles
- Requirements
- Reporting
- 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](mailto: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. **Publication must be eligible to report under the Reporting Standards**
2. **Copies 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**
5. **There is a designated Audit Issue**

## REQUIREMENTS

1. **The publication must be eligible to report under the Reporting Standards**
  - a) You may apply to register a printed publication under the Republic of Ireland Paid Newspaper Reporting Standards if it publishes the majority of its circulation in the Republic of Ireland.
2. **Copies must comply with the Reporting Standards**
  - a) Copies claimed must comply with the relevant sections of these Reporting Standards with the following exceptions which you specifically cannot claim:
    - i) Free copies, including those to contributors, advertisers, advertising agencies, press cutting agencies.
    - ii) File or office copies
    - iii) Free publisher employee copies
    - iv) Paid publisher employee copies (unless they qualify under the Paid Employee Copies category or they are purchased as a normal consumer).
    - v) Electronic versions of the publication unless they meet the requirements to be claimed as a Digital Edition.
3. **Transactions related to the claim must be bona fide 'arms length' arrangements**
  - a) Transactions or arrangements (such as sales, circulation or distribution services) with your own organisation or Related Parties will initially be deemed as not bona fide 'arms-length' for ABC purposes, meaning they cannot be included in your claim. However they can be included if you are able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of your auditor or ABC that these comply with the Reporting Standards and 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.

- v) Transactions between contract publishers and their clients are deemed not to be arms length in relation to a specific publication produced for that client.

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

- The publisher, 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 claim by issue.
  - ii) Evidence supporting the number of copies printed for each issue claimed.
  - iii) Evidence supporting the number of copies distributed for each issue claimed, relevant to its circulation type.
  - iv) Evidence for each copy supporting the relevant circulation category and geographical region in which it is claimed on an issue by issue basis (i.e. not on a transactional basis).
  - v) A copy of each issue and any Editions claimed.
  - vi) Financial records.
- b) Records supporting the claim must be retained:
  - i) If ABC is the auditor, until we have completed the audit of the certificate for the subsequent corresponding Reporting Period. *For example the records supporting the July to December 2012 period must be retained until we have completed the audit for July to December 2013.*
  - ii) If you use non-ABC auditor, until you receive the certificate for the subsequent corresponding Reporting Period.
  - iii) For monthly Reporting Periods until 3 months after the end of the Reporting Period.
- c) Records supporting the claim must be retained and made available to your Auditor or ABC on request, in accordance with the ABC Byelaws.

#### **5. There is a designated Audit Issue**

- a) The Audit Issue is a designated issue in the Reporting Period for which the Reporting Standards specify certain information is required to be retained or reported.
- b) For 6 or 12 month Reporting Periods ending December the Audit Issue is the last issue dated November and for Reporting Periods ending June the last issue dated May.
- c) For monthly Reporting Periods the Audit Issue is the issue distributed nearest to the 21st of the month.
  - i) Where this issue was either not published or excluded under the exclusion rules then the previous claimed issue will be the Audit Issue.
  - ii) If two issues are equidistant from this date then you may choose either as the Audit Issue
- d) For any other Reporting Periods the Audit Issue is the issue distributed nearest to the first day of the last month in the Reporting Period, which also falls within the Reporting Period.
  - i) If two issues are equidistant from this date then you may choose either as the Audit Issue

## GUIDANCE

### G4. Evidence to support the claim must be retained and available for a minimum period

- a) In relation to evidence supporting the number of copies distributed for each issue claimed, this must enable identification of the publication name, issue and quantity of copies. This means copies posted using a franking machine will not normally be able to be claimed as the records will not identify what has been posted.
- b) In relation to mailed copies there is no need to remove copies from the claim that are returned because they are undeliverable. *For example copies returned addressee gone away or not known.*
- c) In relation to print evidence you will normally provide print invoices and evidence of payment. If printing is carried out in-house or within a Related Party organisation then production records may be required. Other financial records may also be reviewed.
- d) In relation to distribution evidence you will normally provide distributors' invoices/despatch notes and evidence of payment. Other financial records may also be reviewed.
- e) In relation to publication sales you may need to provide access to financial records including sales ledgers and bank statements on request.
- f) The auditor may accept copies of records stored electronically, but we advise you check first.
- g) If records are not available or not accepted by your auditor/ABC then this may result in copies being disallowed, certificates being withdrawn or cancellation of the publication's ABC registration.
- h) For ease of auditing and to avoid additional costs any mailing list supplied for audit should be presented in a format agreed between you and your auditor. One agreed format is:
  - i) One file per publication in a comma-delimited format
  - ii) One line per addressee
  - iii) Each addressee coded to identify the circulation category/rate in which it has been claimed
  - iv) Separate fields for name, job title, company name, address records, circulation code, geographical code, request dates, number of copies etc
- i) We offer an optional 'sealed galley' service whereby a mailing list tested at an audit can be treated as a valid source record for future audits. This avoids the need to go back to original documentation at a future audit if a record is included on a mailing list previously audited and sealed. Please contact us for further details.

## RETAIL SALES (SALE OR RETURN)

### DEFINITION

A copy sold to a retailer, on a sale or return basis, for resale as a single copy to a consumer.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer to the retailer**
2. **Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a sale or return basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**
3. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of the publication**
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
5. **There must be an incentive for unsold copies/net sale to be reported to the publisher**
6. **If the final net sale and/or rate classification are not known then estimates must be made**
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with the Basic Cover Price**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer to the retailer**
  - a) The purchase by the consumer may be in cash or by other means agreed by ABC in writing.
  - b) Back issues up to 12 months old can be claimed against the issue current at the time of sale.
2. **Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a sale or return basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**
  - a) 'Sale or Return' means unsold copies are returned or reported for credit. The copies claimed will therefore be the net sale (copies supplied less credited copies).
  - b) Where the publisher is not third party to the retailer then evidence of purchase by the consumer is required. *For example EPOS reports and retailer revenues.*
  - c) You must account for net sales on an issue by issue basis.
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
  - a) If a voucher from a publisher controlled promotion is used the amount paid by the consumer is deemed to be the total of the cash paid to the retailer and any cash they paid for the voucher.
  - b) The value (or perceived value) of gifts or cover mounts to the consumer have no effect on the price paid for ABC purposes. However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account (excluding limited low chance lottery style promotions).
  - c) You must retain details of promotional or special offers during the reporting period.
5. **There must be an incentive for unsold copies/net sale to be reported to the publisher**
  - a) Copies purchased using vouchers from publisher controlled promotions can be claimed as long as the consumer pays at least the retail margin in cash.
6. **If the final net sale and/or rate classification are not known then estimates must be made**
  - a) If at the time you submit your circulation claim:

- i) Unsold copies could still be returned or reported, you must make an estimate of final sales.
- ii) You are running a promotional scheme where the final position (e.g. the number of discounted sales via redeemed vouchers) is not known you must make an estimate of the final net sale and classification.

You must adjust your claim in the following period to reflect any difference between the estimated net sale and classification and the actual net sale and classification.

- b) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption: If you are reporting on a monthly basis and the effect of not making an estimate is judged to be unlikely to affect the figures claimed by more than 2% of the total average circulation then you can account for the vouchers on a wash through basis (i.e. as they are redeemed).

#### **7. Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with the Basic Cover Price**

- a) Sales by retailers will be treated as sales at the cover price unless there is evidence to the contrary.

### **REPORTING**

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

- 1. Average total retail sales for the period for UK and ROI (combined with other retail sales, publisher controlled direct delivery, employee purchase schemes, single copy subscription sales and voucher subscription sales) analysed into the following rate bands:

- Full rate
- Below Full Rate

Overseas as one figure (only needs breaking out from UK and ROI if greater than 5% of category retail sales, single copy and subscription sales).

### **GUIDANCE**

#### **G1. Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer**

- a) Cash means legal tender notes and coins, cheque, credit/debit card, wireless payment systems.
- b) This doesn't preclude a retailer selling more than one copy to a single purchaser (without the publisher's knowledge).

#### **G2. Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a sale or return basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**

- a) You will need to ensure all records required to support the retail sale claim are available for audit. This will include:
  - i) Full details of the exact numbers claimed as unsold or returned copies (including undelivered, lost or stolen copies) for every issue in the audit period.
  - ii) Full issue by issue details of all financial records and contracts with distributors, wholesalers and retailers, with specific regard to normal and recognised trade terms. These must be reconcilable to the distribution and returns records on an issue specific basis and to the average net retail sales claim.
  - iii) Details of any change in trading terms from firm sale (if allowed) to sale or return (either temporarily or permanently) or vice versa.
  - iv) Details of discounts, special offers or restrictions on the return of unsold or undelivered copies.
- b) Copies reported using a pay on scan system will be reported in this category. You will need to ensure appropriate records of sales are available for audit.
- c) Retail sales of Digital Editions via a third party retailer (*for example Apple Newsstand, Google, Amazon etc*) will be reported in this category.

#### **G4. The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**



- a) As the price paid may be affected by promotional schemes you should keep details of purchases and promotional spends so you can demonstrate copies are purchased and that sales under incentives/offers are classified correctly, or disallowed as necessary. You can contact ABC for confidential advice, supplying copies of the promotional material and offer wording. The information kept may include:
- Title/s involved
  - Issues involved
  - Duration of promotion
  - Retail outlets involved
  - Wording of the promotion displayed at the retail outlet/s
  - How the resultant copies are claimed
  - How the promotion will be paid for
- b) Treatment of bundle/package promotions
- i) As each case can vary we recommend you contact us for advice before carrying out your promotion.
- ii) How the price of the publication is presented to the consumer will affect how or whether the copy may be claimed for ABC purposes.
- If the price of the publication appears in the promotional material and it is legible (taking into account its presentation and prominence (including the size of the font used) and assuming a reasonable speed of reading) then the price is likely to be considered clear and conspicuous.
    - o Stating the publication's price in relation to the promotion/bundle in the main wording of the offer will provide most clarity.
    - o The further away from the main offer wording and/or less prominent in the promotion the price of the publication becomes, the more likely it will not be considered clear and conspicuous.
    - o If the price of the publication is linked to the main offer wording with, say, an asterisk - this would make it more conspicuous.
  - Merely stating the price of the publication without reference to the bundle/package could just be a statement about the normal price of the publication and so will not necessarily render the price clear and conspicuous.
  - If there is conflicting information about the price, then the lowest price assessment would be taken for ABC purposes (which might mean it is free).
  - The absence of a clear and conspicuous price would render the copies as free, as would explicit wording stating the publication is free.

Examples:

1. Promotion "*Buy the publication and a bottle of water for €x*".  
The price of the publication is not clear and conspicuous.
2. Promotion "*Buy the publication and a bottle of water for €x*" which is accompanied by the statement "*The price of the publication in this promotion is €y*"  
The price of the publication is likely to be considered clear and conspicuous if the accompanying statement is either within the main body of the promotion, or is in a footnote that is asterisked to the main body and is legible.
3. Promotion "*Buy the publication and bottle of water for €x.*" Elsewhere in promotion "*Publication is €y Monday to Friday and €z on Saturdays*".  
The price of the publication is not in the promotion and is unlikely to be considered clear and conspicuous as this statement appears to be the normal price of the publication.

4. Promotion: If a publication 'ABC News' is promoted as '*Buy ABC News for €x and get a free bottle of water*' then the bottle of water is treated as a free gift and it is clear the price paid is solely for the purchase of the publication.
5. Promotion: If the promotion is '*Buy a bottle of water and get a free copy of ABC News*' then the publication will be treated as free for ABC purposes.

c) Per section 4b: "The discount or cash reimbursement must be taken into account

Examples:

1. Promotion: "*Buy publication and spend €5 and you get €1 off your publication*".

The publication is discounted by €1.

2. Promotion: "*Buy publication, spend €5 and get €1 off your shopping basket*".

The publication is discounted as it is part of the shopping basket, but it is difficult to determine how much it is discounted and will be considered on a case by case basis. In this example, using the minimum spend requirement of the offer gives a 20% discount and would seem a reasonable treatment.

3. Promotion: "*Buy publication and get €1 off a jar of coffee*". Or "*Buy publication and get the money off the rest of your shopping*".

The publication is full price, provided that the publication is sold at full price and the reimbursement does not exceed the cost of the items being discounted.

**G6. If the final net sale and/or rate classification are not known then estimates must be made**

a) Estimates of final sale

An assessment of likely sales should be based on current and historic information such as:

- Current levels of sales and unsold copies
- Historic data and seasonal trends
- Promotional activity
- Print orders
- Competitor activity
- Information from sales force

Particular attention should be given to periods of promotion, re-launch and to non-ROI circulation in general in order to arrive at a fair and reasonable representation of the net circulation. You should record the calculations and assumptions used to arrive at the estimated net sale.

b) All unsold copies must be accounted for. This means that all estimates of net sale must be reviewed in the next audit period to establish their accuracy and that claim adjusted to account for any over or under estimate from the previous period. This must be done for each relevant geographical area reported [Note: If the difference for a period is found to be material following an ABC audit or inspection, ABC may amend the Certificate for the period to which the estimate relates).

*Worked example (assuming 12 issues in a reporting period)*

<i>Issue ID</i>	<i>Supply</i>	<i>Returns</i>	<i>Net Sale</i>	<i>Sales%</i>
1	88,500	26,229	62,271	70.36% closed
2	88,500	24,728	63,772	72.06% closed
3	88,250	23,688	64,652	73.26% closed
4	89,630	14,266	75,364	71.08% closed
5	89,820	27,620	62,200	69.25% closed
6	89,650	21,982	67,668	75.48% closed
7	88,500	26,229	62,271	70.36% closed
8	88,500	24,728	63,772	72.06% closed
9	88,250	23,688	64,652	73.26% closed
10	89,630	14,266	75,364	84.08% unclosed
11	89,820	9,655	80,165	89.25% unclosed

12 89,650 465 89,185 99.48% unclosed

*In this example issues 10, 11 and 12 are not yet closed so an estimate of the final net sales figures have to be made using the criteria mentioned above. You will, of course, notice that a proportion of the unsold copies have already been received, but at this stage you should just concentrate on what you think the final net sales will be.*

*When all the estimates have been made the final figures for your claim may look something like this: - Issue Total*

<b>ID</b>	<b>Supply</b>	<b>Returns</b>	<b>Est. Sale</b>	<b>Sales%</b>
10	89,630	25,096	64,534*	72% Estimated
11	89,820	25,150	64,670*	72% Estimated
12	89,650	24,205	65,445*	73% Estimated

*This means that your estimate of final net sale for these three unclosed issues is 194,649\*.*

*Remember that you must report separate figures for any geographical areas broken out on the Certificate (e.g. UK / Republic of Ireland or overseas).*

*Adjustment for the estimate*

*In the next reporting period you would have a report giving you the actual net sales for issues 10, 11 and 12 because by then they would be closed off and complete. For example, the final report may be as follows:*

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Actual</b>	
<b>ID</b>	<b>Supply</b>	<b>Returns</b>	<b>Sale Sales%</b>
10	89,630	25,382	64,248* 71.68%
11	89,820	25,884	63,936* 71.18%
12	89,650	26,312	63,338* 70.65%

*In this example the actual net sales relevant to your estimate, is 191,522\*.*

*The difference between your original estimate and the actual figure (i.e. 194,649 minus 191,522) means you have overestimated sales by a total of 3,127 copies over those 3 issues.*

*The average overestimate of sold copies was therefore 3,127 divided by 12 (total issues in the previous period) = 261.*

*So you must deduct 261 copies from the average in the current period, to ensure the overestimate from the previous period is accounted for.*

- c) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption a wash through basis means vouchers are accounted for as they are redeemed. The specific point at which they are treated as redeemed is not prescribed but you should use a reasonable and consistent basis.

## RETAIL SALES (LIMITED SALE OR RETURN)

### DEFINITION

A copy sold to a retailer, on a limited sale or return basis, intended for resale as a single copy to a consumer.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **Single copy made available for purchase by the consumer from the retailer**
2. **Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a limited sale or return basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**
3. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of the publication**
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
5. **There must be an incentive for unsold copies/net sale (to the limit) to be reported to the publisher**
6. **If the final net sale and/or rate classification are not known then estimates must be made**
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with the Basic Cover Price**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **Single copy made available for purchase by the consumer from the retailer**
  - a) The purchase by the consumer may be in cash or by other means agreed by ABC in writing.
  - b) Back issues up to 12 months old can be claimed against the issue current at the time of sale.
2. **Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a limited sale or return basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**
  - a) 'Limited Sale or Return' means unsold copies are returned or reported for credit up to a limit contractually agreed with the retailer. The copies claimed will therefore be the net sale (copies supplied less credited copies).
  - b) You must account for net sales on an issue by issue basis.
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
  - a) If a voucher is used the amount paid by the consumer is deemed to be the total of the cash paid to the retailer and any cash they paid for the voucher.
  - b) The value (or perceived value) of gifts or cover mounts to the consumer have no effect on the price paid for ABC purposes. However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account (excluding limited low chance lottery style promotions).
  - c) You must retain details of promotional or special offers during the reporting period.
6. **If the final net sale and/or rate classification are not known then estimates must be made**
  - a) If at the time you submit your circulation claim:
    - i) Unsold copies could still be returned or reported, you must make an estimate of final sales, taking into account the agreed returns limits with retailers.
    - ii) You are running a promotional scheme where the final position (e.g. the number of discounted sales via redeemed vouchers) is not known you must make an estimate of the final net sale and classification.

You must adjust your claim in the following period to reflect any difference between the estimated net sale and classification and the actual net sale and classification.

- b) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption: If you are reporting on a monthly basis and the effect of not making an estimate is judged to be unlikely to affect the figures claimed by more than 2% of the total average circulation then you can account for the vouchers on a wash through basis (i.e. as they are redeemed).

#### **7. Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with the Basic Cover Price**

- a) Sales by retailers will be treated as sales at the cover price unless there is evidence to the contrary.

### **REPORTING**

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. Average total retail sales for the period for UK and ROI (combined with other retail sales, publisher controlled direct delivery, employee purchase schemes, single copy subscription sales and voucher subscription sales) analysed into the following rate bands:
  - Full rate
  - Below Full Rate

Overseas as one figure (only needs breaking out from UK and ROI if greater than 5% of category newstrade, single copy and subscription sales).

### **GUIDANCE**

#### **G1. Single copy made available for purchase by the consumer from the retailer**

- a) Cash means legal tender notes and coins, cheque, credit/debit card, wireless payment systems.
- b) This doesn't preclude a retailer selling more than one copy to a single purchaser (without the publisher's knowledge).

#### **G2. Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a limited sale or return basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**

- a) You will need to ensure all records required to support the limited retail sale claim are available for audit. This will include:
  - i) Full details of the exact numbers claimed as unsold or returned copies (including undelivered, lost or stolen copies) for every issue in the audit period.
  - ii) Full issue by issue details of all financial records and contracts with distributors, wholesalers and retailers, with specific regard to normal and recognised trade terms and the agreed limited returns. These must be reconcilable to the distribution and returns records on an issue specific basis and to the average net retail sales claim.
  - iii) Details of any change in trading terms from firm sale (if allowed) to sale or return (either temporarily or permanently) or vice versa.
  - iv) Details of discounts, special offers or restrictions on the return of unsold or undelivered copies.
- b) Copies reported using a pay on scan system will be reported in this category. You will need to ensure appropriate records of sales are available for audit.

#### **G4. The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**

- a) The price paid may be affected by promotional schemes. You should keep details of purchases and promotional spends on for each publication to ensure the publisher is not buying copies of the publication and that sales under incentives/offers are classified correctly, or disallowed as necessary. You can contact ABC for confidential advice, supplying copies of the promotional material and offer wording. The information kept may include:
  - Title/s involved
  - Issues involved

- Duration of promotion
  - Retail outlets involved
  - Wording of the promotion displayed at the retail outlet/s
  - How the resultant copies are claimed
  - How the promotion will be paid for
- b) Treatment of bundle/package promotions
- i) As each case can vary we recommend you contact us for advice before carrying out your promotion.
- ii) How the price of the publication is presented to the consumer will affect how or whether the copy may be claimed for ABC purposes.
- If the price of the publication appears in the promotional material and it is legible (taking into account its presentation and prominence (including the size of the font used) and assuming a reasonable speed of reading) then the price is likely to be considered clear and conspicuous.
    - o Stating the publication's price in relation to the promotion/bundle in the main wording of the offer will provide most clarity.
    - o The further away from the main offer wording and/or less prominent in the promotion the price of the publication becomes, the more likely it will not be considered clear and conspicuous.
    - o If the price of the publication is linked to the main offer wording with, say, an asterisk - this would make it more conspicuous.
  - Merely stating the price of the publication without reference to the bundle/package could just be a statement about the normal price of the publication and so will not necessarily render the price clear and conspicuous.
  - If there is conflicting information about the price, then the lowest price assessment would be taken for ABC purposes (which might mean it is free).
  - The absence of a clear and conspicuous price would render the copies as free, as would explicit wording stating the publication is free.

Examples:

1. Promotion "*Buy the publication and a bottle of water for €x*".  
The price of the publication is not clear and conspicuous.
2. Promotion "*Buy the publication and a bottle of water for €x*" which is accompanied by the statement "*The price of the publication in this promotion is €y*"  
The price of the publication is likely to be considered clear and conspicuous if the accompanying statement is either within the main body of the promotion, or is in a footnote that is asterisked to the main body and is legible.
3. Promotion "*Buy the publication and bottle of water for €x.*" Elsewhere in promotion "*Publication is €y Monday to Friday and €z on Saturdays*".  
The price of the publication is not in the promotion and is unlikely to be considered clear and conspicuous as this statement appears to be the normal price of the publication.
4. Promotion: If a publication 'ABC News' is promoted as '*Buy ABC News for €x and get a free bottle of water*' then the bottle of water is treated as a free gift and it is clear the price paid is solely for the purchase of the publication.
5. Promotion: If the promotion is '*Buy a bottle of water and get a free copy of ABC News*' then the publication will be treated as free for ABC purposes.

- c) Per section 4b: "The discount or cash reimbursement must be taken into account

Examples:

1. Promotion: "*Buy publication and spend €5 and you get €1 off your publication*".

The publication is discounted by €1.

2. Promotion: "*Buy publication, spend €5 and get €1 off your shopping basket*".

The publication is discounted as it is part of the shopping basket, but it is difficult to determine how much it is discounted and will be considered on a case by case basis. In this example, using the minimum spend requirement of the offer gives a 20% discount and would seem a reasonable treatment.

3. Promotion: "*Buy publication and get €1 off a jar of coffee*". Or "*Buy publication and get the money off the rest of your shopping*".

The publication is full price, provided that the publication is sold at full price and the reimbursement does not exceed the cost of the items being discounted.

**G6. If the final net sale and/or rate classification are not known then estimates must be made**

- a) Estimates of final sale

An assessment of likely sales should be based on current and historic information such as:

- Current levels of sales and unsold copies
- Historic data and seasonal trends
- Promotional activity
- Print orders
- Competitor activity
- Information from sales force

Particular attention should be given to periods of promotion, re-launch and to non-ROI circulation in general in order to arrive at a fair and reasonable representation of the net circulation. You should record the calculations and assumptions used to arrive at the estimated net sale.

- b) All unsold copies that are capable of being credited must be accounted for. This means that all estimates of net sale must be reviewed in the next audit period to establish their accuracy and that claim adjusted to account for any over or under estimate from the previous period. This must be done for each relevant geographical area reported [Note: If the difference for a period is found to be material following an ABC audit or inspection, ABC may amend the Certificate for the period to which the estimate relates).
- c) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption a wash through basis means vouchers are accounted for as they are redeemed. The specific point at which they are treated as redeemed is not prescribed but you should use a reasonable and consistent basis.

## RETAIL SALES (FIRM SALE)

### DEFINITION

A copy sold to a retailer, on a firm sale basis, intended for resale as a single copy to a consumer.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **Single copy made available for purchase by the consumer from the retailer**
2. **Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a firm sale basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**
3. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of the publication**
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
5. **The retailers' ability to vary supply must not be unduly restricted**
6. **If the final rate classification is not known then estimates must be made**
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with the Basic Cover Price**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **Single copy made available for purchase by the consumer from the retailer**
  - a) Contractual arrangement with the retailer must make clear that copies are for resale to the consumer.
  - b) The purchase by the consumer may be in cash or by other means agreed by ABC in writing.
  - c) You cannot claim back issue sales to the retailer.
2. **Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a firm sale basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**
  - a) 'Firm sale' means that unsold copies are not returned or reported for credit.
  - b) The total trade discount must not exceed 60% of Basic Cover Price.
  - c) If you make any reciprocal payments, or the retailer makes any reciprocal charges for goods or services as part of the deal (*for example: for distribution or marketing*) then you must take these into account when calculating whether the trade discount exceeds this level.
  - d) Where you sell copies of a publication directly to a retailer on both a firm sale and sale or return (or limited sale or return) basis, then the trade discount must be the same for each.
  - e) You must account for sales on an issue by issue basis.
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
  - a) If a voucher from a publisher controlled promotion is used the amount paid by the consumer is deemed to be the total of the cash paid to the retailer and any cash they paid for the voucher.
  - b) The value (or perceived value) of gifts or cover mounts to the consumer have no effect on the price paid for ABC purposes. However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account (excluding limited low chance lottery style promotions).
  - c) You must retain details of promotional or special offers during the reporting period.
6. **If the final rate classification is not known then estimates must be made**



- a) If at the time you submit your circulation claim you are running a promotional scheme where the final position (e.g. the number of discounted sales via redeemed vouchers) is not known you must make an estimate of the final classification. In this case you must adjust your claim in the following period to reflect any difference between the estimated classification and the actual classification.
- b) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption: If you are reporting on a monthly basis and the effect of not making an estimate is judged to be unlikely to affect the figures claimed by more than 2% of the total average circulation then you can account for the vouchers on a wash through basis (i.e. as they are redeemed).

#### **7. Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with the Basic Cover Price**

- a) Copies sold to the retailer can be claimed as sales at the cover price unless there is evidence to the contrary, in which case claims should be adjusted as follows:
  - i) The retailer distributes copies free to the consumer (these should be removed from claim)
  - ii) The retailer sells copies at less than the Basic Cover Price (these may be claimed in the appropriate rate band).
  - iii) The consumer makes part payment using a voucher from a publisher controlled promotion (these may be claimed in the appropriate rate band unless acceptance and redemption of vouchers is explicitly not allowed in the agreement between the publisher and the retailer in which case the voucher can be ignored),
  - iv) The consumer makes full payment using a voucher from a publisher controlled promotion (these should be removed from the claim).

For the avoidance of doubt: copies disposed of by the retailer (not provided to a consumer) do not need to be deducted.

### **REPORTING**

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. Average total retail sales for the period for UK and ROI (combined with other retail sales, publisher controlled direct delivery, employee purchase schemes, single copy subscription sales and voucher subscription sales) analysed into the following rate bands:

- Full rate
- Below Full Rate

Overseas as one figure (only needs breaking out from UK and ROI if greater than 5% of category retail sales, single copy and subscription sales).

### **GUIDANCE**

#### **G1. Single copy made available for purchase by the consumer from the retailer**

- a) Cash means legal tender notes and coins, cheque, credit/debit card, wireless payment systems.
- b) This doesn't preclude a retailer selling more than one copy to a single purchaser (without the publisher's knowledge).

#### **G2. Copies are purchased from the publisher by the retailer, on a firm sale basis, either direct or via the distribution chain (typically distributor and/or wholesaler)**

- a) You will need to ensure all records required to support the retail sale claim are available for audit. This will include:
  - i) Full issue by issue details of all financial records and contracts with distributors, wholesalers and retailers, with specific regard to normal and recognised trade terms. These must be reconcilable to the distribution records on an issue specific basis and to the average retail sale claim.
  - ii) Details of any change in trading terms from firm sale (if allowed) to sale or return (either temporarily or permanently) or vice versa.

iii) Details of discounts or special offers.

**G4. The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**

a) The price paid may be affected by promotional schemes. You should keep details of purchases and promotional spends on for each publication to ensure the publisher is not buying copies of the publication and that sales under incentives/offers are classified correctly, or disallowed as necessary. You can contact ABC for confidential advice, supplying copies of the promotional material and offer wording. The information kept may include:

- Title/s involved
- Issues involved
- Duration of promotion
- Retail outlets involved
- Wording of the promotion displayed at the retail outlet/s
- How the resultant copies are claimed
- How the promotion will be paid for

b) Treatment of bundle/package promotions

i) As each case can vary we recommend you contact us for advice before carrying out your promotion.

ii) How the price of the publication is presented to the consumer will affect how or whether the copy may be claimed for ABC purposes.

- If the price of the publication appears in the promotional material and it is legible (taking into account its presentation and prominence (including the size of the font used) and assuming a reasonable speed of reading) then the price is likely to be considered clear and conspicuous.
  - o Stating the publication's price in relation to the promotion/bundle in the main wording of the offer will provide most clarity.
  - o The further away from the main offer wording and/or less prominent in the promotion the price of the publication becomes, the more likely it will not be considered clear and conspicuous.
  - o If the price of the publication is linked to the main offer wording with, say, an asterisk - this would make it more conspicuous.
- Merely stating the price of the publication without reference to the bundle/package could just be a statement about the normal price of the publication and so will not necessarily render the price clear and conspicuous.
- If there is conflicting information about the price, then the lowest price assessment would be taken for ABC purposes (which might mean it is free).
- The absence of a clear and conspicuous price would render the copies as free, as would explicit wording stating the publication is free.

Examples:

1. Promotion "*Buy the publication and a bottle of water for €x*".

The price of the publication is not clear and conspicuous.

2. Promotion "*Buy the publication and a bottle of water for €x*" which is accompanied by the statement "*The price of the publication in this promotion is €y*"

The price of the publication is likely to be considered clear and conspicuous if the accompanying statement is either within the main body of the promotion, or is in a footnote that is asterisked to the main body and is legible.

3. Promotion "*Buy the publication and bottle of water for €x.*" Elsewhere in promotion "*Publication is €y Monday to Friday and €z on Saturdays*".

The price of the publication is not in the promotion and is unlikely to be considered clear and conspicuous as this statement appears to be the normal price of the publication.

4. Promotion: If a publication 'ABC News' is promoted as '*Buy ABC News for €x and get a free bottle of water*' then the bottle of water is treated as a free gift and it is clear the price paid is solely for the purchase of the publication.
5. Promotion: If the promotion is '*Buy a bottle of water and get a free copy of ABC News*' then the publication will be treated as free for ABC purposes.

c) Per section 4b: "The discount or cash reimbursement must be taken into account

Examples:

1. Promotion: "*Buy publication and spend €5 and you get €1 off your publication*".

The publication is discounted by €1.

2. Promotion: "*Buy publication, spend €5 and get €1 off your shopping basket*".

The publication is discounted as it is part of the shopping basket, but it is difficult to determine how much it is discounted and will be considered on a case by case basis. In this example, using the minimum spend requirement of the offer gives a 20% discount and would seem a reasonable treatment.

3. Promotion: "*Buy publication and get €1 off a jar of coffee*". Or "*Buy publication and get the money off the rest of your shopping*".

The publication is full price, provided that the publication is sold at full price and the reimbursement does not exceed the cost of the items being discounted.

**G6. If the final rate classification is not known then estimates must be made**

- a) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption a wash through basis means vouchers are accounted for as they are redeemed. The specific point at which they are treated as redeemed is not prescribed but you should use a reasonable and consistent basis.

# SINGLE COPY SALES

## DEFINITION

A single copy sold to a consumer direct by the publisher.

## PRINCIPLES

1. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer**
2. **Copies are purchased direct from the publisher**
3. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of the publication**
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
5. **If the final rate classification is not known then estimates must be made**
6. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with the Basic Cover Price**

## REQUIREMENTS

1. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer**
  - a) The purchase by the consumer may be in cash or by other means agreed by ABC in writing.
  - b) The consumer must pay at least 10p per copy or 15 eurocents (net of VAT).
  - c) Back issues up to 12 months old can be claimed against the issue current at the time of sale.
2. **Copies are purchased direct from the publisher**
  - a) You must account for sales on an issue by issue basis except:
    - i) As an alternative where a non-daily publication is sold ,those copies sold in a week (Monday to Sunday) can be recorded and claimed as sales against the issue published in that week, regardless of whether the issue might be cover-dated to a different week.
4. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
  - a) If a voucher from a publisher controlled promotion is used the amount paid by the consumer is deemed to be the total of the cash paid to the publisher and any cash they paid for the voucher.
  - b) The value (or perceived value) of gifts or cover mounts to the consumer have no effect on the price paid for ABC purposes. However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account.
  - c) You must retain details of promotional or special offers during the reporting period.
5. **If the final rate classification is not known then estimates must be made**
  - a) If at the time you submit your circulation claim you are running a promotional scheme where the final position (e.g. the number of discounted sales via redeemed vouchers) is not known you must make an estimate of the final classification.

In this case you must adjust your claim in the following period to reflect any difference between the estimated classification and the actual classification.

- b) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption: If you are reporting on a monthly basis and the effect of not making an estimate is judged to be unlikely to affect the figures claimed by more than 2% of the total average circulation then you can account for the vouchers on a wash through basis (i.e. as they are redeemed).

## REPORTING

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. Average total single copy sales for the period for UK and ROI (combined with retail sales, publisher controlled direct delivery, employee purchase schemes, single copy subscription sales and voucher subscription sales) analysed into the following rate bands:
  - Full rate
  - Below Full Rate
  - Overseas as one figure (only needs breaking out from UK and ROI if greater than 5% of category newstrade, single copy and subscription sales).

## GUIDANCE

### G1. Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer

- a) Cash means legal tender notes and coins, cheque, credit/debit card, wireless payment systems.

### G2. Copies are purchased direct from the publisher

- a) You will need to ensure all records required to support the single copy sale claim are available for audit. This will include financial records that adequately identify the numbers of each issue of the publication sold, including an audit trail to verify the money received.
- b) For copies sold at exhibitions or events evidence you may need might include:
  - Till receipts/cash sheets allowing monies to be traced through to evidence of banking.
  - Evidence that the publisher or their representatives had a presence at the exhibition or event to corroborate that copies were sold there. *For example: evidence the publisher had booked a stand or pitch at the event, or evidence the copies were delivered to the event venue.*

### G4. The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous

- a) The price paid may be affected by promotional schemes. You should keep details of purchases and promotional spends on for each publication to ensure the publisher is not buying copies of the publication and that sales under incentives/offers are classified correctly, or disallowed as necessary. You can contact ABC for confidential advice, supplying copies of the promotional material and offer wording. The information kept may include:
  - Title/s involved
  - Issues involved
  - Duration of promotion
  - Outlets involved
  - Wording of the promotion displayed
  - How the resultant copies are claimed
  - How the promotion will be paid for
- b) Promotions/gifts examples
  - If a publication 'ABC News' is promoted as 'Buy ABC News and get a free bottle of water' then the bottle of water is treated as a free gift and it is clear the price paid is solely for the purchase of the publication.
  - If the promotion is 'Buy a bottle of water and get a free copy of ABC News' then the publication will be treated as free for ABC purposes.

### G5. If the final rate classification is not known then estimates must be made

- a) In relation to promotional schemes utilising voucher redemption a wash through basis means vouchers are accounted for as they are redeemed. The specific point at which they are treated as redeemed is not prescribed but you should use a reasonable and consistent basis.

## PUBLISHER CONTROLLED DIRECT DELIVERY

### DEFINITION

A single copy purchased by a consumer directly from the publisher for a contracted period, delivered to the consumer.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **There must be a contractual arrangement between the consumer and the publisher**
2. **Single copy per issue, distributed to the consumer**
3. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer**
4. **For a contracted period, and for a minimum number of issues (at least two)**
5. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of publication.**
6. **The price paid for the publication by the consumer must be clear and conspicuous**
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by consumer with standard rate**
8. **Reported by geographical type**

### REQUIREMENTS

2. **Single copy per issue, distributed to the consumer**
  - a) You must be able to demonstrate the copy is distributed to the consumer.
3. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer**
  - a) You can claim copies where payment is outstanding as long as there are reasonable grounds to consider them to be live, good and collectable.
  - b) Where you offer an incentive that has a value equal to or greater than the full cover price of the publication over the offer period, you can only claim these copies if you do not make the refund directly or indirectly through a retailer or group of retailers who provide a publication home delivery service.
  - c) Where you make an incentive offer through the newstrade that refunds less than the full cover price of the publication you can only claim these copies if the refund is made directly from you to the consumer and not through any part of the supply chain (i.e. not through any home delivery agent, wholesaler or retailer). *Note: The sale can originate either via direct publisher home delivery or through the retail trade.*
  - d) Where you supply goods as part of an offer, the terms of that offer must:
    - i) Not offer a cash alternative to the goods
    - ii) Not allow the consumer to redeem/obtain the goods from a retailer or group of retailers who provide a publication home delivery service.
4. **For a contracted period for a minimum number of issues (at least two).**
  - a) You cannot claim sales of back issues.
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by consumer with standard rate**
  - a) You must claim copies in the appropriate rate band by comparing the price paid for the copies against the Basic Cover Price or relevant Basic Annual Rate (standard subscription rate if there is one – see 'Single copy Subscription Sales section) at the time of sale (pro-rate if less than 1 year). Note: Ignore for ABC purposes the value (or perceived value) of any gifts or other incentives (including bundled publications or media products that are not claimed for ABC purposes).

- b) If a subscription promotion includes a gift or product that is being claimed for ABC purposes (for example a bundled copy of a magazine or access to a paid website) then the price paid must be allocated according to the following, moving down the list until one can be applied:
  - i) According to the specific terms of the offer.
  - ii) Where specific terms are not clear, by pro-rating the price according to the relative prices of the products.
  - iii) Where the specific terms are not clear and in the absence of a means of pro-rating the price paid, it should be divided equally between the number of ABC claimed products included in the sale.

## REPORTING

You will report publisher controlled direct delivery copies as follows, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. By geographical type:
  - a) UK and ROI
  - b) Overseas (only needs breaking out from UK and ROI if greater than 5% of category retail and direct sales).
2. By rate band:
  - a) UK and ROI by:
    - i) At Basic Cover Price
    - ii) Below Basic Cover Price
  - b) Other countries as one figure.
3. By combination with other circulation types:

Publisher controlled direct delivery will be reported combined with:

  - a) Retail sales
  - b) Single copy sales
  - c) Employee purchase schemes
  - d) Single copy subscription sales
  - e) Voucher subscription sales
4. By total average circulation over the period.

## GUIDANCE

### G1. There must be a contractual arrangement between the consumer and the publisher

- a) You will need to provide evidence the consumer has contracted to purchase the publication, over what period and on what terms.

### G2. Single copy per issue, distributed to a known address

- a) The copy will normally be delivered to the consumer's home.
  - i) Usually the delivery is made via your own distribution agents, but in some cases you may arrange for a local newsagent to deliver the publication for you. Typically you will need:
    - Records to prove the quantities of publications sent in bulk to agents controlling home delivery areas.
    - Rounds records that are regularly updated which demonstrate the names and addresses of individual deliverers and details of the addresses being delivered to.
    - Records that enable you to reconcile the number of copies delivered and the cash value of the copies with the wages and/or subsidies to deliverers/agents, and the final banking figure.
  - ii) If the delivery is made by a third party company whose normal business is single copy distribution (such as Royal Mail) then typically the evidence will include testing the payment of invoices and related advice notes sufficient to identify the publication, issue, quantities and date distributed.

### G3. Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer

- a) Where payment is outstanding you may take into account the following in considering whether there are reasonable grounds to consider the debt to be live, good and collectable:
  - i) Publisher's normal credit terms
  - ii) Payment history
  - iii) Credit control efforts
- b) You should retain records that enable you to reconcile the number of copies delivered with cash taken, including records of debts written and authorities for write-offs.
- c) [Where you offer an incentive that has a value equal to or greater than the full cover price of the publication over the offer period, you can only claim these copies if you do not make the refund directly or indirectly through a retailer or group of retailers who provide a publication home delivery service]. *For example: You sell publications under a canvassing scheme to the value of €10 and give a €15 shopping voucher for 'Superdrug' to the consumer. You can claim these copies because currently 'Superdrug' does not provide a publication home delivery service.*



## PAID EMPLOYEE COPIES

### DEFINITION

A single copy sold by a publisher to a current employee of the publisher under an ABC approved purchase scheme.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **Single copy knowingly paid for by current employee**
2. **Copies are purchased direct from the publisher under an ABC pre-approved purchase scheme**
3. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of the publication**
4. **The price paid for the publication by the employee must be clear and conspicuous**
5. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the employee with the Basic Cover Price**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **Single copy knowingly paid for by current employee**
  - a) The purchase by the employee may be directly deducted from their salary or by other means agreed by ABC in writing.
  - b) You can only claim one copy of one edition for each issue purchased by an employee under the scheme.
  - c) You cannot claim sales of back issues.
2. **Copies are purchased direct from the publisher under an ABC pre-approved purchase scheme**
  - a) You must obtain ABC's approval of the purchase scheme before copies can be claimed.
  - b) You must be able to demonstrate the employee has opted to purchase the claimed copies.
  - c) You must account for sales on an issue by issue basis.
4. **The price paid for the publication by the employee must be clear and conspicuous**
  - a) You must retain details of promotional or special offers during the reporting period.

### REPORTING

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. Average total employee copy sales for the period for UK and ROI (combined with retail sales, single copy sales, publisher controlled direct delivery, single copy subscription sales and voucher subscription sales) analysed into the following rate bands:
  - Full rate
  - Below Full Rate
  - Overseas as one figure (only needs breaking out from UK and ROI if greater than 5% of category retail sales, single copy and subscription sales).

### GUIDANCE

- G2. **Copies are purchased direct from the publisher under an ABC pre-approved purchase scheme**
  - a) You will need to ensure all records required to support the employee copy sale claim are available for audit. This will include financial records that adequately identify the numbers of each issue of the publication sold, including an

audit trail to verify the money has been received from identified staff members, including if taken via salary deduction.

# SINGLE COPY SUBSCRIPTION SALES

## DEFINITION

A single copy sold and distributed to an individual or organisation for a contracted period.

## PRINCIPLES

1. **There must be a contractual arrangement between the subscriber and the publisher (or their agent)**
2. **Single copy per issue, distributed to a known addressee**
3. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the subscriber**
4. **For a contracted period and for a minimum number of issues (at least two)**
5. **Standard subscription rates must be published**
6. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by subscriber with standard rate**
7. **The price paid for the publication by the subscriber must be clear and conspicuous**

## REQUIREMENTS

1. **There must be a contractual arrangement between the subscriber and the publisher (or their agent)**
  - a) You must be able to provide evidence of the contractual arrangements between the subscriber and the publisher (or their agent) including the issues/period and the price.
  - b) If you merge publications or purchase a subscription list from a ceased publication it must be clear that subscribers have made a choice to receive the publication claimed.
2. **Single copy per issue, distributed to a known addressee**
  - a) You must retain a list of individual recipients for one designated issue each reporting period (the Audit Issue - see General Principles and Record Keeping section). In addition you must be able to recreate a list for any issue in the reporting period on request.
  - b) You must be able to demonstrate the copy is distributed to the addressee.
3. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the subscriber**
  - a) The subscriber must be the addressee except:
    - i) Where the addressee is an employee whose employer is the subscriber.
    - ii) Where the addressee is the recipient of a gift subscription from the subscriber (maximum 12 gift subscriptions per subscriber).
  - b) The purchase by the subscriber may be in cash or by other means agreed by ABC in writing.
  - c) You can claim copies where payment is outstanding as long as there are reasonable grounds to consider them to be live, good and collectable.
4. **For a contracted period and for a minimum number of issues (at least two)**
  - a) Back issues up to 12 months old supplied as part of a subscription agreement can be claimed against the issue current at the time of sale.

## 5. Standard subscription rates must be published

- a) The 'Basic Annual Rate' (BAR) is the standard 1 year subscription rate for the publication, in contrast to a special price only available to a limited class, or under limited conditions.
- b) There can only be 1 BAR per country/wider geographical region.
- c) If print subscriptions are not available separately then there is no need to publish a BAR.

## 6. Reported by rate, comparing price paid by subscriber with standard rate

- a) You must claim a subscription in the appropriate rate band by comparing the price paid for the subscription with the relevant Basic Annual Rate at the time of sale (pro-rate if less than 1 year). Note - ignore for ABC purposes:
  - i) Bank charges or exchange rate differences
  - ii) The value (or perceived value) of any gifts, or other incentives (including bundled publications or media products that are not claimed for ABC purposes). However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account.
- b) If a subscription promotion includes a gift or product that is being claimed for ABC purposes (for example a bundled copy of a publication or access to a paid website) then the price paid must be allocated according to the following, moving down the list until one can be applied:
  - i) According to the specific terms of the offer.
  - ii) Where specific terms are not clear, by pro-rating the price according to the relative prices of the ABC claimed products.
  - iii) Where the specific terms are not clear and in the absence of a means of pro-rating the price paid, it should be divided equally between the number of ABC claimed products included in the sale.
- c) Where a subscription is sold through a subscription agent:
  - i) Copies can be claimed as sold at Basic Annual Rate unless they are known to be discounted.
  - ii) Linked incentives offered by the agent (with no contribution from the publisher) will be ignored for ABC purposes.
- d) You may treat subscription orders for more than one year as a sale at Basic Annual Rate if the published multi-year subscription rate when pro-rated to 1 year:
  - i) Is at least 90% of the BAR for a two year subscription; or
  - ii) Is at least 85% of the BAR for a three year subscription.
- e) If you do not publish a relevant BAR then those copies must be claimed in the lowest rate band.
  - i) An exception is where no BAR is published because print subscriptions are not available separately. In this case you must determine rate band classification by using an "alternative BAR", which is set at 75% of the annualised print single copy cover price.  
  
*For example: If print only subscriptions are not available but the print copy cover price of a weekly publication is €2, then the "alternative BAR" used in lieu of the BAR is 52 weeks x €2 x 75% = €78.*
- f) You must retain details of subscription rates and special offers during the reporting period

## REPORTING

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate (note: the term Full Rate will replace Basic Annual Rate for reporting purposes):

### 1. Average total single copy subscriptions per issue:

For UK and ROI analysed into the following rate bands (combined with newstrade, single copy and subscription sales):

- At Full Rate
- Below Full Rate

Overseas as one figure (only needs breaking out if greater than 5% of category newstrade, single copy and subscription sales).

## GUIDANCE

### G1. There must be a contractual arrangement between the subscriber and the publisher (or their agent)

- a) If you merge publications or purchase a subscription list from a ceased publication it must be clear that subscribers have made a choice to receive the claimed publication. Examples of how this may be achieved are shown below.

#### Merger

If you merge publications where there are live subscriptions:

#### Subscribers to one publication only

- You may continue to fulfil the contractual requirement of the subscription by mailing copies of the 'new' publication until the expiry of the subscription period.

#### Subscribers to both publications

- You may refund the unexpired portion of one subscription and continue mailing copies until the remaining subscription expires.

OR

- You may net the value of the unfulfilled subscriptions and allocate copies on an issue by issue basis until the value has been subsumed.

#### Purchase or transfer of subscription lists from a ceased publication

If you purchase or transfer a list of subscribers from a ceased publication, you could claim these as subscriptions if you could demonstrate:

- The amount each subscriber is 'in credit' in terms of the payments for their subscription to the ceased publication
- How the credit is applied to the subscription to the claimed publication.
- The subscriber has either
  - i. Elected to continue his subscription to the claimed publication; or
  - ii. Has been given the option to discontinue his subscription to the ceased publication and obtain a refund.

- b) As records for two or three year subscriptions may need to be provided for audit you must ensure these are still available. You may wish to ask us to seal the galley (mailing list) at audit where this might prove difficult going forward.

### G2. Single copy per issue, distributed to a known addressee

- a) Distribution evidence: This will usually be from a third party company whose normal business is single copy distribution (such as Royal Mail). Typically the evidence will include testing the payment of invoices and related advice notes sufficient to identify the publication, issue, quantities and date distributed.

### G3. Single copy knowingly paid for by the subscriber

- a) Cash means legal tender notes and coins, cheque, credit/debit card, wireless payment systems.
- b) Where payment is outstanding you may take into account the following in considering whether there are reasonable grounds to consider the debt to be live, good and collectable:
- i) Publisher's normal credit terms
  - ii) Payment history
  - iii) Credit control efforts

**G4. For a contracted period and for a minimum number of issues (at least two)**

- a) The contracted period may be a rolling issue by issue (or open ended) arrangement providing the contractual arrangements clearly intend there to be an on-going payment mandate and the sale is not promoted as a single copy purchase.

**G5. Standard subscription rates must be published**

- a) Published does not mean necessarily published in the publication but published so that they are publicly available.

**G6. Reported by rate, comparing price paid by subscriber with standard rate**

- a) [Requirement 6b showing examples ] If a subscription promotion includes a gift or product that is being claimed for ABC purposes (for example a bundled copy of a publication or access to a paid website) then the price paid must be allocated according to the following, moving down the list until one can be applied :
  - i) According to the specific terms of the offer. *For example: Buy X magazine get Y free means Y will be treated as free*
  - ii) Where specific terms are not clear, by pro-rating the price according to the relative prices of the ABC claimed products. *For example where the promotion is 'Buy a subscription to X and Y for €50' and X and Y have Basic Annual Subscription rates of €40 and €50 respectively then the €50 paid will be pro-rated in the ratio 40:50.*
  - iii) Where the specific terms are not clear and in the absence of a means of pro-rating the price paid, it should be divided equally between the number of ABC claimed products included in the sale.

Further Examples of Subscription Promotions:

What's in the subscription promotion?	How is it promoted?	Can it be claimed?	How is it claimed?	Criteria applied
Publication A + Handbag	Subscribe today and receive a free handbag	Yes	At price paid (handbag ignored as not ABC claimed)	i
Publication + Handbag	Buy handbag and receive free subscription to Publication A	Not as paid	Publication is free (could be claimed as free if appropriate criteria met).	i
Publication A + Marks & Spencer Vouchers	Subscribe for 3 months and receive vouchers for Marks & Spencer	Yes	At price paid (vouchers ignored as not ABC claimed)	i
Publication A and Publication B (both ABC claimed)	Subscribe to Publication A and receive Publication B free	Publication A Yes. Publication B Not as paid	Publication A at price paid (Publication B treated as free as promoted as free)	i
Publication A and Publication B (both ABC claimed: Publication A sub normally €80 and Publication B sub normally €40)	Subscribe to both Publication A and Publication B for €100	Yes, both.	€100 pro-rated = €67 Publication A and €33 Publication B	ii
Publication A and Publication B (both ABC claimed: Publication A sub normally €80 and Publication B sub normally €40) + Handbag	Subscribe to both Publication A and Publication B for €100 and receive a handbag worth €50	Yes, both.	€100 pro-rated = €67 Publication A and €33 Publication B (handbag ignored as not ABC claimed)	ii
Publication A and Website access (both ABC claimed: Publication A sub normally €100 but Website access is only available as a package with the Publication)	Subscribe to Publication A and receive website access – all for €100	Yes, both	€100 divided equally €50 for Publication A and €50 for website access (website access is not available either free or paid so no price can be identified to pro-rate).	iii

Publication A + Digital Edition (not ABC claimed)	Subscribe to Publication A for €100 and receive the Digital Edition worth €80	Yes	Publication A at €100 (Digital Edition ignored as not claimed)	i
Publication A + Digital Edition (both ABC claimed: Publication A sub normally €100 and Digital Edition sub normally €50)	Subscribe to Publication A and the Digital Edition for €120 (normally €150).	Yes, both	€120 pro-rated = Publication A at €80 and Digital Edition at €40	ii

b) Examples of promotional offers that would result in copies being claimed at a discounted rate:

‘Save 25% on your subscription’

‘2 years subscription for the price of one’

‘18 issues for the price of 12’

‘Buy 12 issues get 6 free’ (note: All 18 issues can be claimed as paid, with the price paid being allocated equally across them).

# VOUCHER SUBSCRIPTION SALES

## DEFINITION

A single copy sold to an individual who pays the publisher in advance to obtain the publication via a retailer, by means of a voucher, for a contracted period.

## PRINCIPLES

1. **There must be a contractual arrangement between the individual purchaser and the publisher**
2. **Copies are purchased by an individual in advance**
3. **Copies are supplied to the individual through retailer distribution via the redemption of a voucher**
4. **For a contracted period and for a minimum number of issues**
5. **There must be an auditable incentive for vouchers redeemed to be reported to the publisher**
6. **The price paid for the publication by the purchaser must be clear and conspicuous**
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the purchaser with standard rate**

## REQUIREMENTS

1. **There must be a contractual arrangement between the individual purchaser and the publisher**
  - a) You must be able to provide evidence of the contractual arrangements between the individual purchaser and the publisher, including the issues/period, the quantities purchased and the price.
2. **Copies are purchased by an individual in advance.**
  - a) An individual can purchase gift subscriptions (maximum 12 subscriptions per subscriber). The recipient(s) details must be known.
  - b) Payment in arrears is acceptable only where this is due to payment being collected by direct debit or continuous credit card billing arrangements.
3. **Copies are supplied to the individual through retailer distribution via the redemption of a voucher**
  - a) The number of copies claimed should relate to the number of vouchers redeemed in the reporting period.
4. **For a contracted period and for a minimum number of issues**
  - a) The contracted period must include issues for a minimum period of four weeks.
  - b) You cannot claim sales of back issues.
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the purchaser with standard rate**
  - a) You must claim copies in the appropriate rate band by comparing the price paid by the purchaser with the Basic Annual Rate for subscription copies (the Basic Annual Rate is the standard 1 year subscription rate for the publication, in contrast to a special price only available to a limited class, or under limited conditions – see Single Copy Subscription Sales section for more information on standard rates).
  - b) Ignore the value (or perceived value) of gifts or other incentives (including bundled publications or media products that are not claimed for ABC purposes). However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account.
  - c) If a subscription promotion includes a gift or product that is being claimed for ABC purposes (for example a bundled copy of a publication or access to a paid website) then the price paid must be allocated according to the following, moving down the list until one can be applied:



- i) According to the specific terms of the offer.
- ii) Where specific terms are not clear, by pro-rating the price according to the relative prices of the ABC claimed products.
- iii) Where the specific terms are not clear and in the absence of a means of pro-rating the price paid, it should be divided equally between the number of ABC claimed products included in the sale.

## REPORTING

You will report Voucher Subscription sales as follows, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. Average Voucher Subscription Sales for the period for UK and ROI (combined with retail sales, publisher controlled direct delivery, employee purchase schemes, single copy subscription sales and voucher subscription sales) analysed into the following rate bands by comparing the price paid with the Basic Annual Rate on a pro-rata basis:
  - Full rate
  - Below Full Rate
  - Overseas as one figure (only needs breaking out from UK and ROI if greater than 5% of category newstrade, single copy and subscription sales).

## GUIDANCE

3. **Copies are supplied to the individual through retailer distribution via the redemption of a voucher**
  - a) Given the possible delay between the redemption of vouchers by individuals and the notification to the publisher it may be appropriate in some circumstances to make an estimate of possible voucher redemptions to reflect a fair and reasonable figure for the number of sales in the reporting period.
  - b) Information that may be required for audit might include a record of current subscribers, details of schemes and the total number of vouchers received by or on behalf of publisher.
7. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid by the consumer with standard rate**
  - a) Examples of promotional offers that would result in copies being claimed at a discounted rate:
    - ‘Save 25% on your subscription’
    - ‘2 years subscription for the price of one’
    - ‘18 issues for the price of 12’
    - ‘Buy 12 issues get 6 free’ (note: All 18 issues can be claimed as paid, with the price paid being allocated equally across them).

## MULTIPLE COPY SALES

### DEFINITION

Copies purchased by a third party from the publisher, delivered and made available for pick up or receipt by consumers.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **There must be a contractual arrangement between the final purchaser (third party) and the publisher or an intermediary.**
2. **Copies are paid for by the final purchaser.**
3. **The publisher must receive a positive financial contribution per copy from the final purchaser.**
4. **Copies distributed and made available for pick up or receipt by consumers.**
5. **Claimed quantity should not exceed potential demand by the intended consumers.**
6. **Reported by consumer type/location.**
7. **The price paid for the publication by the final purchaser (and the intermediary if applicable) must be clear and conspicuous.**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **There must be a contractual arrangement between the final purchaser (third party) and the publisher or an intermediary.**
  - a) You must be able to provide evidence of the contractual arrangements between the final purchaser and the publisher and/or the intermediary (if applicable) including the issues, quantities to be supplied and price per copy.
  - b) You cannot claim sales of back issues.
3. **The publisher must receive a positive financial contribution per copy from the final purchaser.**
  - a) Either the final purchaser or intermediary (if applicable) must pay the publisher a net amount for the copies:
    - i) When calculating what price has been paid you must take into account:
      - Any reciprocal payments made by the publisher
      - Any reciprocal charges for goods or services made by the purchaser (or the intermediary if applicable) as part of the deal (*for example: for distribution or marketing*).
      - The value of any other goods or services provided free or discounted by the publisher (*for example advertising or promotional messages*). Specifically, any advertising sold as part of a bulk sale deal must be sold for at least rate card rate, pro-rated for the quantity of publications included in the deal compared to the last ABC average circulation.
    - ii) In the case of airline and international rail copies, sold for distribution in secure areas airside and trackside, it is recognised that an authorised distribution company must be used. In this scenario:
      - If that distribution company is used as an intermediary to sell to the final purchaser, the publisher may not receive a net payment for the copies from the distribution company due to the payment of distribution charges.
      - If a distributor pays a contractual entry fee to the final purchaser which is of a general basis and not specific to any specified group of publications or publishers then this will not be considered a reciprocal payment to be taken into account for ABC purposes.

**4. Copies distributed and made available for pick up or receipt by consumers.**

- a) You must be able to demonstrate that the copies are distributed and made available for pick up or receipt by the intended consumers.

**5. Claimed quantity should not exceed potential demand by the intended consumers.**

- a) The number of copies claimed must be limited to a designated cap – see Caps by Supply Type section for details.
- b) Copies purchased by a consumer, wholly or in part by coupon(s) obtained via a promotion controlled by a party independent of the publisher, can be claimed (on a sale or return basis) providing:
  - i) The Publisher has no control over the conversion of coupons into cash, (i.e. coupon redemption must be direct between the retailer of the Publication and the independent promoter or their agent)
  - ii) The final number of copies that may be claimed will be based upon the number of copies that can be proven by the redemption of vouchers and amount paid. Note: As the copies may have been initially supplied via the newstrade, care must be taken not to double count these copies in the circulation claim.

**7. The price paid for the publication by the final purchaser (and the intermediary if applicable) must be clear and conspicuous.**

- a) The net price paid must be at least minimum legal tender per copy, except for any short-term arrangement, for which the final purchaser must pay at least 15 cents (net of VAT) or 10p per copy in the UK.

An arrangement will be considered short-term unless the number of issues sold under the deal exceeds that shown below (in a 12 month period from the date of the first issue supplied):

Publication Frequency	Short term unless exceeds:
Daily	40 issues
Bi-weekly (2 a week)	16 issues
Weekly	8 issues
Fortnightly	4 issues
Monthly	2 issues
Less frequent than monthly	1 issue

Note: For other publishing frequencies the number of issues must exceed that typically published in an 8 week period.

**REPORTING**

You will report multiple copy sales as follows, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. By total average multiple copy sale over the period, analysed by geographical type:
  - a) Republic of Ireland and United Kingdom
  - b) Other countries
2. By total average multiple copy sale analysed by the following categories according to consumer type:
  - a) Airside & International Rail
  - b) Hotels
  - c) Trains
  - d) Other Publication Insert
  - e) Voucher Redemption
  - f) Sports Events
  - g) Leisure Centres
  - h) Food/Beverage Outlets
  - i) Others.
3. A breakdown of total average multiple copy sales into total average short-term and total average non short-term multiple copy sales (short-term as defined above).

4. An analysis of the total short-term multiple copy sales by issue, showing the issue cover date/identification, quantity and country of distribution.

#### **GUIDANCE**

**G1. There must be a contractual arrangement between the final purchaser (third party) and the publisher or an intermediary.**

- a) In relation to airside and trackside copies:
- i) It is the publisher's responsibility to ensure their distribution company will:
    - Provide evidence of distribution of the copies airside/trackside as detailed below
    - Understand and keep up to date with the requirements of the ABC Reporting Standards
    - Report the number of sold copies by issue for each ABC reporting period to the publisher
    - Provide access to the publisher's circulation auditor to any records requested for the purpose of checking the accuracy of any claim or compliance with the Reporting Standards and byelaws
  - ii) The publisher can appoint a circulation auditor other than their main circulation auditor to audit airside or international rail copies but this appointment must be separate from the appointment of the main circulation auditor. This means that the airside/trackside copy auditor must report separately to the publisher and ABC, and will not report to the main circulation auditor.
  - iii) The publisher's circulation auditor must have access to documentary evidence relevant to the deal between the final purchaser and any intermediary (if applicable).

**G4. Copies distributed and made available for pick up or receipt by consumers.**

- a) Evidence of distribution of the copies to the distribution company and onward to airside/trackside must be available. This will typically involve the distribution company maintaining a goods inwards and goods outwards recording system, with clearly documented management controls that:
- Is updated daily for planned and unplanned changes
  - Is reconciled on a regular basis to resolve differences between goods in and goods out
  - Identifies the newspapers and number of copies supplied to every distribution point
  - Operates appropriate and effective quality assurance processes for ensuring that the newspapers and number of copies supplied to every point is correctly stated.
  - 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.

**G7. The price paid for the publication by the final purchaser (and the intermediary if applicable) must be clear and conspicuous.**

- a) Averaging or bundling by issue/publication/customer is not permitted regardless of what the contractual arrangements state. For example: If an invoice states 5,000 copies at 2 cents and 5,000 copies at 0 cents then only the 5,000 copies at 2 cents are allowable, they cannot be averaged out at 1 cent.

## SPECIAL EDITIONS

### DEFINITION

A stand-alone edition, sold as a single copy, in which the subject matter differs from the normal edition(s).

### PRINCIPLES

1. **A Special Edition must be in keeping with the parent edition to be reported on the same certificate**
2. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of the publication**
3. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer, at the published cover price, in the UK or Republic of Ireland**
4. **Prior notification to ABC is required**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **A Special Edition must be in keeping with the parent edition to be reported on the same certificate**
  - a) A Special Edition:
    - i) Must carry at least 70% of the ROP (display) advertisements from the parent edition of which at least 70% of the individual advertisers must be represented. Any advertisers or agencies whose advertisement(s) is/are included in the Special Edition must have agreed in writing their inclusion in the Special Edition before it is published. Note:
      - Ignore any supplement (published in any Edition) which is published on 3 or less occasions in a 6 month period.
      - ROP (display) advertising does not include house advertisements, advertorials, advertisement/classified features (where advertisements for two or more advertisers are grouped under a common theme with or without editorial *for example 'Eating Out' or 'Spring Brides'*), reader offers, reader holiday advertisements
    - ii) Must carry those advertisements also included in the parent edition in the same size
    - iii) Must carry those advertisements also included in the parent edition in the same colour (unless evidenced as agreed otherwise with the advertiser or agency).
    - iv) Must comprise at least 25% editorial by volume.
    - v) Must carry a logotype/masthead on the front page incorporating the generic name of the parent publication.
    - vi) Must be the same format as the parent edition, *for example tabloid, broadsheet* and use similar paper quality.
    - vii) Must carry the same cover date/issue identification as the parent edition on a majority of its pages.
    - viii) Must have commenced distribution within 7 days of the date of issue of the parent edition. The on-sale period may differ from that for the parent edition.
2. **Cover price must be published on or inside front or back cover of the publication**
  - a) The Special Edition's cover price must be the same or higher than the cover price of the parent edition.
3. **Single copy knowingly paid for by the consumer, at the published cover price, in the UK or Republic of Ireland**
  - a) Copies sold below the cover price cannot be claimed.

- b) There must therefore be no cash reimbursement to the consumer (excluding limited low chance lottery style promotions).
- c) Copies must be sold solus. This means a Special Edition cannot be distributed with or inside the parent edition or sold as a package with other products or publications.

**4. Prior notification to ABC is required**

- a) You must notify ABC prior to claiming Special Edition sales.
- b) You must submit an application to include a Special Edition within 15 working days of its issue date accompanied by:
  - i) A completed Special Edition application form
  - ii) A copy of the Special Edition
  - iii) A copy of the parent publication marked to show the ROP (display) advertisements that also appear in the Special Edition
  - iv) A copy of the notification to retailers giving details of the 'on sale' period for the Special Edition
  - v) Copies of agreements from advertisers to include their advertisement(s) in the Special Edition.

**REPORTING**

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC certificate:

- 1. Average single copy Special Edition sales for the period.
- 2. For each Special Edition claimed:
  - a) Its cover date
  - b) Its cover price
  - c) The number of copies included in the claim

**GUIDANCE**

None.

## SPORTS EDITIONS

### DEFINITION

An extra edition sold in addition to the normal edition(s) of the parent publication to cover sports.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **A Sports Edition must be in keeping with the parent edition to be reported on the same certificate**
2. **Copies knowingly paid for in the UK or Republic of Ireland**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **A Sports Edition must be in keeping with the parent edition to be reported on the same certificate**
  - a) A Sports Edition:
    - i) Must carry at least 50% of the ROP (display) advertisements from the parent edition of which at least 50% of the individual advertisers must be represented. Any advertisers or agencies whose advertisement(s) is/are excluded from the Sports Edition must have agreed in writing their exclusion from the Sports Edition. Note:
      - Ignore any supplement (published in any Edition) which is published on 3 or less occasions in a 6 month period.
      - ROP (display) advertising does not include house advertisements, advertorials, advertisement/classified features (where advertisements for two or more advertisers are grouped under a common theme with or without editorial *for example 'Eating Out' or 'Spring Brides'*), reader offers, reader holiday advertisements
    - ii) Must either:
      - carry a logotype/masthead on the front page incorporating the generic name of the parent publication, consistent with the general appearance of the parent publication; or
      - carry a strapline which clearly and prominently indicates on the masthead that it is an edition of the parent publication.
    - iii) Must carry the same cover date/issue identification as the parent edition on a majority of its pages.
2. **Copies knowingly paid for in the UK or Republic of Ireland**
  - a) The copy/copies must either be:
    - i) A single copy sale meeting the requirements of either the Retail Sales or Single Copy Sales sections (including the requirement to publish a cover price); or
    - ii) A Multiple Copy Sale meeting the requirements of the Multiple Copy Sales section.

### REPORTING

You will report Sports Edition sales for the period as follows, which will be broken out on the ABC certificate (note: the term Full Rate will replace Basic Cover Price for reporting purposes):

1. By circulation type:
  - a) Single copy sales (Retail and Single Copy)
  - b) Multiple Copy Sales
2. By rate band:

- a) At Full Rate
- b) Below Full Rate

**GUIDANCE**

None.



# DIGITAL EDITIONS

## DEFINITION

A digital edition is an edition of the print publication published electronically as a unit.

## PRINCIPLES

1. **Prior notification of Digital Edition claims and plans are required**
2. **A Digital Edition is sufficiently similar to be considered the same product as the print parent edition**
3. **Digital Edition copies are opted in**
4. **A Digital Edition is published and available to the consumer**
5. **Digital Edition copies must meet requirements of the relevant print category except where varied by this section.**
6. **Reported by rate, comparing price paid with the print copy price**
7. **Optional metrics/breakdowns can be reported.**

## REQUIREMENTS

1. **Prior notification of Digital Edition claims and plans are required**
  - a) Digital Edition claims must be audited by ABC Staff Auditors
  - b) You must register your intention to claim in advance of the publication of the issues as part of the audit is carried out during the reporting period.
  - c) You must provide planned distribution dates in advance and notify us of any changes.
2. **Digital Edition is sufficiently similar to be considered the same product as the print parent edition**
  - a) A Digital Edition must be identified as an edition of a publication reported on the ABC Certificate (the Parent Edition). This means it must carry a logotype/masthead incorporating the generic name of the Parent Edition and be consistent with the general appearance of the Parent Edition.
  - b) A Digital Edition is published electronically as a unit.
  - c) It may be reformatted to suit the different delivery medium. *For example: changes in page size or order.*
  - d) Editorial or advertising may include electronic enhancements or be adapted to take advantage of the medium. *For example: pictures replaced with video*
  - e) Compared to the print parent edition, you can change editorial content, providing at any point in time:
    - i) A minimum of about 75% of the editorial in the print parent edition is present in the Digital Edition.
    - ii) Additional editorial, not in the print edition, can be added to the digital edition up to about 25% of the total editorial by volume in the print edition.

You must declare editorial changes when submitting your claim to ABC and be able to demonstrate they fall within the permitted parameters.
  - f) A Digital Edition may include live social media feeds, news feeds and/or video feeds. These will be ignored in relation to the editorial change requirements.
  - g) A digital edition must carry all of the ROP (not classified) advertisements (by number and advertisers) that appear in the parent edition unless agreed otherwise with the advertiser/agency.

- h) You can sell advertisements for inclusion in the digital edition only.
- i) If editorial or advertising renders the digital edition illegal for publication the specific advertising/editorial may be removed. In this instance you can ignore the relevant editorial/advertising from your calculations of changes.
- j) Digital editions and their parent edition must be published on or about a common distribution date.

**3. Digital Edition copies are opted in**

- a) The individual must have either specifically purchased the Digital Edition, or requested to receive/view it.

**4. A Digital Edition is published and available to the consumer**

- a) You must provide ABC with free access to the digital edition for every issue.

**5. Digital Edition copies must meet requirements of the relevant print category except where varied by this section.**

- a) Digital Edition copies can be claimed only for specified circulation categories depending on the sector. The requirements of those categories in relation to print copies apply to Digital Edition copies except as varied by this section.
- b) In relation to all paid categories you must be able to demonstrate the copy has been sold and at what price.
- c) If the purchaser pays less than 20% of the ROI print copy price:
  - i) You must capture their name, postal address and email address.
  - ii) You can only claim one Digital Edition copy per individual
  - iii) You cannot claim the copy if you have provided a paid or free print copy to the same individual (where known).
  - iv) For Corporate Subscription Digital Editions:
    - There must be a contractual arrangement between the purchaser (a third party employer) and the publisher for at least two issues.
    - The copies are purchased by the third party employer for its employees
    - The claimed quantity must be restricted to those employees that have personally opted to receive/view the Digital Edition. *For example: A company takes out a subscription for each of its 100 employees. If only 40 of those employees personally register to receive/view the digital edition then only those 40 copies may be included on the ABC Certificate.*
- d) Gift subscriptions, where the recipient receives a subscription as a gift from a paying subscriber (up to a maximum of 12 gift subscriptions per subscriber), can be claimed as Digital Edition Single Copy Subscription Sales as follows:
  - i. The amount paid for the gift subscription must be at least 20% of the ROI print Basic Annual Subscription Rate (BAR).
  - ii. The recipient's email address must be provided.
  - iii. The recipient is deemed (for ABC purposes) as having paid for the subscription.
  - iv. The recipient's geographical location for reporting purposes will be treated as being the same as that of the purchaser making the gift.
- e) If the purchaser pays at least 20% of the ROI print copy price then there is no requirement to provide details of the purchaser.
- f) You must retain and supply us on an issue by issue basis (or as otherwise agreed) a list of individual recipients for each issue (the 'Total Distribution List' (TDL)) which includes details of all the recipients of individually distributed print copies and all Digital Edition copies (other than those purchased for 20% or more of the ROI

print copy price). We must be able to identify the circulation category/type each copy is claimed in. As referred to above, this list should exclude:

- i) Duplicate records (i.e. each individual on the list can only be claimed once - the print copy takes precedence).
- g) You must supply us the claim for Digital Edition copies on an issue by issue basis (or as otherwise agreed).

## 6. Reported by rate, comparing price paid with the print copy price

- a) Paid digital edition copies must be claimed in the appropriate rate band by comparing the price paid with the ROI print copy Basic Cover Price (single copy sales) and the ROI print copy Basic Annual Rate (subscriptions). Note:
  - i) If there is no ROI print Basic Annual Rate (BAR) because print subscriptions are not available separately then you must use the alternative BAR (see Single Copy Subscriptions section 6e).
  - ii) You can ignore the value (or perceived value) of any gifts, or other incentives (including bundled publications or media products that are not claimed for ABC purposes). However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account (excluding limited low chance lottery style promotions).
- b) If a subscription promotion includes a gift or product that is being claimed for ABC purposes (for example a bundled copy of a publication or access to a paid website) then the price paid must be allocated according to the following, moving down the list until one can be applied:
  - i) According to the specific terms of the offer.
  - ii) Where specific terms are not clear, by pro-rating the price according to the relative prices of the ABC claimed products.
  - iii) Where the specific terms are not clear and in the absence of a means of pro-rating the price paid, it should be divided equally between the number of ABC claimed products included in the sale.
- c) If a publication's digital edition copy is sold bundled as a package with the print copy (whether for a single issue or a subscription) then the treatment is as follows:
  - i) Both the digital edition and the print copy can be included in the ABC claim if the price paid for the package exceeds the ROI print copy Basic Cover Price (single copy sale) or ROI Basic Annual Rate (subscriptions) by at least 20%
  - ii) If the price paid for a package bundling a publication's print and a digital edition is less than 20% above the ROI print copy Basic Cover Price (single copy sale) or the ROI print copy Basic Annual Rate (subscriptions) then only the print copy can be included in the ABC claim.

## 7. Optional metrics/breakdowns can be reported

- a) You may make a statement on the Certificate of the average number of additional paid digital edition copies which are not included in the ABC claim because a print copy to those individuals has been claimed. Note: Only one additional digital edition copy per issue per individual can be claimed.
- b) You may report a breakdown of Digital Editions by browser, device or other identifiable and auditable metric.
- c) You may report, in addition to circulation, Publication Active Views for the Digital Edition. The definition and requirements for Publication Active View are detailed in the ABC Digital Publication Reporting Standards. *The definition is reproduced below for your convenience:*

### Publication Active View:

1. Definition: A single copy of a publication actively opened by a device for viewing.
2. Principles:
  - a. A minimum of one page of an issue (or a day) opened/served on/to a device.
  - b. Distinct action/event by the end user to view.

Note: a single action/request which results in both the content being downloaded/made available and the automatic opening of a page of the publication is not considered a distinct action/event. A further distinct action would be required such as opening a second page.

- c. The view request must be on an issue by issue (or daily) basis.

## REPORTING

You will report total average Digital Edition copies as follows, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. By geographical type:

- a) United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland;
- b) Other Countries

2. By circulation type:

As for print copies, in the same rate bands, but separate to print copies (i.e. not combined or in the total average circulation figure):

- a) Single copy sales
- b) Single Copy Subscription Sales

Digital Edition specific:

- c) Corporate Digital Edition subscriptions

## GUIDANCE

### **G5. Digital Edition copies must meet requirements of the relevant print category except where varied by this section.**

- a) Single copy retail sales of Digital Editions via a third party retailer (*for example Apple Newsstand, Google, Amazon etc*) will be reported in the category Retail Sales (Sale or Return). Single copy sales of Digital Editions direct to a consumer by the publisher will be claimed in the category Single Copy Sales.

### **G6. Reported by rate, comparing price paid with the print copy price**

- a) The rate band in which single copy sales of digital editions are claimed will be calculated by comparing the price paid against the ROI print copy Basic Cover Price. The rate band in which digital edition subscriptions are claimed will be calculated by comparing the price paid against the ROI print copy BAR for subscriptions. *For example the BAR for a print subscription is €200. Its digital edition is marketed for a subscription rate of €80. For rate band reporting purposes an €80 subscription to the digital edition must be reported according to  $80/200 = 40\%$*
- b) Both the digital edition and the print copy can be included in the ABC claim if the price paid for the package exceeds the ROI print copy Basic Cover Price (single copy sale) or ROI Basic Annual Rate (subscriptions) by at least 20%. *For example: If the BAR for a print subscription is €100, then to claim both the print and digital edition copy sold together in a subscription package, the package must be sold for at least €120.*

# REPORTED DATA

## INTRODUCTION

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

## REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Total Average Circulation

- a) You must report the total Average Circulation per issue.
  - i) Copies claimed in the following categories will be included in the total Average Circulation figure:  
Retail, Single Copy and Subscription Sales, including:  
Retail Sales (Sale or Return)  
Retail Sales (Limited Sale or Return)  
Retail Sales (Firm Sale)  
Single Copy Sales  
Single Copy Subscription Sales  
Voucher Subscription Sales  
Publisher Controlled Direct Delivery  
Paid Employee Copies  
Multiple Copy Sales  
Special Edition Sales  
Sports Edition Sales
  - ii) Digital Edition copies are reported separately to the print copies.
  - iii) The total Average Circulation figure will be broken out into Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and other.

### 2. Actively Purchased Circulation

- a) We will report an analysis of the paid print and Digital Edition elements of the total Average Circulation which is defined as Actively Purchased, being the sum of circulation from the following categories:
  - i) Print and Digital Edition Retail, Single Copy and Subscription Sales, including: Retail Sales (Sale or Return), Retail Sales (Limited Sale or Return), Retail Sales (Firm Sale), Single Copy Sales, Single Copy Subscription Sales, Voucher Subscription Sales, Publisher Controlled Direct Delivery, Paid Employee Copies.
  - ii) Print Single Copy Sales of Special Editions
  - iii) Print Single Copy Sales of Sports Editions

### 3. Issue details, circulations

- a) On all certificates (except single issue) you must report the monthly average circulations, broken out by the following circulation types:
  - i) Retail Sales, Single Copy and Subscription Sales
  - ii) Multiple Copy Sales

### 4. Format of Publication

- a) You must report the format of the publication (for daily and weekly publications by day of week). *For example tabloid/broadsheet, newspaper/magazine by Monday, Tuesday etc as appropriate.*

### 5. Geographical Region(s) Served

- a) You must report a concise description of the geographical region(s) served by the publication during the Reporting Period.

## BASIC COVER PRICE

### DEFINITION

The Basic Cover Price is the standard published price for an issue against which circulation is reported.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **The Basic Cover Price is a recognised standard price**
2. **A cover price must be published to claim certain categories of paid circulation**
3. **Copies reported by rate, comparing price paid with Basic Cover Price**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **The Basic Cover Price is a recognised standard price**
  - a) The Basic Cover Price is the published cover price at which a single copy of the publication may be purchased without limitation and for an on-going duration, in contrast to a short term price or special price only available to a limited class or under limited conditions.
2. **A cover price must be published to claim certain categories of paid circulation**
  - a) The relevant circulation section of these Reporting Standards will stipulate if a cover price must be published for copies to be included in the ABC claim. Where a cover price must be published it must be published on or inside the front or back cover of the publication.
  - b) If you fail to publish a cover price for an issue (that includes circulation that requires a cover price to be published) then:
    - i) You must notify ABC's Group Executive Director, Standards, Operations & Compliance before the return submission deadline explaining the reasons why it happened and what steps are being taken to prevent a recurrence.
    - ii) We may request further information or documentation surrounding the omission.
    - iii) We will review the circumstances surrounding the omission and if it is decided the occurrence is exceptional and the claim verifiable then the copies may be claimed.
3. **Copies reported by rate, comparing price paid with Basic Cover Price**
  - a) Circulation sections will stipulate if copies are reported by rate.
  - b) For publications reporting on a monthly basis a reduction in cover price will not be accepted as a Basic Cover Price until it has been in place for a minimum of two complete consecutive ABC monthly reporting periods.  
Note:
    - i) A change in the cover price will be ignored for this purpose where:
      - The monetary amount of the change (increase or decrease) wholly reflects the change in a purchase tax (e.g. VAT) levied on the publication; and
      - The change is made in a timescale that is consistent with it reflecting the tax change.

### REPORTING

You will report the following, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

1. The cover price published on or within each issue in the last week of the reporting period. If there was more than one cover price for any of these issues then you must enter the range of lowest to highest cover prices.

**GUIDANCE**

None.

## EDITIONS

### DEFINITION

An Edition is a version of an issue of the publication that varies from the Main Edition (the UK and/or ROI version that has the largest circulation), usually for reasons of geography, timing or content. How it has varied from the Main Edition will affect how or whether it can be included on the same ABC Certificate.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **An Edition must be in keeping with the overall issue to be reported on the same ABC Certificate**
2. **Changes to an Edition may require a breakout on the ABC Certificate**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **An Edition must be in keeping with the overall issue to be reported on the same ABC Certificate**
  - a) The Edition must carry a logotype/masthead incorporating the generic name of the Main Edition.
  - b) The branding and appearance of the Edition must not give the impression that it is a different publication than the Main Edition. For the avoidance of doubt a change in format alone (such as a change in publication size) will not infringe this requirement.
  - c) The Edition must carry the same cover date/issue identification as the Main Edition.
  - d) The Edition must be published and distributed on or about the same date as the Main Edition.
  - e) At least one ROP (display) advertisement must be common to the Edition and the Main Edition (not an in-house advertisement)\*.
  - f) \*Note: Ignore from the advertising calculations:
    - i) Any supplement (published in any Edition) which is published on 3 or less occasions in a 6 month period.
    - ii) Any wrap-round ('wrap') providing:
      - The wrap consists of multiples of 4 pages
      - The wrap is not included in the issue's page numbering
      - The normal publication including masthead remains intact inside the wrap
      - Any publication branding on the wrap is consistent with the publication inside
  - g) \*Note: Where a supplement (published in any Edition) is published on 4 or more occasions in a 6 month period but due to exceptional circumstances copies of an issue are distributed without the supplement, you may apply to us to exempt it from the advertising/editorial/pagination calculations. *For example: a late breaking story leading to additional printing of the main section without the supplement.*
  - h) As an exception an Edition does not need to carry a logotype/masthead incorporating the generic name of the Main Edition if the publication was reporting Editions with different names as at 28 June 2007 providing:
    - i) The Edition carries a strapline which clearly and prominently indicates on the masthead that it is an edition of the Main Edition.
    - ii) You have continued to report the different Edition name since that time
2. **Changes to an Edition may require a breakout on the ABC Certificate**
  - a) Where there are any advertising changes you must report the average circulation and breakout by circulation type for that Edition, which will appear on the Certificate. We will identify the Certificate as breaking out Editions by adding the word 'Series'
  - b) Advertising changes are ignored for ABC purposes if:



- i) They are made solely because their inclusion would, in the opinion of the publisher, the advertiser or their agency render the publication illegal in a particular territory. Note: This opinion must be judged reasonable by the auditor and ABC.
- ii) The advertisement has changed but it is the same advertiser.
- c) Where the Edition is in a different format to the Main Edition *for example tabloid rather than broadsheet*, you must report the average circulation and breakout by circulation type for that Edition, which will appear on the Certificate. We will identify the Certificate as breaking out Editions by adding the word 'Series'
- d) If you do need to breakout an Edition then the Main Edition will be broken out as well.

## **GUIDANCE**

None.

## ISSUES TO BE INCLUDED/EXCLUDED

### DEFINITION

All published issues for which the majority of the distribution took place within the Reporting Period must be included except for any issues allowed to be excluded according to this section.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **All issues published in the Reporting Period must be included**
2. **Published issues that are allowed to be excluded according to this section may be removed from the average circulation figure**
3. **Issues allowed to be excluded from the average circulation figure will be reported**

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **All issues published in the Reporting Period must be included**
  - a) Whether an issue is included in the Reporting Period is determined by the date by which 50% of the claimed distribution is distributed/made available. For each component of distribution the date distributed/made available is determined as follows:
    - i) Mailed copies: The date the copies enter the distribution chain, i.e. when they are posted or delivered to a courier.
    - ii) Paid copies: The first date the copies are made available to the consumer, i.e. for retail sales the first official on sale date.
    - iii) Copies made available for pick up by consumer: The date the copies are made available/handed out to the consumer.
2. **Published issues that are allowed to be excluded according to this section may be removed from the average circulation**
  - a) There are certain circumstances under which you may exclude an issue from the reported circulation. The circumstances and information surrounding any exclusion are subject to audit.
  - b) **Daily Publications - ABC granted exclusion:** You may exclude an issue for which we have issued an exclusion note. You can apply for an ABC granted exclusion if:
    - i) Due to circumstances outside your control:
      - The planned level of distribution is achieved but is severely delayed or withdrawn prematurely from sale resulting in a shortfall in the Normal Net Sale\* greater than 5%.
    - ii) You can demonstrate there is a shortfall in the Normal Net Sale\* greater than 5% because of the occurrence of a Local Bank Holiday (only recognised regionally or locally) and you have evidence the banks were closed or had restricted opening hours.
    - iii) You submit your application to us using an ABC Exclusion Note Request Form within four weeks of the affected issue or before the audit, whichever is earliest.
  - c) **Daily Publications - Optional exclusion:** You may optionally exclude the following issues without applying for an exclusion note:
    - i) Any issue published on an Official National Public Holiday.

Note: As Good Friday is not an official public holiday in the Republic of Ireland you cannot use the optional exclusion rules to exclude affected issues from your circulation claim. However you may apply for the issue of a daily publication published on Good Friday to be considered for exclusion as long as its net sale is lower than its normal net sale by 5% or more.

- ii) Issues published during the Christmas/New Year trading period, which is defined as from Christmas Eve to the second official working day after 1<sup>st</sup> January (inclusive).
- d) **Weekly Publications or less frequent - ABC granted exclusion:** You may exclude an issue for which we have issued an exclusion note. You can apply for an ABC granted exclusion if:
  - i) Due to circumstances outside your control:
    - The planned level of distribution is achieved but is severely delayed or withdrawn prematurely from sale resulting in a shortfall in the Normal Net Sale\* greater than 5%.
  - ii) You can demonstrate there is a shortfall in the Normal Net Sale\* greater than 5% because of the occurrence of a Local Bank Holiday (only recognised regionally or locally) and you have evidence the banks were closed or had restricted opening hours.
  - iii) You can demonstrate there is a shortfall in the Normal Net Sale\* greater than 5% because of the occurrence of an official National Public Holiday. Note: Does not apply to Easter holidays - see below.
  - iv) You submit your application to us using an ABC Exclusion Note Request Form within four weeks of the affected issue or before the audit, whichever is earliest.
- e) **Weekly Publications or less frequent - Optional exclusion:** You may optionally exclude the following issues without applying for an exclusion note:
  - i) An issue published on Easter Sunday
  - ii) The issue published in the week containing Easter Monday
  - iii) Any two of the three issues published in the three weeks preceding the first Sunday after New Year's Day.

Note: As Good Friday is not an official public holiday in the Republic of Ireland you cannot use the optional exclusion rules to exclude an affected issue from your circulation claim. However you may apply for the issue of a weekly publication published in the week containing Good Friday, to be considered for exclusion as long as its net sale is lower than its normal net sale by 5% or more.
- f) **\*Normal Net Sale:** The Normal Net Sale used in the above calculations must:
  - i) Be the average normal net sale of the previous four equivalent issues (e.g. for a Monday compare to Mondays etc). Note:
    - If one or more of the last four issues are excluded because of an official National Public Holiday or Christmas/New year trading period exclusions then do not use this as one of the four comparable issue but go back one further issue.
    - If one or more of the last four issues are excluded because of an ABC Granted Exclusion then it will be counted as one of the four comparable issues.
    - Only include individually purchased sales (i.e. retail, single copy and subscription sales (print and Digital Editions) plus single copy sales of Sports and Special Editions).

If we do not issue an exclusion note we will issue a rejection notice detailing the reason for rejection.

### 3. Issues allowed to be excluded from the average circulation figure will be reported

- a) Any issues excluded from the reported circulation will be reported on the Certificate.

## REPORTING

You will report the following which will be reported on the ABC Certificate:

1. Number of issues included in the circulation claim.
2. Details of any issues excluded from the circulation claim, including the general reason for exclusion.

## GUIDANCE

None.

# REPORTING PERIODS

## DEFINITION

Each ABC Certificate has a defined Reporting Period which identifies the date or dates it covers.

## PRINCIPLES

1. You must report a continuous series of Reporting Periods on a mandatory frequency
2. You can report optional shorter Reporting Periods

## REQUIREMENTS

1. You must report a continuous series of Reporting Periods on a mandatory frequency
  - a) Once we have issued a publication's first ABC Certificate for a mandatory Reporting Period we must continue to issue Certificates for subsequent consecutive mandatory Reporting Periods (i.e. so there is no gap in certification) while the publication remains registered.
  - b) The mandatory Reporting Period will either be:
    - i) Monthly - a four or five week period commencing on a Monday and ending on a Sunday. The exact dates to be included in each Reporting Period will be set out in a published ABC Accounting Calendar.
    - ii) 6 months, broadly January to June and 6 months, July to December each year. The exact dates will be based on reporting weeks commencing on a Monday and ending on a Sunday. These dates will be set out in a published ABC Accounting Calendar.
    - iii) 12 months, broadly January to December each year, for non-daily publications (excluding Sunday publications)
  - c) Changing the mandatory frequency, if possible, is expected to be infrequent. We reserve the right to reject or impose conditions on requests to change frequency if in our view this might affect transparency or comparability.
  - d) If in our opinion there are exceptional changes to a publication during the Reporting Period that mean issuing a Certificate for the mandatory Reporting Period in full might lead to confusion or a lack of transparency in the data certified, then we may agree or require the issue of more than one Certificate covering the mandatory period. *For example if a publication changes from a daily to a weekly publishing frequency during the period then one Certificate could be issued up until the point of change and one from that point to the end of the mandatory Reporting Period.*
2. You can report optional shorter Reporting Periods
  - a) Optional Reporting Periods are whole months or any number of whole months in addition to mandatory Reporting Periods. Note: A month is a four or five week period commencing on a Monday and ending on a Sunday. The exact dates to be included in each Reporting Period will be set out in a published ABC Accounting Calendar.
  - b) For newly registered publications only:
    - i) You can report single issues until the start of the next month.
    - ii) You can report one or more consecutive optional Reporting Periods. (i.e. there is no gap in certification) before reporting your first mandatory Reporting Period.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **G2. You can report optional shorter Reporting Periods**

- a) Please contact us regarding any additional optional periods with us as early as possible in order that we can discuss fees and scheduling of audits.

## CERTIFICATE TYPES

### DEFINITION

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

### PRINCIPLES

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

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **You must report using a standard Certificate type**
  - a) The key feature of the standard Certificate is that publications must report this as a minimum, presenting set information in a standardised format.
  - b) The mandatory Certificate may be either:
    - i) A Standard Certificate.
    - ii) A Cross-Platform Certificate that reports the same information as a Standard Certificate but with the addition of Digital Edition copies.
    - iii) An Annual Certificate that reports the circulation of a publication published annually.
    - iv) An Editions (or 'Series') Certificate that reports the circulation of a publication that includes different editions.
2. **You may choose to report using an optional Certificate type**
  - a) The key feature of optional Certificates is that they offer the reporting of additional information. They usually incorporate all the information that would be reported on a mandatory Certificate.
  - b) The optional Certificate available is:
    - i) A Group Certificate that combines the circulations from 2 or more publications' Certificates providing:
      - Each Certificate relates to the same Reporting Standards
      - Each Certificate is for the same Reporting Period
      - Each publication has the same publishing frequency
      - Each publication is owned by the same publisher

ABC will produce Group Certificates from the data submitted for the constituent publications.

### GUIDANCE

None.

# RETURN FORM SUBMISSION, AUDIT, CERTIFICATION

## DEFINITION

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

## PRINCIPLES

- 1. A Return Form must be submitted for the registered product for every applicable Reporting Period**
- 2. The Return Form must be submitted by the Submission Deadline**
- 3. ABC will issue a Certificate based on the Return Form**
- 4. Each circulation claim is audited to verify it is in accordance with the applicable Reporting Standards**

## REQUIREMENTS

- 1. A Return Form must be submitted for the registered product for every applicable Reporting Period**
  - a) You must submit a Return Form for the applicable mandatory and optional Reporting Periods you have chosen to report.
  - b) We will advise you how to submit your Return Form. *For example online via the ABC eReturn website.* However if you have not heard from us at the appropriate time please contact us.
  - c) If you use ABC Staff Auditors you will submit your Return Form to us, authorised by an appropriate individual representing your organisation.
  - d) If you use a non-ABC Auditor then they must submit the Return Form to us, authorised both by an appropriate individual representing your organisation and your Approved Auditor.
  - e) Whilst our systems contain some arithmetic and logic validation processes, the accuracy of the Return Form remains your responsibility.
  - f) Estimates and assumptions must not be made on the Return Form unless the Reporting Standards allow for them, or we have authorised them.
- 2. The Return Form must be submitted by the Submission Deadline**
  - a) We will publicise the applicable Submission Deadline.
  - b) 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.
- 3. 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 first release the circulation figures for publications reporting on the 1 or 6 month mandatory reporting cycles in an ABC concurrent release of data. We publicise the date and time of this release and you must not issue or publicise any figures before this release.
    - i) If we receive a Return Form by the submission deadline but cannot certify it (for whatever reason) in time for the concurrent release we will show it as 'Certificate pending'
    - ii) If we do not receive the Return Form in time for inclusion in an ABC report the publication we will show it as 'Not reported'.

- c) We will confirm when circulation figures not in a concurrent release will become publicly available, normally 5 working days after a draft Certificate has been sent to you.

**4. Each circulation claim is audited to verify it is in accordance with the applicable Reporting Standards**

- a) The audit must be carried out either by ABC Staff Auditors or, unless stipulated otherwise, an Approved Auditor appointed by you and approved by us.
- b) Requirements in relation to the auditor and audits will be covered by the ABC Byelaws, ABC Audit Programmes and contractual arrangements.
- c) We carry out inspections on all publications that are not audited by ABC Staff Auditors. The inspections are carried out by ABC Staff Auditors and all publications will be inspected at least once every two years on average and those publications with a publishing frequency of more than once a week will be inspected annually on average.
- d) If following an audit or inspection 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/Inspection 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.

**GUIDANCE**

None.



## CAPS BY SUPPLY TYPE – MULTIPLE COPY SALES

### DEFINITION

The caps in this section set the maximum number of copies that you can claim for designated supply types for Multiple Copy Sales.

Caps are expressed as a percentage of the ‘total potential penetration’ or other quantifiable measure.

### PRINCIPLES

1. **Copies must meet the requirements of the Multiple Copy Sales category.**
2. **If the number of copies supplied is less than the cap then you must claim the actual supply**
3. **You cannot claim copies supplied over and above the cap**
4. **Caps cannot be ‘double-counted’ at a particular location already subject to its own cap**
5. **Caps may be restricted due to multiple publications being supplied**
6. **Caps are set by the ABC Republic of Ireland Council**

### REQUIREMENTS

3. **You cannot claim copies supplied over and above the cap**
  - a) If for a particular deal you sell copies at full cover price (net) and:
    - i) There is advertising/promotional content or items involved in the transaction then you may claim copies supplied up to the relevant cap (*for example: for schools up to 6<sup>th</sup> form you may claim copies supplied up to a maximum of 15% of the number of pupils*); or
    - ii) There is no advertising/promotional content or items involved then you may claim up to 100% of the publications supplied under the deal.
4. **Caps cannot be ‘double-counted’ at a particular location already subject to its own cap**
  - a) *For example if you distribute copies at a distinct betting shop outlet within an hotel then you cannot claim distribution up to the permitted cap for a betting shop and in addition up to the permitted cap for an hotel. However if you distribute at two different points in this environment you can claim up to the quantity of the largest cap at that location.*
5. **Caps may be restricted due to multiple publications being supplied**
  - a) If the distribution of more than one publication supplied under these Reporting Standards results in the cap at a particular location being exceeded (except for the transportation categories\*) then we reserve the right to restrict the quantities claimed for the publications involved. \*including airside, trains, boats, ships, coaches etc.
6. **Caps are set by the ABC Republic of Ireland Council**
  - a) You may apply to us or any member of the Council to table a proposed cap to be considered for inclusion.

### CAPS

1. **AIRSIDE (INCLUDING AIRLINES): 75% of seating capacity**
  - Total potential penetration will be the average number of seats available on the services to which the newspaper is supplied. This may be calculated with reference to number of short-haul and long-haul flights.  
In relation to airline lounges:
    - Lounges that are designated for a named airline’s passengers (*e.g. BA Lounge*) will not have a separate cap. Any copies supplied will count against the cap for the airline based on flight capacity as detailed above

- For lounges that are not designated to an airline’s passengers or are designated for two or more airlines’ passengers publishers must apply to ABC for capping arrangements.
- The cap in this category is based upon the average number of journeys per day. *For example: A fleet of 10 aircraft each with 200 seats = 2,000 seats. If the aircraft each makes 2 outbound flights per day this makes a total potential penetration of 4,000 seats. Therefore the cap (and maximum number of copies that can be claimed for that airline per issue) will be 75% x 4,000 = 3,000 copies.*
- The contract with the purchaser must include a requirement for them to advise the total potential penetration (or Estimated Passenger Capacity – ‘EPC’) and to revise if schedules or capacity changes significantly.
- If the same contract specifies that copies will be supplied at one end of the route for use also on return journeys, the EPC will be calculated on ‘out and back’ capacity, otherwise only outward capacity from the supply point will be taken into account.

**2. HOTELS** **80% of bedrooms (Dublin, London)**  
**65% of bedrooms (elsewhere)**

- Total potential penetration will be the total quantity of available rooms per individual hotel.
- The quantity of copies that may be included will be a maximum of the percentage penetration figure as an average across the mandatory ABC audit period for the publication in question (i.e. 6 months or 12 months as appropriate).
- Supplies may exceed this figure for individual issues (but may never exceed 100%), but where the average across the mandatory audit period exceeds this percentage, the quantity to be declared to ABC must be restricted to this figure.
- London refers to an address which falls inside of the M25 London Orbital Motorway.

**3. TRAINS** **50% of carriage seats\* (by day by class)**

- Total potential penetration will be the number of seats available on the carriages of each individual train supplied to.
- This figure is a percentage by day by class.

**4. OTHER PUBLICATION INSERT** **ABC certified net retail sale and/or Free Letterbox Delivery**

- Total potential penetration is the certified total circulation figure.
- May only be claimed if the host publication is distributed no later than the day following the publication’s normal distribution date.
- The host publication and inserted publication cannot be different issues or editions of the same publication. *For example: A Saturday Sports Edition cannot be claimed if it is inserted in Monday’s issue of the parent publication.*
- Auditable evidence of the circulation must be available.

**5. VOUCHER REDEMPTION** **Actual number of voucher redemptions**

- Total potential penetration is the total number of redeemed vouchers.
- Either actual Vouchers or third-party evidence of number of vouchers redeemed must be available.

**6. SPORTS EVENTS** **33% of attendance figures**

- Total potential penetration is the total attendance at the event
- Third-party evidence supporting the actual attendance figure must be available

**7. FOOD/BEVERAGE OUTLETS** **80% of seating capacity**

- Total potential penetration is the total seating capacity of the outlet
- Third-party evidence of seating capacity of outlet used must be available

**8. SCHOOLS – UP TO 6TH FORM** **15% of number of pupils**

- Total potential penetration is the number of pupils at the school up to and including 6th form level
- Third-party evidence of the number of pupils must be available. This must be renewed annually

**9. UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES** **33% of number of students**

- Total potential penetration is the number of students at the establishment
- Third-party evidence of the number of students must be available. This must be renewed annually

**10. FERRIES** **33% of number of seats\***

- Total potential penetration is the number of seats on board the boat
- Third-party evidence of the number of seats must be available

**11. CRUISE SHIPS** **65% of number of cabins\***

- Total potential penetration is the number of cabins on board the boat
- Third-party evidence of the number of cabins must be available

**12. COACHES** **50% of number of seats\***

- Total potential penetration is the number of seats on board the coach
- Third-party evidence of the number of seats and coaches must be available

**13. EVENTS/EXHIBITIONS** **33% of attendance**

- Total potential penetration is the actual attendance figures from the event.
- When an exhibition is for more than one day, the attendance needs to be calculated for each day for daily publications and for the week or length of the show (if less than a week) for weekly publications. The principle is that a publication can only be distributed at a show during its shelf life (it would be wrong to count the attendance for a whole 4 day show when only the Monday publication was distributed on the Monday)
- The calculation of the day's attendance can be done in a number of ways:
  - actual daily attendance
  - average of total attendance divided by the number of days the show covers, or
  - average of total attendance pro-rated by previous years actual daily attendance
- Third-party evidence of the actual attendance must be available. This must be based on controlled entry to the event/exhibition and a recognized auditable method of proving measurement e.g. paid or ticket entry. Publishers are advised to contact ABC to discuss the proposed method of measurement in advance of the event, particularly in relation to free events

**14. THEATRES/CINEMAS/BINGO HALLS** **15% of number of seats**

- Total potential penetration is the number of seats at the establishment
- Third-party evidence of the number of seats must be available

**15. BUSINESS/OFFICES** **33% of number of staff**

- Total potential penetration is the number of staff at the establishment
- Third-party evidence of the number of staff must be available. This must be renewed annually

**16. HOSPITALS** **50% of number of beds**

- Total potential penetration is the number of beds at the hospital
- Third-party evidence of the number of beds must be available

**17. PRISONS** **15% of number of cells**

- Total potential penetration is the number of cells at the prison
- Third-party evidence of the number of cells must be available

**18. NURSING/RESIDENTIAL HOMES** **50% of number of beds**

- Total potential penetration is the number of beds at the establishment
- Third-party evidence of the number of beds must be available

**19. MEALS ON WHEELS** **50% of number of meals**

- Total potential penetration is the number of meals supplied
- Third-party evidence of the number of meals must be available. This must be renewed annually

**20. JOB CENTRES** **80% of number of seats**

- Total potential penetration is the number of seats at the job centre
- Third-party evidence of the number of seats must be available. This must be renewed annually

**21. CAR HIRE & COMMERCIAL VEHICLE/VAN HIRE /MINICAB FIRMS**  
**50% of number of cars/vehicles in fleet\***

- Total potential penetration is the number of hire cars/vehicles in the fleet
- Third-party evidence of the number of cars/vehicles must be available. This must be renewed annually

**22. BETTING SHOPS** **80% of number of seats**

- Total potential penetration is the number of seats at the shop
- Third-party evidence of the number of seats must be available

**23. DOCTORS/DENTIST/VETERINARY SURGERIES** **80% of number of seats**

- Total potential penetration is the number of seats at the surgery
- Third-party evidence of the number of seats must be available

**24. HOLIDAY CARAVANS (STATIC)** **65% of number of caravans (1st April to 30th Sept only)**

- Total potential penetration is the number of static caravans on the site
- Third-party evidence of the number of caravans must be available.

**25. DIRECT MAIL-SHOTS** **65% of copies delivered**

- Total potential penetration is the number of copies on the mailing/delivery list
- Copies must be delivered individually addressed to a named individual on the day of publication of the issue claimed
- Third-party evidence of delivery must be available, together with a full mailing/delivery list containing names and addresses for each copy claimed

**26. BLOCKS OF FLATS/APARTMENT BLOCKS 75% of number of residences**

- Total potential penetration is the number of separate residences within the block
- Third party evidence of the number of residences must be available

**27. SUPERMARKET OR HYPERMARKET\*\* 250 copies per outlet**

- \*\*Defined as large self service food and household goods stores, likely white goods, with a news offer either within shopping aisles or from kiosks located outside check out areas. Premises will be over 300 square metres and have restricted Sunday opening hours, being the deciding factor, Tesco, Tesco Extra, Asda, Sainsburys, Savacentre, Morrisons, Waitrose etc, fall into this category

**28. PETROL FILLING STATION\*\* 150 copies per outlet**

- \*\*Defined as:
  - Having four or more pump islands/stations (each pump island/station may have a varying number of nozzles)
  - Excluding filling stations at motorway services

**29. MAJOR STORE\*\* 100 copies per outlet**

- \*\*Defined as multiple stores over three hundred square metres in prime locations. Examples include Superdrug, B & Q, Wyevale Garden Centre etc and also Department Stores e.g. Marks & Spencer's, all offering a comprehensive range of products across many categories.

**30. NEWSAGENT\*\* 50 copies per outlet**

- \*\*Defined as an outlet where the principal products are news, confectionary and tobacco

**31. CONVENIENCE STORE SELLING NEWSPAPERS 50 copies per outlet**

- *Examples might be Spar, Londis etc providing they sell newspapers*

**32. ESTATE AGENT 50 copies per outlet**

**33. 'PUBLIC SERVICE' LOCATION\*\* 50 copies per location**

- \*\*For example Council offices, libraries, 'non-venue/stadium' type sports centres/leisure centres (but excluding private gyms which are covered under a separate cap in this section)

**34. BUSES 40 copies per bus**

- Where the number of buses is restricted to the number of buses supplied to regardless of how many journeys they each do

**35. RETAIL OUTLET (NOT OTHERWISE DEFINED) 20 copies per outlet**

- Note: includes hairdressers

**36. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION 20 copies per outlet**

- A motorway services with a petrol filling station on site is treated as one outlet

**37. TRAIN STATIONS 150 copies per outlet**

- Copies placed either within a train station or hand distributed within 50 metres of station entrance(s)/exit(s).

**38. MANAGED SHOPPING CENTRE/RETAIL PARK\*\* Sum of caps of individual outlets**

- The cap will be the sum of the caps per these rules for all outlets within the managed shopping centre/retail park.
- Third party evidence of the number and type of retail outlets e.g. floorplan/letter from centre/park manager/owner must be available.
- There must be a written agreement stating how many copies are to be delivered, where the copies are to be located and what security is available for the copies out of hours. This must be signed by a senior representative of the management/owner of the managed shopping centre/retail park.

\*\*A managed shopping centre/retail park is a clearly defined group of shops together in one area, under collective management/ownership. Examples: Bluewater, Bicester Shopping Village.

For the avoidance of doubt, a High Street or other major shopping street/centre without central management / ownership is not classified as a managed shopping centre / retail park.

**39. BOWLING ALLEY 5 copies per lane**

**40. PRIVATELY OWNED GYM 50 copies**

**41. BUS STATIONS 50 copies**

- Note: This cap is for copies distributed at a bus station and not for copies placed on buses which are covered under a separate cap in this section.

\*The caps in these categories are based upon 1 journey per issue.

*For example: A fleet of 10 coaches each with 50 seats = 500 seats, therefore the 50% cap means the maximum possible claim per issue is 250 copies (regardless of the number of trips those coaches make).*

[www.abc.org.uk](http://www.abc.org.uk)



## Contact us

ABC, Saxon House, 211 High Street, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 1AD

+44 (0) 1442 870800 [info@abc.org.uk](mailto:info@abc.org.uk)

© ABC 2017 [www.abc.org.uk](http://www.abc.org.uk)