



3rd November 2017

Important changes for Consumer Magazines

This document details significant changes to the Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards, **effective from periods ending December 2017**

Aims

- Simplify without sacrificing quality
- Review level of detail
- Use understandable terms
- Introduce principle that ABC Standards do not restrict publisher pricing policies

Key changes

- Changed certificate design – clearer, simpler, more charts ([view example certificate](#))
- Introduction of new primary circulation categories – paid single copies, paid subscriptions, paid multiple copies, free copies
- Actively purchased figures now include all copies paid for by an individual
- Reduction of the number of rate bands shown for paid circulation categories
- Removal of minimum price restrictions for retail print copies and multi-packs
- Simpler presentation of free copies: Regular or sample, gross or net

Please refer to the following pages for details of specific changes.

If you have any queries regarding the changes please do not hesitate to contact ABC enquiries@abc.org.uk



1. Primary circulation categories:

- a) Circulations will be reported in four primary categories:
- Paid Single Copies
 - Paid Subscriptions
 - Paid Multiple Copies
 - Free Copies

Those titles with Membership Copies (formerly referred to as Society Copies) will have these reported as a primary category.

2. Retail sales - simplify rate bands reported

- a) Change from 4 analysed rate bands to 3
- b) Allow print copies sold at less than 20% to be reported (currently only digital can).

Current	From December 2017 period
Full Rate	Full Rate
50-100%	20% – 99% of Full Rate
20-50%	Below 20% of Full rate
< 20% (Digital Edition only)	

3. Actively purchased – simplify reporting

- a) All paid retail/single and paid individual subscription copies purchased by an individual will count towards Actively Purchased (previously excluded retail/single copies sold at less than 20%)
- b) All You Can Read Sales (Digital Editions that a consumer has purchased and viewed as part of a multi-publication package) will be included as Actively Purchased.

4. Subscriptions – simplify rate bands reported

- a) Individual subscriptions change from 5 analysed rate bands to 3

Current	From December 2017 period
Full Rate	Full rate
50-100%	20% – 99% of Full Rate
20-50%	Below 20% of Full Rate
10-20%	
Below 10%	



b) Multiple Copy Subscriptions change from 5 bands to one

d) Paid Subscriptions will be broken out as follows:

Individual:

- Full Rate
- 20% – 99% of Full Rate
- Below 20% of Full Rate

All You Can Read

Other:

- Requested Sponsored Subscriptions
- Multiple Subscriptions
- Corporate Subscriptions

e) Digital Edition Copies purchased and viewed under a multiple subscription package that have historically been claimed in the less than 20% retail category will, from December 2017 period end be claimed in the All You Can Read Sales category.

5. Retail Sales - multi-packs

a) Remove the minimum price requirement to claim multi-packed magazines (highest priced magazine plus 20% of price of any other ABC claimed magazines in package).

6. Digital Editions – simplification

a) Remove the requirement to capture the name, postal & email addresses for Digital edition copies purchased by an individual at less than 20% of cover price/subscription rate (i.e. evidence of purchase only is required).

b) Remove minimum price restriction (20% of subscription rate) for Digital Edition gift subscriptions.

c) Paid Multiple Copies - Digital Editions:

- Report current 'Multiple Copy Business Sales' category under Paid Multiple Copies. [These are copies purchased by a 3rd party and viewed by a consumer]
- Remove the existing Multiple Copy Digital Edition sale provision (never claimed), which allowed multiple copies to be claimed if sold for more than 20% of cover price AND the individual had requested & been granted access to the title by issue



7. Membership Copies (formerly Society) – simplify reporting

- a) Rename the ‘Society’ category on certificates to ‘Membership Copies’
- b) Remove the three sub-categories (Paid Optional, Unpaid Requested, Non-optional)

8. Free Copies

- a) Free copies will be broken out as follows on ‘page 2’ of certificate:

Regular

- Net
- Gross

Sample

- Net
- Gross

Note:

- ‘Net’ refers to circulation where the claimed copies are picked up or received by consumers (and you record and account for undistributed copies)
 - ‘Gross’ refers to circulation where the claimed copies are the quantity supplied/distributed (and you do not record and account for undistributed copies)
 - Certain categories, such as controlled circulation, are deemed to always be net as they are delivered to individuals. Please refer to specific category sections for details.
- b) Add new free category ‘Letterbox Distribution’ (exists in ABC Regional Standards)
 - c) Free copies will be further broken out by categories claimed:

Controlled Free	Non-Controlled Free	Monitored Free - Net by Hand	Monitored Free – Net (other)	Monitored Free - Gross	Letterbox	Free Retail Voucher	Sample Free
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- d) Circulation in the following free categories will be defined as ‘Regular’ if the quantities are broadly similar for the majority of issues: Controlled Free, Non-Controlled Free, Letterbox and Free Retail Vouchers. If not regular the copies will be claimed as Sample.
- e) For Controlled circulation requested (where claimed) the age of requests analysis (within 1, 2 or 3 years) becomes optional.



9. Monitored Free Distribution (MFD)

- a) Current requirement to report Monitored Free Distribution totals for each issue becomes optional
- b) The analysis of the number of distribution points against each audience type/location (e.g. airlines, hotels etc.) becomes optional
- c) Replace separate Method of Distribution Statement and Normal Distribution Schedule with summary overview description
- d) Remove requirement to describe the ABC as 'distribution' as opposed to circulation if more than 80% of total is MFD.
- e) To be defined as regular MFD the amount the distribution quantity can vary (compared to average of the previous four issues) increases from 10% to 25%.
- f) Remove the requirement for ABC to pre-approve systems before distribution is claimed (this is tested at audit). However still need to inform ABC if commencing MFD.
- g) Remove the requirement to notify ABC of all changes in distribution. Information must be provided on request by ABC.

10. Sample Free Distribution

- a) Remove the reporting of the distribution date field and number of distribution points from the issue by issue analysis of Sample Free Distribution. [Note: This information could be included optionally]

11. Duplication level – change way duplicates treated

- a) Remove requirement to report a duplication level [required if total of Single Subs, Society, Controlled and Non-Controlled copies is greater than 1% of total average]
- b) Introduce requirement that duplicate copies to a known individual are not permitted unless there is a category available to report them (e.g. Paid Multiple Copies, Multiple Subscriptions)

12. Retail Sales – More flexibility on accounting for voucher promotions

- a) Vouchers can be accounted for on a wash-through basis for titles on all reporting frequencies (currently restricted to titles reporting monthly only), providing the effect of not making an estimate is unlikely to affect the figures claimed by more than 2% of the average circulation.