



# CDRL

An approved alternative dispute resolution provider



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT TO CHARTERED TRADING STANDARDS INSITUTE  
(CTSI) FOR THE PERIOD OF MAY 2022 – APRIL 2023

Pursuant to the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent  
Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 (As Amended)

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### Schedules:

1. Complaint statistics in Excel
2. Systematic or significant problems encountered during reporting period

## 1. Introduction

1.1. On 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015, Consumer Dispute Resolution Limited (“**CDRL**”) which at the time traded as “The Retail Ombudsman” was approved by Chartered Trading Standards Institute (“**CTSI**”), pursuant to the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes Regulations 2015 (“**the Regulations**”), as an approved provider of alternative dispute resolution services (“**ADR**”).

1.2. Following approval by CTSI in 2015, CDRL operates the following ADR schemes:

- 1.2.1. RetailADR
- 1.2.2. AviationADR
- 1.2.3. UtilitiesADR
- 1.2.4. CommsADR
- 1.2.5. Consumer Arbitration

1.3. In June 2017, CDRL ceased to run its ‘retail’ scheme as an ‘ombudsman’ and consequently rebranded the scheme to ‘RetailADR’. CDRL has since increased its ADR schemes to also provide arbitration, with an aim to encourage a wider engagement in non-mandatory sectors and reduce consumer detriment.

1.4. The schemes within the CTSI approval form part of this Annual Activity Report. AviationADR is independently approved by the Civil Aviation Authority and CommsADR is independently approved by Ofcom. These schemes are therefore subject to separate reporting requirements direct to their applicable competent authorities. For the remainder of this Annual Activity Report, all relevant approved sectors shall be referred to as the collective CDRL.

1.5. CDRL provides ADR in respect of unresolved disputes between consumers / businesses and:

- Retailers (in relation to distance sale purchases and in store purchases)
- Supermarkets
- Leisure providers
- Airport lounges
- Supply of home fuels (i.e. oil and liquid petroleum gas)
- British Gas (in respect of non-regulated complaints)
- EON (in respect of non-regulated complaints)
- SSE (in respect of non-regulated complaints)

**Note:** complaints in relation to regulated activities (e.g. the actual supply of energy) are dealt with by Ombudsman Services: Energy.

1.6. As part of CTSI’s approval, CDRL is required under Schedule 5 of the Regulations to produce an annual activity report.

## **2. Complaints CDRL processes**

- 2.1. CDRL processes complaints raised in regard to its members and, on occasion, non-members.
- 2.2. In respect of complaints received against non-members, CDRL deals with such complaints where the non-member trader agrees to engage with CDRL and abide by its Scheme Rules in relation to the particular complaint. Many traders work with CDRL on this basis.

## **3. Statistics**

3.1. Schedule 1 contains raw data in relation to domestic and cross-border complaints.

3.2. CDRL has specifically recorded complaints relating to:

3.2.1. Complaint types:

- Not of satisfactory quality (which includes complaints relating to returns due to goods being faulty)
- Not as described
- Late delivery
- Cancelled/no delivery (which includes complaints where the retailer states goods have been delivered and the consumer claims that they have not received them)
- Out of stock (which includes general complaints about stock levels and complaints where the consumer claims the retailer has breached its contract to deliver out of stock items despite money being exchanged by the consumer i.e. issues of invitation to treat)
- Service issues (which includes customer service issues, issues with staff (e.g. allegations of rudeness / discrimination), issues with the provision of services (such as installation issues and energy provider home service complaints))
- Other (which includes 'not fit for purpose' complaints, returns complaints where the consumer has 'changed their mind', discrimination allegations, and complaints in relation to mis-selling and pricing.

3.2.2. Goods/services categories:

- Electrical goods
- Clothing
- Food (which includes complaints relating to supermarkets/dine in halls)
- Other (which includes trade and energy provider home services complaints)

## **4. Average length of ADR procedure**

4.1. The average time taken to resolve disputes (from receipt of complaint):

4.1.1. RetailADR = 156 days

4.1.2. UtilitiesADR = 127 days

4.1.3. Consumer Arbitration = 81 days

4.2. The average time taken to resolve disputes (from ‘complete complaint file’):

4.2.1. RetailADR = 113 days

4.2.2. UtilitiesADR = 74 days

4.2.3. Consumer Arbitration = 35 days

**5. ADR procedures which were discontinued for operational reasons**

CDRL has no data to report here (from the date the complaint was received during the period applicable to this report).

**6. The rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes of its alternative dispute resolution procedures**

CDRL has not recorded data on the rate of compliance with outcomes as a matter of course for this reporting period. However, if CDRL receives any reports from consumers that a member has failed to comply with the award set out in the Final Determination within the requisite 28 day period, CDRL duly follows this up with the trader and ensures that the consumer is kept informed throughout in an effort to ensure that the remedy is fulfilled.

**7. ADR entity's annual activity report**

CDRL has not had any opportunity to co-operate with any other ADR entity in relation to cross-border disputes. Annual complaint figures for May 2022 – April 2023 are as follows:

| Dispute type                       | Number of complaints (Domestic) |             |             |                | Number of complaints (Cross-border) |            |            |  | Totals Accepted |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|--|-----------------|
|                                    | rec'd                           | rejected    | Accepted    |                | rec'd                               | rejected   | Accepted   |  |                 |
| <b>Not of satisfactory quality</b> |                                 |             |             |                |                                     |            |            |  |                 |
| Electrical goods                   | 16                              | 8           | 8           |                | 2                                   | 1          | 1          |  | 9               |
| Clothing                           | 10                              | 6           | 4           |                | 1                                   | 1          | 0          |  | 4               |
| Food                               | 4                               | 0           | 4           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 4               |
| Other                              | 188                             | 65          | 123         |                | 21                                  | 15         | 6          |  | 129             |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>218</b>                      | <b>79</b>   | <b>139</b>  |                | <b>24</b>                           | <b>17</b>  | <b>7</b>   |  | <b>146</b>      |
| <b>Not as described</b>            |                                 |             |             |                |                                     |            |            |  | 0               |
| Electrical goods                   | 5                               | 1           | 4           |                | 1                                   | 0          | 1          |  | 5               |
| Clothing                           | 10                              | 4           | 6           |                | 2                                   | 1          | 1          |  | 7               |
| Food                               | 1                               | 1           | 0           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 0               |
| Other                              | 93                              | 34          | 59          |                | 11                                  | 3          | 8          |  | 67              |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>109</b>                      | <b>40</b>   | <b>69</b>   |                | <b>14</b>                           | <b>4</b>   | <b>10</b>  |  | <b>79</b>       |
| <b>Late delivery</b>               |                                 |             |             |                |                                     |            |            |  |                 |
| Electrical goods                   | 3                               | 1           | 2           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 2               |
| Clothing                           | 10                              | 5           | 5           |                | 1                                   | 1          | 0          |  | 5               |
| Food                               | 1                               | 0           | 1           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 1               |
| Other                              | 58                              | 29          | 29          |                | 7                                   | 2          | 5          |  | 34              |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>72</b>                       | <b>35</b>   | <b>37</b>   |                | <b>8</b>                            | <b>3</b>   | <b>5</b>   |  | <b>42</b>       |
| <b>Cancelled/no delivery</b>       |                                 |             |             |                |                                     |            |            |  |                 |
| Electrical goods                   | 35                              | 15          | 20          |                | 5                                   | 1          | 4          |  | 24              |
| Clothing                           | 120                             | 42          | 78          |                | 14                                  | 3          | 11         |  | 89              |
| Food                               | 0                               | 0           | 0           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 0               |
| Other                              | 197                             | 82          | 115         |                | 24                                  | 19         | 5          |  | 120             |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>352</b>                      | <b>139</b>  | <b>213</b>  |                | <b>43</b>                           | <b>23</b>  | <b>20</b>  |  | <b>233</b>      |
| <b>Out of stock</b>                |                                 |             |             |                |                                     |            |            |  |                 |
| Electrical goods                   | 0                               | 0           | 0           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 0               |
| Clothing                           | 0                               | 0           | 0           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 0               |
| Food                               | 1                               | 0           | 1           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 1               |
| Other                              | 7                               | 3           | 4           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 4               |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>8</b>                        | <b>3</b>    | <b>5</b>    |                | <b>0</b>                            | <b>0</b>   | <b>0</b>   |  | <b>5</b>        |
| <b>Other</b>                       |                                 |             |             |                |                                     |            |            |  |                 |
| Electrical goods                   | 251                             | 100         | 151         |                | 29                                  | 13         | 16         |  | 157             |
| Clothing                           | 403                             | 179         | 224         |                | 46                                  | 34         | 12         |  | 236             |
| Food                               | 23                              | 10          | 13          |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 13              |
| Other                              | 1836                            | 787         | 1049        |                | 204                                 | 62         | 142        |  | 1191            |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>2513</b>                     | <b>1076</b> | <b>1437</b> |                | <b>279</b>                          | <b>109</b> | <b>170</b> |  | <b>1607</b>     |
| <b>Service issues</b>              |                                 |             |             |                |                                     |            |            |  |                 |
| Electrical goods                   | 33                              | 13          | 20          |                | 3                                   | 1          | 2          |  | 22              |
| Clothing                           | 14                              | 10          | 4           |                | 3                                   | 1          | 2          |  | 6               |
| Food                               | 2                               | 2           | 0           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 0               |
| Trade                              | 0                               | 0           | 0           |                | 0                                   | 0          | 0          |  | 0               |
| Other                              | 303                             | 140         | 163         |                | 35                                  | 10         | 25         |  | 0               |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>352</b>                      | <b>165</b>  | <b>187</b>  |                | <b>41</b>                           | <b>12</b>  | <b>29</b>  |  | <b>28</b>       |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                      | <b>3624</b>                     | <b>1537</b> | <b>2087</b> | <b>Cross B</b> | <b>409</b>                          | <b>168</b> | <b>241</b> |  | <b>2328</b>     |

**8. The number of disputes which the ADR entity has refused to deal with, and the percentage share of the grounds set in paragraph 13 of Schedule 3 on which the ADR entity has declined to consider such disputes:**

| Reason   | No. rejected | Percentage of rejected |
|--|--------------|------------------------|
| a) the consumer has not attempted to contact the trader first                                      |              |                        |
| b) the dispute was frivolous or vexatious  |              |                        |
| c) the dispute had been previously considered by another ADR body or the court                     | 122          | 7.15%                  |
| d) the value fell below the monetary value   |              |                        |
| e) the consumer did not submit the disputes within the time period specified                       |              |                        |
| f) dealing with the dispute would have impaired the operation of the ADR body                      |              |                        |
| g) other (enquired too early, not yet complained to trader, trader not member, advice call etc...) | 1583         | 92.85%                 |
| h) discontinued for operational reasons  |              |                        |

**SCHEDULE 2**

**Problems Encountered During Reporting Period**

| <b>Systematic or significant problems that occur frequently and lead to disputes between consumers and traders of which the ADR entity has become aware due to its operations as an ADR entity</b>   | <b>How can this problem be avoided or resolved in future</b>   |
|--|--|
| <p>A lack of awareness and understanding surrounding consumers statutory rights, in accordance with the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and/or Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013 (and other relevant consumer laws), on behalf of both the consumer and the trader.</p>   | <p>It is important that traders’ complaints procedures, particularly in relation to dealing with goods that are not of satisfactory quality or delivery of goods, are in line with the rights that a consumer is statutorily entitled to under the relevant legislation.</p>   |
| <p>We are still seeing a large volume of complaints relating to delivery of goods since non-contact deliveries emerged as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Consumers are commonly raising allegations that they have not received the goods purchased or that a delivery was made with some items missing.</p> <p>Another frequent type of dispute we have seen relates to returns complaints where the consumer alleges to have returned goods due to a changed their mind, and the trader claiming to have not received the goods back at its warehouse.</p> | <p>CDRL is unable to provide recommendations on how these types of disputes can be avoided or resolved in future as we must remain independent and impartial to all disputes. We do however attempt to educate both parties within our Final Determinations / Arbitral Awards (where necessary) on what the legislation says with regard to the nature of the dispute.</p> |