

Trading Standards Working Group



April 2022

Agenda

- Welcome & introduction
- Actions from the last meeting - AD
- BEIS Update - CR
- Consumer campaigns and education update - MM & AS
- Performance and Operations update - LD
- Energy - LD
- Break
- ADR - KW
- CTSI Conference - KW
- CMA - JW
- Trader Tracking update - AD
- AOB

BEIS Update



Carol Rice

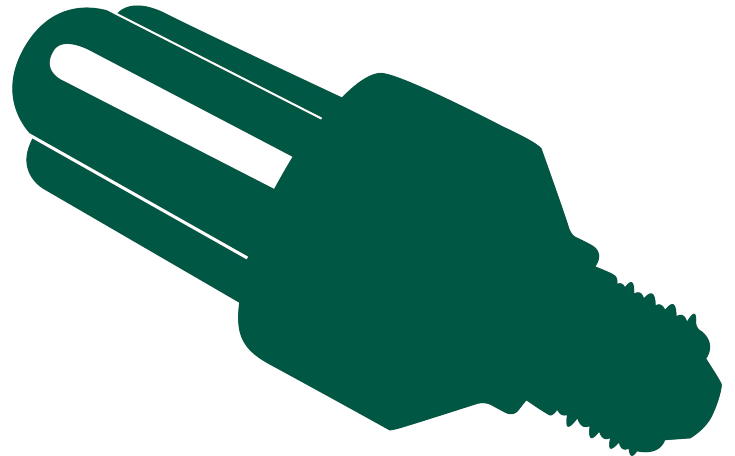
Campaigns Update



April 2022

National Consumer Week evaluation

- Overall the campaign was a success
 - Nearly 250 organisations took part
 - Coverage across local and national media
 - A potential reach of 4.5 million people on social media
 - An increase in relevant consumer service helpline cases



Scams Awareness Campaign 2022

- This year's campaign will focus on scams and the cost of living crisis
 - Within this there will be strands focusing on online scams and doorstep scams
- We want to make sure people have the knowledge and skills they need to spot a scam, and empower them to take action when they see one.
- This year should see the return to face-to-face campaigning, alongside raising awareness online and in the media



What's next?

- We're pulling together a full scams campaign plan
- We're starting to create resources, including looking at ways to make them more accessible
 - If you have any suggestions get in touch
- More comms on the campaign should be coming shortly

Education Update



April 2022

Update

- **CE content** - most our time has been spent on writing the new content for the new website. We have reviewed and updated materials as well as creating new materials. We are currently in the planning stages to upload this onto the CA website.
- **Solicitors Regulation Authority** - we were asked to deliver a presentation to the SRA about how our team delivers CE. We explained how we work within points of consumer vulnerability that also fit within other areas of CA work, such as employment, family or debt. (This can be shared if the group are interested.) This may link to further support for research on access to justice.

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- **Scams Awareness** - we are working with the campaigns team to produce materials for this year's campaign. We have a range of resources on the proposed topics that will be on our CE pages, that we will also share with the campaigns team.
- **Money Advice team** - we are now doing regular updates to the wider team to explain the consumer landscape and where consumer fits into other areas (such as debt, financial capability etc...)
- **CEA** - continuing to support the work of the Consumer Empowerment Alliance, with planning for future events. (Still tbc)

Performance & Operations update



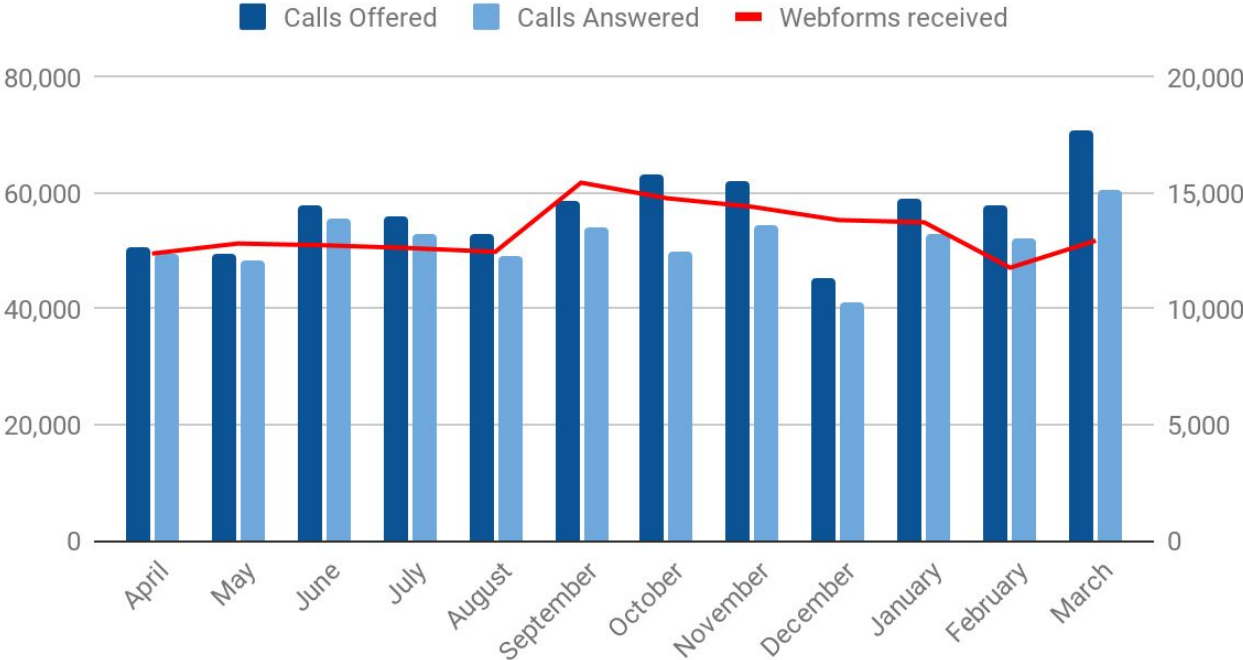
April 2022

Performance and Operations

- Overall the service handled **811,395** general consumer contacts throughout 2021/22 which is an increase of **48,516** contacts when compared to 2020/21
- The increase in webform volumes originally seen in 2020/21 has been sustained throughout 2021/22 with volumes ending the year broadly the same at circa **160,000**
- Client Satisfaction results were achieved for the year
- Quality of advice consistently exceeded KPI levels throughout the year at both a local and national level
- Referral levels remained consistent across the year

Performance and Operations

Calls offered and answered Vs webforms received



Performance and Operations

- Over the course of the year we have continued to see outbreaks of covid amongst our delivery centre advisers which has impacted on performance to a degree. Although the number of outbreaks has decreased as the year has progressed we are continually reminded that covid remains prevalent
- Recruitment and retention of staff continues to be a challenge nationally for the service. The operations team are working closely with all delivery centres to support them and understand their recruitment plans for the coming year

Trends

Complaint issue	2021/22		Complaint issue	2020/21	
	No of complaints	% of total cases		No of complaints	% of total cases
Used car	43390	7.4%	Used car	38108	8.9%
Roofing, roof sealing and chimney repairs	8512	1.5%	Women's clothing	8661	2.0%
Upholstered furniture (e.g. sofas)	8391	1.4%	Personal goods and Services	8570	2.0%
Car MOT, service and repairs	8252	1.4%	Air Travel	8260	1.9%
Women's clothing	7800	1.3%	Upholstered furniture	7414	1.7%

Energy



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April 2022

Energy

- Since the announcement of the price cap increase, we have seen an unprecedented and sustained increase in demand for our energy service
- As a result we have seen clients trying to reach the energy service by selecting the general consumer option on our IVR.
- A full briefing has been provided to advisers for how to code those types of cases and the Operations team are completing weekly case checks on the numbers
- Owing to the current situation within the industry, you may see a small increase in the number of cases being referred from our service

Break

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April 2022

ADR



Karen Wilkinson

CTSI symposium



Karen Wilkinson

CMA



Jon Walters

Getting Closer to Consumers Programme

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and Citizens Advice are partnering on a programme of work in which we will share our insights of how it feels to have a consumer issue.

This will examine the nature of problems, the impacts they have on people's lives and the ways in which they can seek to resolve them (including the help they can receive).

The programme will draw on Citizens Advice's (and in particular the consumer service's) extensive experience and expertise in understanding the problems consumers face, and providing them with clear, practical advice.

Programme pillars

The programme will be formed of two pillars, each designed to best service the intended audience:

- **On-site visits to consumer service delivery centres for CMA Senior Leadership Team** - providing an opportunity to see and hear consumer problems first hand, and reflecting with advice teams and managers on this experience
- **Deep-dive insight sessions** - Interactive workshop sessions that will encourage delegates to explore the nature of consumer problems based not only on the evidence we provide, but also their own lived experiences

These slides will explore the options relating to the first of these pillars

Site visits - agenda

10.00am	Welcome, introductions and aims of the day
10.20am	Induction into the consumer service
10.40am	Insights on consumer behaviours and problems
11.10am	Consumer issue trends and data
11.30am	Shadowing advisors (part one)
12.30pm	Lunch / informal discussion on shadowing
1.15pm	Shadowing advisers (part two)
2.15pm	Roundtable discussion
3.00pm	Service partner representative (Trading Standards)
3.30pm	Closing summary and final questions
3.45pm	Close

Site visits commence first, in early May.

First of these takes place in Staffordshire.

We are grateful to Trish Caldwell and Tony Shore for providing support for the service partner session at this initial visit, to offer the Trading Standards perspective.

We may request other partner support at further visits later in the year

Trader Tracking



Jon Walters

Trader Tracking/RAST

We introduced new functionality on 26/03/2021 and it enables Trading Standards users to:

1) Search for traders on our Flare case management system:

Add tracks or certificates to any trader record which exists on our system in real time

View tracks / certificates associated to other TS

Delete or close tracks tracks / certificates associated to your TS in real time

2) Manage your own tracks and certificates

Trader Tracking/RAST

Trader Tracking process has become more effective since the update to the portal.

It is now possible for Trading Standards to add these via RAST / Partner Portal. The feedback we have received shows that this functionality is more user friendly and convenient than requesting changes via ourselves.

Trader Tracking/RAST

We have completed some analysis on usage of the trader tracking on the portal by Trading Standards since the launch:

2019/20 = 186 trackings added, although this did include 178 tracking added for a referral pilot - Homebase

2020/21 = 88 trackings added

2021/22 = After the launch of the online portal/RAST 613 trackings added

This is a 80.26% increase

The analysis shows that the online portal for our partners has produced some great results and has enabled Trading Standards real time access to the trader data

AOB

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- Date of next meeting - 26 July 2022
- Freephone number update
- Future meetings

Thank you

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