

QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEME SUPPORT SERVICES LIMITED

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and
Information) Regulations 2015



Q A
SCHEME SUPPORT
SERVICES

Author: Adrian Simpson

Assistant Director of Consumer Policy

Coverage

QASSS covers the following schemes:

- i) **HIES** - The Home Insulation & Energy Systems Quality Assured Contractors Scheme
- ii) **DGCOS** – The Double Glazing and Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme
- iii) **HICS** – Home Improvement Consumer Protection Scheme
- iv) **MAPS** – Mobility and Accessibility Consumer Protection Scheme

This report covers the period **1st August 2017 – 31st July 2018**

Required Information

Question 1: the number of domestic disputes and cross-border disputes the ADR entity has received

Answer: QASSS received 1117 Complaints

Question 2: the types of complaints to which the domestic disputes and cross-border disputes relate

Answer:

- Issuing of paperwork relating to RHI/FIT
- Mis-selling
- Product failure
- Workmanship
- Deposit return

Question 3: A description of any 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.

Answer: Communication issues with member – *Members failing to properly communicate with consumers through not keeping them informed of progression of complaint*

Issuing of paperwork relating to Renewable Heat Incentive and the Feed In Tariff Scheme – *To claim Government subsidies for renewable heating measures consumers require an installer to provide specified paperwork*

Mis-selling – *Installers can provide consumer's with incorrect information before contract, whether deliberately or by accident.*

Product failure – *Goods supplied by the installer or as part of a contract develop a fault*

Workmanship - *Work is not carried out using reasonable care and skill*

Deposit return – *Members failing to give money back when a consumer cancels a contract*

Question 4: Any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how the problems referred to in [question 3] could be avoided or resolved in future, to raise traders' standards and to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices?

Answer: All members are subject to a code of practice for each scheme. Each of the codes of practice detail what members obligations are to consumers.

This year every customer facing member of staff for the HIES code of practice will be undertaking training on the HIES code of practice. We will monitor the results of this and will consider expanding the training to the other schemes.

To reduce mis-selling in the energy sector we work in partnership with Certi-fi Schemes Limited, a separate legal entity who operate to ISO IEC 17065:2012 for which they are currently undergoing UKAS accreditation. Certi-fi operate the Energy Performance Validation Scheme (EPVS), which currently checks every performance estimate given by its Members. At the moment EPVS is compulsory for some HIES Members. Others choose to join the Scheme to increase sales by demonstrating to their customers that their performance calculations and system sizing have been independently checked.

Question 5 : The number of disputes which the ADR entity has refused to deal with, (this will be the number of refused case. This number should include the number of cases withdrawn by the consumer or trader). Provide the percentage share of the grounds set out in paragraph 13 of Schedule 3 on which the ADR entity has declined to consider such disputes; The % share needs to be against the following reasons to refuse:

- a) prior to submitting the complaint to the body, the consumer has not attempted to contact the trader concerned in order to discuss the consumer's complaint and sought, as a first step, to resolve the matter directly with the trader;*
- (b) the dispute is frivolous or vexatious;*
- (c) the dispute is being, or has been previously, considered by another ADR entity or by a court;*
- (d) the value of the claim falls below or above the monetary thresholds set by the body;*
- (e) the consumer has not submitted the complaint to the body within the time period specified by the body, provided that such time period is not less than 12 months from the date upon which the trader has given notice to the consumer that the trader is unable to resolve the complaint with the consumer;*
- (f) dealing with such a type of dispute would seriously impair the effective operation of the body.*

Answer: 0% disputes have been rejected, HIES will consider complaints that occurred before the member joined HIES and this year we dealt with 11 complaints of this nature.

Question 6: the percentage of alternative dispute resolution procedures which were discontinued for operational reasons and, if known, the reasons for the discontinuation

Answer: 1.4% - due to the installer ceasing to trade and the dispute was then to an insurance claim as part of the HIES promise that no consumer will be left disadvantaged when using a HIES member

Question 7: The average time taken to resolve domestic disputes and cross-border disputes

Answer : 8.48 working days

Question 8 : The rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes of the alternative dispute resolution procedures

Answer: 99.7%

Question 9: The co-operation, if any, of the ADR entity within any network of ADR entities which facilitates the resolution of cross-border disputes.

Answer : We do not belong to any ADR networks relating to cross-border disputes

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Adrian Simpson, Assistant Director of Consumer Policy