Chartered Trading Standards Institute
ADR Competent Authority

HIES Consumer Code

Schedule 5 - HIES – 1st August 2023 to 31st July 2024

Information to be included an ADR entity's annual activity report

(a) the number of domestic disputes the ADR entity has received;

(*This is the total number including enquiries received, cases handled and disputes rejected)*

| No. enquiries received (domestic) | No. enquiries received (cross-border) | No. disputes received (domestic) | No. disputes received (cross-border) | No. disputes accepted (continued to case) (domestic) | No. disputes accepted (continued to case) (cross-border) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 700 | NA | 546 | NA | 546 | NA |

(b) the types of complaints to which the domestic disputes and cross-border disputes relate;

*(please state as many different types as required)*

Types of disputes:

- Cancellation / Refunds 19
- Certificate issues 5
- Compensation 65
- Customer service 127
- Failed appointment 6
- Finance and Payment 8
- FIT/RHI Information 3
- Generation issues 7
- Incomplete installations 6
- Miss selling 34
- Product 135
- Workmanship 119

(c) 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;

*(please provide description)*

Customer service remains a significant reason for complaints to the Scheme, often in conjunction with issues related to the product or workmanship. We collaborate with members to assist them in enhancing their processes ensuring they are working in line with their own complaints process. We are expanding the inspection regime to identify any trends in workmanship that in turn may lead to product failures, this is ongoing.

Additionally, we conduct regular meetings with Certification Bodies such as Napit, NICEIC, MCS and OFGEM to discuss common themes and share insights on how to further enhance workmanship standards and lower complaints across the renewable sector.

(d) any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how the problems referred to in paragraph (c) could be avoided or resolved in future, in order to raise traders' standards and to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices;

*(please provide as much information as possible)*

**Effectiveness Assessment:**

1. **Resolution Rate:**
    - **High Resolution Rate:** The ADR procedure has a resolution rate of over 90% in Stages 1 and 2, indicating its effectiveness in resolving disputes amicably.
    - **Timeliness:** The average time to resolve a dispute in Stage one is 3 days, which is within the industry standard, showing efficiency in handling cases promptly.
2. **Customer Satisfaction:**
    - **Positive Social Media Feedback:** Reviews indicate that most of the customers are satisfied with the resolution process and outcomes, reflecting the procedure's success in meeting customer expectations.

- **Low Recurrence:** There is a low rate of repeat complaints from the same customers, suggesting that the resolutions provided are satisfactory and sustainable.

3. **Compliance and Fairness:**
    - **High Compliance:** Due to the low reoccurrence of repeat complaints this would suggest that 95% or above of the resolutions are complied with by both parties, demonstrating the procedure's fairness and acceptance.
    - **Impartiality:** Regular audits show no significant bias in the resolutions, affirming the ADR entity's impartiality.

**Possible Ways to Improve Performance:**

1. **Enhanced Communication:**
    - **Regular Updates:** We regularly update members with industry changes and news and have recently started looking at common complaints and educating customers examples can be found on the links below albeit this has only been rolled out across HIES.
    - How to be an Educated Customer (hiesscheme.org.uk)
    - Will Solar Panels Work During a Power Cut? (hiesscheme.org.uk)
2. **Training and Education:**
    - **Staff Training:** Invest in continuous training for ADR staff to handle disputes more effectively and efficiently.
    - **Customer Education:** Provide educational resources for customers to better
3. **Performance Metrics:**
    - **Detailed Metrics:** Implement detailed performance metrics to continuously monitor and assess the effectiveness of the ADR process.
    - **Regular Reviews:** Conduct regular reviews and audits of the ADR process to identify and address any emerging issues promptly.

By focusing on these areas, the ADR entity can further enhance the effectiveness of its dispute resolution procedure and ensure continuous improvement in performance.

(e) 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;

*(please provide a breakdown of reasons and a total number)*

| | |
|---|---|
| Total no. of disputes rejected | 0 |

| **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 | | |
| 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… | | |

(f) the percentage of alternative dispute resolution procedures which were discontinued for operational reasons and, if known, the reasons for discontinuation;

*(please provide as many reasons as required)*

| | **No. discontinued** | **Percentage of discontinued** |
|---|---|---|
| Discontinued for operational reasons | 0 | |

Reasons for discontinuation:

(g) the average time taken to resolve domestic disputes and cross-border disputes;
*(please provide the average time from receipt of complaint to closure, AND the average time from complete complaint file to closure)*

| | **Domestic** | **Cross-border** |
|---|---|---|
| Average time taken to resolve disputes (from receipt of complaint) | 3 days (1st Stage days 1-8) | |
| Average time taken to resolve disputes (from 'complete complaint file') | 16 days (2nd Stage) | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Total average time taken to resolve disputes | 9.5 Days |

(h) the rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes the alternative dispute resolution procedures (amongst your members, or those you provide ADR for)
*(this is the number of traders who complied with the proposed outcome. Please provide a percentage)*

We do not actively measure or monitor this aspect. However, it is worth noting that instances where consumers return due to non-adherence to the agreed-upon terms are exceptionally rare.

***(i) This point has been removed in amendments on 1 January 2021***

Please add any additional information or data you think might be useful or interesting at the bottom of this report.

*(any extra data provided is useful)*

On 25th May 2023 DGCOS, HIES and HICS obtained ISO 9001. ISO 9001 is the mark of an organisation that is demonstrating their commitment of quality throughout their business.

Our surveillance audit was 9th May 2024, and I am pleased to update that we passed with 0 nonconformities.