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| **Title** | **AOS Status Report** | | | |
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| **Director** | **Chief Operating Officer** | | | |
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| **Date** | **9 February 2017** | | | |
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| This report provides an overview of the present activities of the BPA Staff Executive and describes the present status of current AOS Programmes and Initiatives. **It is for Information Only.** | | | | |
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| **Scheme Status** | **October 2016** | **November 2016** | **December 2016** | |
| No of Members | 113 | 114 | 114 | |
| No Members Leaving Scheme | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| No new members in application | 8 | 8 | 6 | |
| No of Investigation requests | 88 | 77 | 44 | |
| No of enquiry requests | 355 | 469 | 334 | |
| No of Sanctions given  No of Suspended Sanctions | 0  0 | 0  0 | 0  0 | |
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**Executive Summary**

**AOS Membership** – As of today there are 113 AOS members. IPC Membership currently stands at 81.

**Mystery Shoppers –** Mystery Shopper visits are continuing and we have now introduced tailored mystery shop visits whereby if we receive 5 or more complaints for one site, we will send an Area Manager to the site to check compliance.

**POPLA Cases** - Ombudsman Services have received 65,042 appeals since September 2015, of which 18,554 (28%) have been withdrawn, and have made 41,646 decisions of which 66.6% have been in favour of the operator.

**Membership Numbers**

At the time of writing this report there are 113 members of the AOS Scheme having had Northern Parking Services and One Parking return to the BPA from the IPC and the addition of, a number of new members. The IPC has 81 members and we have only lost 3 AOS Members to the IPC since May 2016. The overall ATA market has remained static during the last couple of years with AOS membership remaining static and IPC membership growth slowing during 2016 – while there will always be new organisations joining the sector, we do expect further consolidation among the larger corporate members.

The graph below indicates the proportionate market share between the BPA and the IPC when points are awarded dependant on operator size – 1 point for Band 1 up to 8 points for Band 8. There is also an analysis of the market share for the larger operators, Bands 5-8.

It shows that the rate of decline for AOS members is far slower across Bands 5-8 than with all Bands – conversely the rate of growth for the IPC is slower among larger members. It should be noted that the rate in decline of the AOS membership has stabilised in recent months with a subsequent slowing in the growth rate for the IPC.

**January / February SALE**

In an effort to attract Members to us from the IPC, we have introduced a short-term initiative whereby we will waive the AOS and IAS Joining Fees for any organisation who expresses an interest in joining during January and February – this offer can be excersised at any time. This has seen 4 organisations respond positively so far.

**Investigation Requests**

Investigation requests have increased recently and we are currently have between 50 and 60 active each week and anticipate an increase in logging of investigations. Team focus remains on resolving cases within 28 days to meet the required service standard set. Currently we have only 6 cases older than 28 days – the service standard is no more than 20.

The graph below shows the trend in the total number of correspondence received from the start of 2014. The figures show there has been a 15% increase in correspondence received in 2016 compared to the amount of correspondence dealt with in 2015 (it should be noted that October 2015 figures were inflated by the change in POPLA service provider)

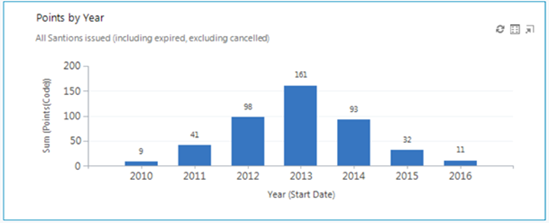
**Code of Practice**

The project to review the Code remains on track with a number of meetings having taken place. The next stage is to take the proposals from the Review Group to the PDS Board in March for their approval. Following that there will be a period of consultation with all stakeholders, feedback will be analysed and then final proposals taken back to the PDS Board for further approval. At that point a date for implementation will be agreed and Officers will work with Members to ensure that they are able to comply.

**Sanctions Scheme**

There are currently 4 Operators with a total of 7 Active and 0 Suspended Sanction Points on their license.

The graph below shows the number of Sanction Points issued year on year. You will note the increase from 2010 to 2013. It is worth noting, POPLA was introduced in October 2012 and since then, the number of Sanctions Points issued to our Members has decreased. One of the objectives for POPLA was to raise standards and I believe one of the reasons for the decrease in Sanction Points issued since POPLA was introduced shows our Members have improved their practices and raised standards.



**Staff Changes**

We now have a full compliment of 3 Officers, having just appointed Tom Briody. Tom joined the team on December 12th 2016 and is progressing very well. Each Officer has their own ‘specialist’ areas, however all team members are expected to answer 80% of any queries with their ‘specialist’ colleagues being able to answer the remaining 20%. This provides greater resilience within in the team and assists with the overall aim to collaborate within the AOS and cross departmentally.

The appointment of Tom will free up time for Jill Cavanagh as Customer Services Manager to progress her duties in her substantive role.

**External Audits**

The BPA team of qualified auditors continue to conduct annual external audit visits of members. We are looking at introducing further checks of how cases regarding randomly chosen VRM’s were processed by operators.

**Mystery Shopper Signage Checks**

The Area Managers are visiting sites managed by Members. Sites are randomly selected and a check of the signage at each site is carried out. These checks are to focus on the quantity and quality of the internal signage, signage provided for disabled motorists, bay markings and entrance signage.

If the site is compliant in accordance with our signage requirements, the Area will write to the Operator concerned advising such. If any amendments are needed, the requirements will be sent to the AOS team and administered by Tom and sent to the Operator. Once amendments have been made and the site/signage is compliant a letter of confirmation is sent to the Operator. The initial target was 200 site visits – at this time the Area Managers have completed 204 thus far up to end of 2016 with 31 requiring further investigation.

**‘Tailored’ Mystery Shop Visits**

The CRM will now report on how many complaints we receive per site. We have a report each week to review and if we receive 5 or more complaints about one location, we will send an Area Manager there to review compliance. The Area Manager will then provide a report to the Customer Services Manager who can deal with any issues before the complaints increase or escalate.

These site visits are to be done in conjunction with the mystery shops but are more specific to allow us to deal with complaints before they escalate and help provide feedback on the compliance of Operator sites.

**Service Standards**

The Service Standards have been reviewed and subsequently updated.

A call monitoring system has been introduced to assist in monitoring Service Standards. Training by Offices Services on this system is yet to be completed.

New Service Standards being considered are as follows:

* **Investigations for MP’s** require a response from the Operator within 7 days – this is currently in operation and we are in the main receiving a response within this timescale.
* **‘Tailored’ Mystery Shops** – a report will be reviewed each week and we will be able to identify any site where we have received 5 or more complaints and send an AM to visit to check compliance.
* **Case Correspondence/Completion** - Once an investigation has been closed, we must let the Operator know within 1 working day.
* **Member enquiries** must be responded to within 2 working days.
* **AOS Audits** – there should be no more than 10 active audits incomplete longer than 28 days.
* **Booked AOS Audits** – The audit must be booked within 8 weeks of the due date.

**Public Facing Phone Numbers for Operators**

We have contacted each AOS member to request a public facing telephone numbers to assist in dealing with enquiries and complaints from the motorist. Numbers have been provided with the exception of one Operator not providing a number.

A total of thirteen numbers provided are not answered by a human and diverts to a voice message or auto payment line. This is being followed up by Esme to ensure a public facing number is provided by ALL operators. All staff and CRM will be updated when complete.

The request for a public facing phone number has been added to the pre-compliance checklists to ensure all new members provide a number going forward.

**POPLA – Ombudsman Services**

Ombudsman Services have received 65,042 appeals since September 2015, of which 18,554 (28%) have been withdrawn, and have made 41,646 decisions of which 66.6% have been in favour of the operator.

The initial POPLA Portal enhancements took place as planned, and now hosts a new range of facilities previously absent which will improve the user experience significantly. The ability for motorists to view operator evidence is expected to be added shortly.

**Adjourned POPLA ‘Byelaw’ cases**

POPLA has decided to lift the adjournment on all cases on which the parking operator has asked the motorist to make a payment in respect of alleged breach of Byelaws. They will now commence assessment of these cases – c.1300. Operators have been given the opportunity to effect a ‘late withdrawal’ for which a £6.50 fee will be charged.

**POPLA Work in Progress (WIP) and Genuine Pre-estimate of Loss Cases**

There were 2 categories of outstanding cases left over from London Councils.  These are identified as ‘normal work in progress (WIP)’ and genuine pre-estimate of loss (GPEOL) cases.  There were around 800 appeals not yet decided in the WIP category and 3394 cases adjourned due to the GPEOL issue relating to the Parking Eye vs Beavis Case determined at the Supreme Court.   A firm of solicitors in the Midlands called Wright Hassall (WH) were appointed to deal with the ‘additional’ cases. All the determinations have now been concluded and this project is now concluded.

**ISPA**

The BPA Board have taken a decision not to fund ISPA after March 2017 and therefore the Panel will cease activity at that point. Officers will work with ISPA to ensure that any ongoing projects are completed.

**Parking in the media**

This month there were 21 mentions – 6 print clips, 4 radio broadcasts and 11 online articles. Penalties top the list followed by private parking and railways. There were 680 articles about parking in total, an increase of 156 on November.

**Notable actions from political monitoring this month:**

Political monitoring by Vuelio allows the team to receive specific and relevant information. This also reduces the time required for filtering emails from the media in-box.

* This month we picked up, through Vuelio, [Government plans](file:///C:\Users\joanna.a\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\NDNJFCGM\•%09https:\www.gov.uk\government\news\new-measures-to-protect-consumers-from-debt-claims) to crackdown on unresolved debts, including assessment of the role of parking companies and examine how drivers are informed of fines. Starting with roundtables and a consultation. We have followed up with the Ministry of Justice to ensure we are invited to the roundtables and included in the conversation.

**PR and publicity**

The PR Office and insight Consulting Group are overseeing a new campaign for the start of 2017. The campaign will seek to educate motorists on what to look out for in car parks with a focus on emerging technology which is assisting in finding and paying for parking. This will help raise visibility of the BPA and its relevant schemes amongst key target audiences – media, consumers, Parliamentarians and key partners.

This will be the last campaign of the current Contract which runs until end of March 2017. We have now given PRO and ICG notice and Officers will be discussing internally next steps and specific needs with a proposal going forward to the January PAB.

**Meetings and events**

9/12 – PT – WAMITAB

12/12 – KR – Scot Rail

12/12 – KR – Rail Delivery Group

16/12 – DS – Royal Mint £1 Communications Group

Regular meetings are planned and diarised with Government Departments and Agencies including ICO, DCLG, DfT, BIS, DVLA, National Trading Standards Board, Payments UK, CAB and All-Party Parliamentary Group on Debt & Personal Finance, Better Regulation Delivery Office – Business Reference Panel, Bank of England Polymer Banknotes Industry Forum and Royal Mint Industry Readiness Working Group, Smart Cities APPG, Transport Technology Forum.

**Know Your Parking Rights (KYPR)**

Over 70K people have visited the site since its launch in November 2014 and over 149K pages have been viewed.  
  
Members are encouraged to publicise the website using the logo. Of the top 10 referring sites, two are local authority members and five private parking operators. Over 25K referrals have been via the BPA website, with Smart Parking and ParkingEye the next biggest referrers. The top 10 referring sites are as follows:

1. britishparking.co.uk

2. smartparking.com

3. parkingeye.co.uk

4. swansea.gov.uk

5. parkingticketing.co.uk

6. ptlappeals.co.uk

7. sandwell.gov.uk

8. site-auditor.online

9. rank-checker.online

10. napier.zatappeal.com

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