



# ADR Biennial Report

July 2021 – June 2023



In June 2015, Flexible Resolution Services (FRS) – previously Ombudsman Services – was approved by the Chartered Institute of Trading Standards (CTSI) to provide alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services under the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 (the Regulations).

As part of CTSI's approval, under Schedule 6 of the Regulations, FRS is required to produce a biennial activity report containing the information below:

**a) The number of disputes received by the ADR entity and the types of complaints to which the disputes related.**

FRS received 1,759 disputes during the reporting period. A dispute is defined as a request from a consumer notifying FRS of an unresolved complaint for investigation.

Of these cases, 812 fell within scope of what FRS can deal with.

The following table confirms the types of complaints referred to FRS within the reporting period that came within scope of the service:

Complaint Type	Number of Complaints	% of Complaints
Claims	216	26%
Repair	244	30%
Quality of Service	135	17%
Sales	75	9%
Other	142	18%

**b) The percentage share of alternative dispute resolution procedures which were discontinued before an outcome was reached.**

The number of complaints that were discontinued by FRS during the reporting period was 889. In addition, 58 consumers decided to withdraw their complaints from the process.

The following table shows the percentage share for disputes that were discontinued, by reason type, within the reporting period:

Reason for refusal	% share
The consumer submitted an incomplete application to FRS which could not be taken forward owing to the lack of information	100%
The consumer was not a 'customer' of the trader	0%
The subject matter of the dispute did not fall within the scope of what FRS can consider under its scheme rules	0%
The trader that the consumer is complaining about was not registered with FRS as its ADR entity	0%

**c) The average time taken to resolve the disputes which the ADR entity has received.**

The average time taken to resolve disputes within the reporting period was 28 days.

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

Data to confirm the rate of compliance is not currently available.

**e) Any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how any systemic or significant problems that occur frequently and lead to disputes between consumers and traders could be avoided or resolved in future.**

In instances where a boiler has been written off, the automatic process for the trader is to have their own repair agent visit the property to survey and provide a quotation. In our experience, these quotes are usually really expensive and when the consumer complains to the trader, they will then offer the consumer the opportunity to have their own gas safe registered engineer provide a quote to supply and fit a boiler. We consider that if the trader makes the consumer aware of this option when the boiler is initially written off, then this would reduce the number of complaints and unnecessary contacts between the consumer and trader.

**f) Where the ADR entity is a member of any network of ADR entities which facilitates the resolution of cross-border disputes, an assessment of the effectiveness of its co-operation in that network.**

FRS has not needed to co-operate with other ADR entities, in relation to this scheme.

**g) Where the ADR entity provides training to its ADR officials, details of the training it provides.**

FRS supports continuous development of its ADR officials.

In the reporting period, training has been provided to new joiners in this area providing background to the subject matter and approaches to disputes.

**h) An assessment of the effectiveness of an alternative disputes resolution procedure offered by the ADR entity and of possible ways of improving its performance.**

Data to confirm the rate of compliance is not currently available. However, FRS follows a process to pursue any trader that fails to implement a binding decision within the required timeframe. FRS will review the membership status of any trader that fails to comply with a binding decision, with a view to terminating that membership.



**Flexible  
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### Getting in touch

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### Additional support:

We are committed to treating everybody with fairness and respect. Our commitment includes providing additional support to consumers needing help to access our services fully.

Please see below some of the services we can help with:

- Speaking to us in a foreign language & translation services
- Visual impairments (including Braille)
- Hearing impairments (including Sign language)
- Accessibility

If you need anymore information or would like to request access to any of the services above, you can do this over the phone, online or in writing.

[www.flexibleresolutionservices.co.uk](http://www.flexibleresolutionservices.co.uk)