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News Release

## All parts of supply chain now say OFT should think again

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Welcoming today's response from the National Federation of Retail Newsagent's (NFRN) to the Office of Fair Trading's (OFT) consultation document on newspaper and magazine distribution, the Periodical Publishers Association (PPA) said today that major groupings on all sides now agreed that the OFT should reconsider its opinion.

Said PPA chief executive Ian Locks: "It is extremely welcome that the NFRN has agreed with our analysis that magazines are time sensitive and that there is an inextricable link between the distribution of newspapers and magazines which, by and large, are distributed by the same wholesalers, in the same vehicles at the same time."

"We welcome the fact that the NFRN has asked the OFT to look again at the proposals the OFT put forward on 19 May to separate the distribution of newspapers and magazines for the first time. This call follows submissions from newspaper and magazine publishers, wholesalers, retailers and other concerned organisations expressing concern over the OFT's conclusions."

Immediate past-president of the NFRN, Peter Wagg, said in a statement on behalf of the NFRN: "Splitting newspaper and magazine distribution by creating different rules could be disastrous. This would undoubtedly add further cost to distribution which would be passed on by wholesalers to retailers. Rather than preserve the network of independent newsagents for the benefit of consumers as a whole, this draft proposal could have just the opposite effect.

Speaking at a press conference today, 22 June, David Daniel, Trade Relations Manager, NFRN said: "This provides opportunity for some parts of retail to exploit the supply chain to the detriment of independent retailers."

PPA believes that absolute territorial protection should exist equally as well for magazines as for newspapers and has made this case strongly in its recent submission to the OFT, focusing

on the time sensitivity of the product and the discrimination between publishers it believes would be created.

PPA has also argued strongly that without similar protection for magazines as for newspapers, the supply chain would inevitably unravel, threatening the future of a free and diverse Press for the benefit of consumers as well as the democratic process as a whole. Newspapers are dependent on magazines to retain a cost-efficient route to market.

Like the NFRN, PPA has made it clear that the frame of reference is made far too narrow – effectively regarding the Press as any other product or commodity, rather than, as the NFRN has said, “complex issues in a hugely complex industry”.

Said Locks: “We note the NFRN’s call for a new code of practice replacing the old newspaper code to embrace both newspapers and magazines and we will look forward to discussions with the NFRN along with wholesalers and national newspapers on the final shape of this proposal.”

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*ENDS*

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**Note to Editors:**

- i)        i)                *The Periodical Publishers Association (PPA) is the organisation for magazine publishers in the UK. The role of PPA is to promote and protect the interests of the magazine industry in general and member companies in particular.*
- ii)       ii)                *The association’s membership consists of almost 400 publishing companies, who together publish more than 2,260 consumer, business and professional magazines.*