

Mark White appointed as new Groceries Code Adjudicator

Small Business Minister Paul Scully has today announced the appointment of Mark White as the new Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA). Mark will take up the role of GCA when the current Adjudicator, Christine Tacon, steps down from the role later in the year. In the interim period, Mark will carry out the role of the Deputy Groceries Code Adjudicator.

Christine Tacon has been reappointed for a term of up to 6 months to provide continuity to the groceries sector through the coronavirus pandemic. Mark White will work alongside her as Deputy GCA to allow for a thorough handover of responsibilities.

Small Business Minister Paul Scully said:

Mark White's extensive experience will bring valuable insight to this important role, providing support to the groceries sector through these difficult times.

I look forward to working with him to ensure a level playing field between grocers and suppliers.

Mark White said:

I am delighted to have been appointed to succeed Christine Tacon. I welcome the opportunity to build on Christine's work and as GCA my objective will be to drive forward the progress that has been made to date. As the annual survey has shown, much has been achieved, but there is still more to be done and I welcome the government's commitment in its response to the Statutory Review to work with me to help suppliers feel empowered to raise issues in confidence with the GCA and their retailers directly.

The exceptional times in which we find ourselves demonstrate the importance of a constructive relationship between the retailers and their suppliers, as well as the Code's resilience in shaping those relationships. I intend to build relationships across the sector – most importantly with the retailers, suppliers and trade bodies – while I carry out the role of Deputy to Christine in the short term. In that way, I will be in a strong position to work on future issues as her successor and the UK's second GCA.

About Mark White

Mark currently serves as a Non-Executive Chairman of Digital Reconnaissance

Limited, a cyber protocol employee reference checking company. He is also Member of the Upper Tribunal (Tax and Chancery Chamber) and of the Lower Tribunal (General Regulatory Chamber) at HM Courts & Tribunal Service where he is responsible for hearing appeals against decisions from the Financial Conduct Authority and the Ministry of Justice in a range of financial services and claims management cases.

Prior to that, Mark was the Group General Counsel, Company Secretary and Executive Board Member at Compass Group PLC. He was also Group General Counsel Company Secretary and Executive Board Member at Ferguson PLC (formerly Wolseley PLC), , Enterprise Oil PLC (now part of Royal Dutch Shell) and Rotork p.l.c. Mark was also a solicitor at Eversheds Sutherland LLP (formerly Frere Cholmeley).

At Compass Group PLC, he was responsible for legal, governance, the annual report, compliance and insurance as well as the professional development of 140 lawyers for this FTSE 30 food and support services company employing more than 600,000 people with operations in 45+ countries. He was also a pension scheme trustee, a member of the Executive Board, Disclosure and Corporate Responsibility committees and a director of multiple group companies and joint venture companies in the UK, France, the UAE, South Africa and India.

Additional Information

The Groceries Code Adjudicator is responsible for enforcing the Groceries Supply Code of Practice, which aims to ensure that large grocery retailers treat their direct suppliers lawfully and fairly. They work with designated supermarkets and grocers to respond to issues as they arise and arbitrate disputes between retailers and suppliers. They also have the power to launch investigations where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the Code has been breached.

The GCA is operationally independent of government but is one of BEIS's key partners. The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy appoints the GCA and any Deputy and is also required to approve the GCA's annual levy.

The appointment was made in line with the governance code for public appointments.