



THE INDEPENDENT
FOOTBALL OMBUDSMAN

The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015

Annual Activity Report 2025

Schedule 5: 12/02/25 - 11/02/26

Schedule 6: 12/02/24 - 11/02/25



Schedule 5 and Schedule 6 Information for ADR Bodies

The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015, require you to supply the competent authority (Chartered Trading Standards Institute) with your Schedule 5 (annual) and Schedule 6 (biennial) reports when they are due.

The Schedule 5 report must be supplied every year (including when you also supply your biennial report) and must be made available on your website as per the legislation. The Schedule 5 report must be supplied to the competent authority and uploaded onto the website within a month of the anniversary of your date of approval as an approved ADR body.

The Schedule 6 report must be supplied biennially and is not required to be available on your website, only sent to the competent authority. The years that you supply the biennial report, you still must supply an annual report in addition. The Schedule 6 report must be supplied to the competent authority within a month of the anniversary of your approval date. The information (data) (as per section 11.3 of the legislation) is to cover the whole (totals) of the 2-year reporting period.

All details of what must be included in the reports can be found below.

This is the minimum data required for reporting, but any other or extra data supplied would be much appreciated for further insight.

As of 1st January 2021, there have been several amendments made to the legislation due to Brexit. It is no longer a requirement of the legislation to handle cross-border disputes and report on these disputes. However, if you continue to handle cross-border disputes, we would ask that you supply any information in relation to these cases.

Additionally, if your ADR scheme's outcome is binding on either party, please provide us with the percentage of whether the outcome was ruled in the consumer or trader's favour at the end of the Schedule 5 and Schedule 6 report.

Schedule 5 - Regulation 11(2) – CTSI Activity Report IFO - Year Ending February 2026

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

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

No. enquiries received (domestic & 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)
948	277	20	228	13

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

The IFO deals with a great variety of cases which include sanctions imposed on supporters, stewarding and ticketing issues, requests for refunds and compensation, together with claims that there were shortcomings in the way the governing bodies [the Football Association, the Premier League, and the English Football League] have been exercising their powers.

The IFO does not investigate complaints that fall outside its remit. In particular, it does not review on-field sporting decisions or incidents arising during the course of play, including refereeing decisions, the use of VAR, or matters relating to player conduct.

Types of disputes:

- supporter sanctions for ticket touting, behavioral issues and breaches of ticket terms and conditions,
- membership schemes and season ticket renewal issues,
- matchday incidents,
- grassroots discipline complaints relating to the handling of the FA's process,
- breaches of the Code of Conduct for Gambling Related Agreements in Football were added to the IFO's jurisdiction.

(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;

In the year under review some of the most common in-scope problems related to club bans due to unauthorised ticket use or behaviour.

(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;

The issues surrounding ticket misuse cannot be avoided as these are most commonly deliberate offences, often committed by ticket touts. The IFO is looking to promote increased inter-club collaboration when combatting large-scale ticket touting, encouraging the sharing of information and resources where appropriate.

(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;

Total no. of disputes rejected	56
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Reason	No. rejected	Percentage of rejected
a) the consumer has not attempted to contact the trader first	30	54
b) the dispute was frivolous or vexatious	2	3
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...	24	43

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

	No. discontinued	Percentage of discontinued
Discontinued for operational reasons	0	0

Reasons for discontinuation:

There were no complaints which were discontinued during the adjudication process and all cases were completed.

(g) the average time taken to resolve domestic disputes and cross-border disputes;

	Domestic	Cross-border
Average time taken to resolve disputes (from receipt of complaint)	65.8	55.9
Average time taken to resolve disputes (from 'complete complaint file')	31.0	24.5

Total average time taken to resolve disputes	60.8
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(h) the rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes the alternative dispute resolution procedures (amongst your members, or those you provide ADR for)

Like many Ombudsman and ADR schemes the findings of the IFO are non-binding on the parties. Under the agreed procedure the relevant football body is required to make a public statement of the reasons if they felt unable to implement IFO findings.

One recommendation was made; the relevant football body implemented the recommendation.

(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.

The issue of unauthorised ticket use is increasingly prevalent in English football. The IFO has seen growing numbers of disputes around breaches of ticketing terms and conditions, ranging from incorrectly transferred match tickets to large scale unauthorised ticket use networks. Clubs have responded to this growing concern with more stringent regulations, with some Clubs deeming 'the sale or transfer of a ticket to any person' a serious breach of terms and conditions. The IFO's approach to these cases has been to ensure that investigations and sanctions processes have been consistent and fair.

Schedule 6 – CTSI Activity Report IFO Year Ending February 2024/2026

Information which an ADR entity must communicate to relevant competent authority every two years

(a) the number of disputes received by the ADR entity and the types of complaints to which the disputes relate; **12/02/25 to 11/02/26**

No. enquiries received (domestic) & cross-border)	No. disputes received (domestic)	No. disputes received (cross-border)	No. disputes accepted (domestic)	No. disputes accepted (cross-border)
948	277	20	228	13

the number of disputes received by the ADR entity and the types of complaints to which the disputes relate; **12/02/2024 to 11/02/2025**

No. enquiries received (domestic) & cross-border)	No. disputes received (domestic)	No. disputes received (cross-border)	No. disputes accepted (domestic)	No. disputes accepted (cross-border)
882	137	9	115	5

The IFO deals with a great variety of cases which include sanctions imposed on supporters, stewarding and ticketing issues, demands for refunds and compensation, together with claims that there were shortcomings in the way the governing bodies [the Football Association, the Premier League, and the English Football League] have been exercising their powers. Types of disputes rejected include out of scope cases which commonly involve on-field matters, such as refereeing, use of VAR and player behaviour.

Types of disputes:

- supporter sanctions for ticket touting, behavioural issues and breaches of ticket terms and conditions,
- membership schemes and season ticket renewal issues,
- matchday incidents,
- during the reporting year, the IFO's remit in relation to grassroots football and the Women's game was strengthened,

- breaches of the Code of Conduct for Gambling Related Agreements in Football were added to the IFO's jurisdiction.

(b) the percentage share of alternative dispute resolution procedures which were discontinued before an outcome was reached; None

Period 12/02/2025 to 11/02/26

Total no. of disputes rejected	56
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Reason	No. rejected	Percentage of rejected
a) the consumer has not attempted to contact the trader first	30	54
b) the dispute was frivolous or vexatious	2	3
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...	24	43

Period 12/02/2024 to 11/02/25

Total no. of disputes rejected	18
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Reason	No. disputes discontinued	Percentage discontinued
Rejected for operational reasons	8	44.4
a) the consumer has not attempted to contact the trader first	0	
b) the dispute was frivolous or vexatious	0	
c) the dispute had been previously considered by another ADR body or the court	0	
d) the value fell below the monetary value	0	
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		

Case withdrawn by consumer		
Case withdrawn by trader		
Solution reached without ADR		
The trader was not a member of the ADR scheme (if this is a requirement)		

(c) the average time taken to resolve the disputes which the ADR entity has received;

Period 12/02/2025 to 11/02/26

	Domestic	Cross-border
Average time taken to resolve disputes (from receipt of complaint)	65.8	55.9
Average time taken to resolve disputes (from 'complete complaint file')	31.0	24.5

Total average time taken to resolve disputes	60.8
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Period 12/02/2024 to 11/02/25

	Domestic	Cross-border
Average time taken to resolve disputes (from receipt of complaint)	65.2	37.4
Average time taken to resolve disputes (from 'complete complaint file')	40.1	24.8

Total average time taken to resolve disputes	51.3
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the rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes of its alternative dispute resolution procedures;

Like many Ombudsman and ADR schemes the findings of the IFO are non-binding on the parties. Under the agreed procedure the relevant football body is required to

make a public statement of the reasons if they felt unable to implement IFO findings. One recommendation was made; this was acted on by the relevant football body.

- (d) any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how any systematic or significant problems that occur frequently and lead to disputes between consumers and traders could be avoided or resolved in future;

IFO Adjudication Reports sometimes contain recommendations. The IFO has not made any recommendations in the reporting period

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

- (g) where the ADR entity provided training to its ADR officials, details of the training it provides; Subjects covered 12/02/2024 to 11/02/2026

Data Protection and Info-Sec

Disability Awareness Training

Mediation Training

Consumer Law (City and Guilds)

GDPR

Equality Act & Inclusive Polices

Muslim Employees in the Workplace (Targeted Help)

Neurodivergent Consumers (External Webinar)

Gender Neutral Writing & Drafting (External / Certificate Received)

- (h) an assessment the effectiveness of an alternative dispute resolution procedure offered by the ADR entity and of possible ways of improving its performance.

Like many Ombudsman and ADR schemes the findings of the IFO are non-binding on the parties. In the 2024/25 reporting year, one case contained recommendations which were acted on by the club. In cases where recommendations are not taken onboard, the relevant football body are required to make a public statement of the reasons they felt unable to implement IFO findings.