

National Body Repair Association (NBRA)

Consumer Codes Audit

September 2025

Background information

The National Body Repair Association (NBRA) is a trade association representing businesses that repair, maintain and service motor vehicles. The association runs a code of practice which was approved by the Consumer Codes Approval Board in July 2017.

The NBRA acts as an organisation that deals mainly with consumer to business transactions in the non-commercial vehicle sector, though most referrals to their members are via insurance companies. It's Code of Practice for Consumers migrated from the VBRA (Vehicle Builders and Repairers Association) in July 2017 and now also includes the members of the National Association of Bodyshops. The NBRA operates independently under the umbrella of the Retail Motor Industry Federation.

For the period covered by their Annual Report of 1 March 2024 to 29 February 2025, NBRA has 900 members. Of these 116 are supplier members including training centers who are solely business to business contracts and of the remainder, of these 246 are signed up to comply with the Consumer Code of Practice.

Audit Process

A qualified trading standards professional from the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) completed an on-site audit. The audit focused on the following areas:

1. Member Application Process including checks carried out on prospective businesses.
2. Existing Member Inspections/Audit content and process (including general compliance with the code, staff training and dealing with consumer complaints).
3. Membership Withdrawal and Sanctions for Non-Compliant Member Businesses.
4. Marketing and Advertising by Member Businesses.
5. Terms and conditions and other pre-contractual information (including cancellation rights, deposits, delivery times, guarantees and warranties).

6. Consumer complaints process (including ADR).

7. Customer satisfaction and feedback, information/complaints from enforcement agencies, and how this information is used to develop and improve the code.

Audit Summary

The audit examined:

- The application process and auditing of new members
- The records of audit of existing members
- Consumer review processes
- Former member's websites

Member Application Process

In the last year there have been 61 applications to join the association, 27 have joined as supplier members or training centers where the Code is not applicable. There were 8 successful applications to join the Code.

NBRA require that any prospective member is operating legally and legitimately with appropriate tooling and equipment. They must have the appropriate insurance in place and the correct equipment to carry out the work that they claim to be doing. NBRA believe that the investment required to set up and run a body-shop is a strong indication of the quality of the applicant. Some businesses join NBRA and then, in due course, with their support and guidance, become suitable businesses for Code members. Some repairers only offer SMART repairs, which require less tooling than a bodyshop doing full accident damage that may include chassis straightening.

Google reviews are now also checked at the point of application. Any issues of concern highlighted by this review will be discussed with the potential member.

The Business Development Managers contact each applicant directly gathering information to build a profile for the repairer on the CRM system and prepare the application form. This is then sent electronically to the repairer to sign and return.

The process remains that the prospective member is issued with a copy of the Code and all the information relating to the criteria of the Code and during the recruitment process, NBRA check whether the member is likely to meet the Code criteria. If not inform them what would be required.

Following receipt of the signed application and confirmation of payment arrangements, the repairer is sent a welcome email. Since the last audit, there are now more members of the field team, so the majority of new members will have an on-site visit for the New Member Audit during the sign-up process. A physical membership sign and electronic copies of the logo are issued. If an audit cannot be completed at sign up, up to six weeks later, the member is contacted by phone and the audit completed.

Many repairers join the NBRA to get further support towards attaining the industry standard, BS10125, which is a process to guarantee safe repairs and is audited against; correct calibrated equipment, repair methods, trained staff to an industry standard (IMI Accreditations) and using the appropriate materials for a safe repair. These criteria represent further protections for the consumer in addition to NBRA/CTSI code approval.

All new members are contacted within two weeks of joining to ensure that they have received and are using the logos. Some members are precluded from displaying the NBRA and CTSI Logos under commercial agreements with their principal work providers (insurance companies). NBRA continue to strongly encourage the display of relevant, correctly positioned signage.

For the purposes of this audit three new member's application documents were provided and were found to be in accordance with NBRA's procedures. The website of one member (joined July 2025) shows the NBRA logo, another joined in September 2025, does not show the logo and the third one does not have a website.

Existing Member Inspections/Audit

NBRA operates a system of checks prior to acceptance into membership and periodically thereafter. The majority of audits for new members are now completed on-site, the audits for existing members, remotely. For the period of 01/03/24 to 29/02/25 109 audits were completed. NBRA aim to audit one third of existing member per year. In the period since 1st March to date, 60 audits have been carried out.

Most issues that arise during an audit on an existing member can be corrected immediately. The most common issue found is the lack of display of the name of the Customer Liaison Manager, this is required to be displayed in an area that the customer is most likely to see e.g. the service reception area. A document is supplied for the member to complete, then print and display.

Three completed audit records were checked and found to be completed in accordance with NBRA processes.

Observation

The list of questions used in the member audit has not been reviewed for many years. Many of the questions are now redundant as they relate to requirements of membership.

NBRA are going to review the questions share with the auditor for evaluation.

Membership Withdrawal and Sanctions for Non-Compliant Member Businesses

No businesses have been expelled from the NBRA scheme in the last year. It is noted that there has still never been a need for the panel to convene. The process in place for raising formal disciplinary procedures against members was reviewed and complies with the requirements of the Consumer Code Approval Scheme.

Between March 2024 and February 2025 76 members left the NBRA, of which 15 were members of the Code.

For the audit, the details of three members who have left within the last year were requested and their websites were checked to see if the NBRA or CTSI logos were erroneously displayed. On the website of one member (left 01.07.25) the NBRA and CTSI logos were still present on the website.

Marketing and Advertising by Member Businesses

The majority of NBRA members get most of their business via insurance companies, consequently they are not, in general, chosen by the consumer to repair their vehicle. Therefore, the advertising of membership of NBRA and of the Code is not checked at audit, but members are required to have a copy of the Code available to consumers and staff.

A key point of the member audit covers marketing and that the repairer will commit to reviewing their marketing so it meets the spirit of the code. The member is advised to use the NBRA & CTSI logos to display their commitment to customer service.

The NBRA operates a single fee for membership. All members are given a sign showing the NBRA/ACS logo free of charge. All members who have successfully completed their first audit are given electronic copies of the logo and advised to use these on paperwork and websites. This is not enforceable nor a mandatory requirement of NBRA Membership. NBRA display the ACS logo against each applicable member.

Terms and Conditions and other Pre-Contractual Information

NBRA provides standard terms and conditions for members to use, but it is not obligatory. The standard terms and conditions are produced in-house and are clear, reasonable and comply with the requirements of the core criteria. No changes have been made to the standard terms and conditions since the last audit.

NBRA provides its members with discounted expert services and have developed video recording technology which is geo-located and time stamped to assist in resolving complaints with consumers.

Consumer Complaints Process

NBRA operates free conciliation and provides access arbitration services via National Conciliation Service at no cost to consumers.

In the period March 2024 - February 2025 no cases were referred for conciliation.

Customer Satisfaction and Feedback

Since 2020 NBRA have collated information from Google (and other online review applications) from their 246 Code approved members, a total of 24,165 reviews in the year March 2024 - February 2025. The data was mainly sourced through Google and uses the first page of results only. The average rating found is 4.6 (out of 5). NBRA plan to continue to use

this method to gather reviews on their members as it generates substantial review data. Individual member's results are published in the NBRA Annual Report. Any business with a score of 3.5 or less or with any review that contains allegations of worrying conduct will receive a call from the director of NBRA.

Conclusions

NBRA continue to drive compliance amongst it's members, enhancing consumer protection in this sector.

NBRA have recently made some small amendments to their Code. The new version of the Code has been agreed by CTSI.

NBRA have held a number of regional events this year that were structured as a speed-dating to enable networking between members and supplier members. It is hoped to hold more events in the future that may include content relating to their Code.