

Press release

16 October 2018

Investment, savings and pensions industry announces long term solution to improving customer experience of transferring between companies

- Consumers to benefit from better communication, common standards, continuous improvement and greater transparency on firms' performance
- TRIG, the cross industry working group, endorses and recommends the TeX & Criterion joint venture named **STAR** to manage good practice framework
- Firms to benefit from consistent and improving standards, leading to higher certainty and lower operating costs
- Framework specifies transfers within 2 weeks (3 weeks for occupational pension transfers) with a commitment to progressively bring down transfer times in the future. Where transfers involve multiple transactions and counterparties, each step should take no more than 2 days.
- Support from Pensions Minister and across industry

The Transfers and Reregistration Industry Group (TRIG), a collaboration of 10 industry trade bodies and representatives of individual firms, has been working to deliver a cross-industry solution to the challenge of improving customer experiences of moving money from one financial institution to another. The work has focused on developing a framework of best practice standards, improving customer communication and establishing a governance arrangement to take on the ongoing management of the standards.

TRIG is now endorsing and recommending to the industry a joint venture formed by Criterion and TeX under the brand of 'Star' to deliver a long-term governance solution to the transfers work. TRIG will be encouraging member firms in their respective associations to sign up to the Framework.

For customers, the new arrangement will lead to:

- Greater certainty and speed for transfers
- Improved control over their money
- Increased competition

The FCA highlighted the issue of transfers and re-registration in its recent market studies into the Asset Management Industry and into Investment Platforms. Participation in the framework will enable firms to demonstrate to regulators their commitment to good practice and to constant improvements in standards.

The ongoing collection and publication of performance in executing transfers, as well as a list of the firms which have chosen to participate, will provide regulators and customers with clear evidence of how firms are behaving.

As well as having happier clients, participating firms will also benefit from greater certainty in dealing with counterparties, leading to fewer queries and lower administration costs.

Hargreaves Lansdown's Tom McPhail, Chair of TRIG: "Firms want to do the right thing for their customers; when they have to transact with other firms to move customers' money, they also want to know it can be done quickly and efficiently. The publication of a register of financial companies who have signed up to this initiative and of ongoing performance data, will bring transparency and

scrutiny to companies' performance, creating pressure on businesses which are lagging behind to up their game."

"We have been very impressed with the capabilities and commitment the TeX and Criterion teams have brought together in creating the Star joint venture. TRIG is therefore very happy to endorse this governance solution and to recommend it to industry members and other stakeholders."

Guy Opperman, Minister for pensions and financial inclusion: "I welcome this initiative and the progress made so far in speeding up transfers. For routine DC transfers it makes sense, from both a competition and customer service point of view, that members are able to move their money swiftly. For many members moving money is straightforward but for some others it's far from effective and I'd urge firms to commit to the TRIG framework, as this is an area the Government is keeping a close eye on."

David Moffat, Chair of TeX: "We are delighted the TRIG Steering Committee has chosen to adopt the joint Criterion & TeX industry service proposal. This is an exciting step in the implementation of the TRIG recommendations which will benefit consumers and industry alike and we look forward to working in close collaboration going forward."

Caroline Mansley, MD Criterion commenting said: "We are delighted that our collaboration with TeX has been successful in securing what is a vital piece of industry work. Combining our complementary capabilities in a robust, focused manner provides a compelling approach to the needs of the long-term savings industry and its consumers. We believe that what is required is sufficient participation to provide a broad and deep pool of subject matter expertise, to develop the first version of the transfer process definitions and SLAs. We hope the industry gets right behind the initiative and look forward to the support from both regulators and participants, required to make the work representative and financially sustainable. Our joint solution combines our expertise, to deliver a best-of-breed approach to the implementation. Our goal is better transfers through cross-industry collaboration."

Notes to editors

TRIG is formed of the following trade bodies and associations:

- Association of British Insurers (ABI)
- Association of Member-Directed Pension Schemes (AMPS)
- Investment Association (IA)
- Pensions Administration Standards Association (PASA)
- Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA)
- Personal Investment Management & Financial Advice Association (PIMFA)
- Society of Pension Professionals (SPP)
- Tax Incentivised Savings Association (TISA)
- UK Finance
- UK Platforms Group (UKPG)

Following its formation in 2016, TRIG conducted consultations across the financial services industry, which led to the publication of a best practice framework in 2018. This has been followed by an open tender process to appoint a long term governance body to take responsibility for the implementation, management and governance of the framework.

If you want any additional information or comment, do get in touch

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