

PRESS COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

From the Chairman

The Attorney General
The Rt Hon the Baroness Scotland QC
The Attorney General's Office
20 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0NF

6th July 2009

Dear Patricia,

It was a real pleasure meeting you at your offices last week to discuss a number of important issues regarding the press.

In particular, we appreciated the opportunity to be able to explain a little more about some of the behind-the-scenes work that the PCC undertakes, which we are not able – for obvious reasons – to talk about publicly. The system in place at the moment means that we are able to communicate with editors across the industry to ensure that they make well-informed decisions under the terms of the Code about the conduct of their journalists and the content of their articles.

The purpose of this is ultimately to forestall the need for complaints. We are seeking to work with editors, on behalf of concerned members of the public, to ensure that the industry's own standards are respected. This has been very successful over recent years, and has meant that we have been able to stop particular occasions of physical harassment or the publication of intrusive stories.

The key to this process is the buy-in from the industry. Editors know that the PCC is not dictating to them about their behaviour (something which would be inimical to freedom of expression), but rather acting to ensure that information is circulated to enable them to act responsibly.

As you know, we would be very happy for you to come in and visit the PCC so you can see how our system works in more detail. I am glad that you suggested that we stay in closer touch so that you can be aware of the work we are doing, and vice versa. There may be occasions on which our interests overlap, and the PCC can be used as the appropriate vehicle for taking matters forward with the industry.

CHAIRMAN
Baroness Buscombe

MEMBERS OF THE
COMMISSION
Matti Alderson
Spencer Feeney
Colleen Harris MVO
Vivien Hepworth
John Home Robertson
Ian MacGregor
John McLellan
Ian Nichol
Lindsay Nicholson
Esther Robertson
Eve Salomon
Simon Sapper
The Right Rev.
John Waine KCVO
Tina Weaver
Peter Wright

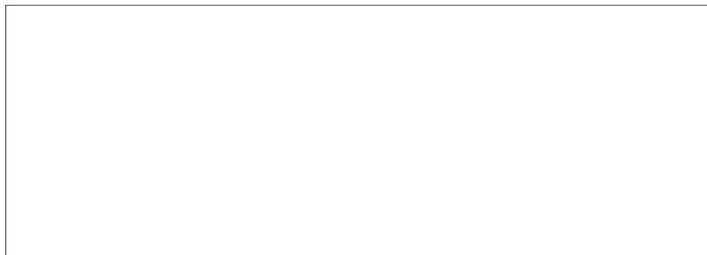
DIRECTOR
Tim Toulmin



We also talked about the idea of your own system of advisories. I think – as I have said above – that it is important for the industry to buy into any system with which it is asked to cooperate. I suggest it might be helpful to you to discuss this idea with Bob Satchwell of the Society of Editors, who is a very respected spokesman for the Industry. We would be happy to arrange a meeting, if you would like.

Do please also let me know if you would be able to come in and see us.

Lid best wishes,



Baroness Buscombe

