

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

PCC PAPER NO: 3986

TO ALL COMMISSIONERS

Subterfuge report follow up

1. Commissioners will have seen the press reports and commentary following the report into subterfuge and newsgathering that was published after the last Commission meeting. The feeling within the office was that it was covered in a serious and straightforward manner. In addition, we have received a positive response from many in the industry, where the view seems to be that the report struck the right balance between casting light on events at the News of the World and managing to say something constructive for the industry at large.
2. Commissioners may recall that the report included an undertaking by the Commission to host a seminar on undercover newsgathering for national newspaper journalists. This will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> July at the Crowne Plaza in Blackfriars. We have invited someone from the Information Commissioner's office to be on hand to answer any questions about the Data Protection Act.
3. In terms of monitoring compliance with the report's recommendations, there was some discussion at the last meeting about whether the Commission should make clear that it would following up the matter with the industry at a certain point to assess the level of implementation. After discussion, it was decided that this would not be the most appropriate way forward given the type of regulation overseen by the Commission. The dim view that the Commission would take of something similar happening at any publication which turned out not to have heeded its recommendations is implicit in the report. That said, Commissioners may wish to review whether anything further needs to be done. Where it is necessary, industry trade bodies may, for example, have a role in helping individual companies or publications frame amendments to contracts. This is something that we could follow up with them to help ensure that the issue does not fall by the wayside.
4. If Commissioners have any other views on this, or any comments about how the report was received, we would be grateful to hear them.

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