

subterfuge newspaper seminar

The PCC has held the latest in its series of training seminars for journalists. The evening event – attended by over 25 national newspaper journalists and lawyers – focussed on the issue of subterfuge: when and where it can be justified; and how its use is regulated by both clause 10 of the Code of Practice and the Data Protection Act.

The seminar was opened by Tim Toulmin, the PCC's Director. Mick Gorrill, from the Information Commissioner's Office, then addressed the audience on the ways in which the Data Protection Act can impact on journalists. For the second part of the evening, seminar participants examined a number of real-life cases that the Commission has dealt with and which set important precedents in this area. The Commission's decisions on each case were subsequently revealed and explained by PCC Training Consultant Alison Hastings, herself a former Commissioner.

The PCC is committed to running training seminars on an ongoing basis. It is crucial that all journalists – whether experienced or not – remain as up-to-date as possible about the PCC's latest decisions and its interpretation of the Code. The Commission is happy to offer refresher seminars to individual newspapers on request. For more information, please contact Tonia Milton



Delegates at Subterfuge seminar



Journalists at a newspaper seminar.

training EDITORS AND JOURNALISTS

The PCC regularly hosts seminars for editors and journalists, which are designed to stimulate discussion about the Commission's approach to complaints. Using a variety of cases dealt with by the Commission, a typical session will involve journalists considering articles under the Code of Practice or working through a number of scenarios, before being challenged to assess whether or not there was a breach of the Code.

Seminars are generally devised for specific industry disciplines, but a more general session can easily be provided if required. So far, training sessions have been aimed at:

- News editors
- Features editors
- Picture editors
- Online editors and journalists

Subterfuge and investigative journalism

Following the PCC's report into subterfuge and newsgathering, the PCC ran refresher courses on subterfuge and investigative journalism for journalists from all the national newspapers. Two of the seminars, held in London and Glasgow, were addressed by representatives from the Information Commissioner's Office as well as by PCC staff. In all, seven two and a half hour sessions were held on this subject.

The PCC has also run seminars for individual newspapers and media groups, including IPC media, The Sun, Manchester Evening News, Birmingham Mail and Birmingham Post, Jersey Evening Post, Bristol Evening Post, Western Daily Press, and the Bath Chronicle. We are always happy to provide this sort of seminar to individual publications on request; alternatively, the PCC can provide materials for journalists to work through in their own time.

For more information please contact Catherine Speller on