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Tom Watson MP



House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Ms Sue Akers QPM
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Metropolitan Police Service
New Scotland Yard
Broadway
London
SW1H 0BG

2 March 2011

Dear Sue,

It is re-assuring to see you take the lead of the phone hacking investigation. After many months, if not years of inertia, it certainly seems that progress is being made.

I am writing to bring matters that may constitute breaches of law to your attention in order that, if you have not done so already, you can re-assure yourself by investigating them fully. Please consider this as a formal request for an investigation.

You will be aware that the current Chief Executive of News International has confirmed to a parliamentary committee that she allowed serving police officers to be paid for information whilst she was editor of the News of the World. As far as I am aware, Ms Brooks has not been interviewed nor any action taken. Please can you confirm to me what action you intend to take?

It is extraordinary that a national newspaper editor admits a serious criminal offence to a Parliamentary enquiry and no action has thus far been taken by the Metropolitan Police Service. I know that you would wish to establish how many times police officers were paid by News International. James Murdoch is on record as saying that he takes a "zero tolerance approach to wrong doing", so I am sure he will ensure the fullest co-operation on the matter.

You may also be aware that Ms Brooks is listed in the spreadsheets held by the Information Commissioner as ordering a "mobile conversion" (of telephone number [redacted] from the convicted private investigator, [redacted]). As you know, a "mobile conversion" is understood by most people to mean the execution of a criminal breach of the Data Protection Act in order to obtain personal information by deception.

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As far as I am aware, Ms Brooks has not been interviewed on this matter either, nor any action taken. Please can you confirm to me what action you now intend to take?

I understand from newspaper reports that [redacted] was a target of Glenn Mulcaire. Damaging stories appeared about him in The Sun newspaper. This could be the first example where articles, potentially written using illegally obtained information, appeared in a News International newspaper other than the News of the World.

Please confirm that you are investigating this matter? What steps are you taking to widen your inquiries? Will you, for example, be examining the dockets submitted for cash payments by journalists at the News of the World and The Sun? I am told by News International insiders that by examining the cash payments made to reporters in order to pay-off informants will yield more evidence. They tell me that the payments were always approved by an editor and managing editor and that there will be both a paper and electronic trail. They believe there is a processing centre in Nottingham which is used to organise payments. In addition, as I have explained in a previous letter, copies of historic transactions may be held by the Iron Mountain data warehousing company.

You will be aware there is an audio recording of a conversation between Glenn Mulcaire and an unnamed journalist on the New York Times web site, where Mulcaire gives phone hacking instructions. I understand the journalist is now employed by The Times newspaper.

I also believe that the person who commissioned the phone hacking of [redacted] may be a journalist on the [redacted]. If you would like me to explain why I have reached this conclusion, as ever, please do not hesitate to contact me on [redacted].

Let me re-assure you that I will not be making this letter or my previous correspondence to you public.

Thank you for taking this matter seriously.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature area]

Tom Watson
Member of Parliament for West Bromwich East