

4.10 EDITORIAL POLICY – LISTENING DEVICES

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The PCC Code of Practice does not allow newspapers or websites to seek, obtain or publish material which has been acquired by using clandestine listening devices or hidden cameras.

Any journalist who believes there is a public interest issue which might justify such action must gain approval from the senior editor in his company BEFORE the gathering of such material begins. That editor must make the Chief Operating Officer aware that he has sanctioned its use to allow the decision to be logged.

Other than in those exceptional circumstances, journalists should not intercept private or mobile telephone calls, messages or emails, remove documents or photographs without authorisation or breach the Data Protection Act.

Neither should journalists misrepresent or engage in subterfuge - either through commission or omission - of any kind in pursuit of information.

Obtaining such material by using clandestine listening devices is against the law and could result in a prison sentence. It would also result in company disciplinary action against the individual or individuals that could lead to dismissal from the company.