

PCC welcomes Select Committee report on self-regulation

The Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee has just published responses to its report into self-regulation of the press.

The PCC said that it welcomed the report:

“In particular, the Committee’s findings that there is no case for a statutory regulator of the press and that a privacy law would be undesirable are important statements of principle that the Commission wholeheartedly endorses. As to its own performance, the Commission was grateful that the Committee highlighted the amount of pro-active and behind the scenes work that the PCC carries out, and for its conclusion that this was some of the most valuable work that it undertakes.” The Commission was also pleased that the CMS Committee had endorsed its approach to the regulation of online editorial information, and, in response to a suggestion that its remit should go even further, said:

“The Commission’s flexible structure means that it will be able to adapt quickly to any further developments in technology, and indeed it would be surprising if this was the last occasion on which the Commission’s remit ever changed.”

There was also support from the Committee for the principle of conciliating complaints without the need for a formal ruling. The Committee suggested that the PCC makes greater efforts to publicise breaches of the Code that are settled in this way. The Commission said it would look into ways this could be achieved.

However, the Commission was disappointed that the report did not contain any recognition about the way it had developed effective procedures to deal with concerns about pre-publication newsgathering – such as objections to harassment. It rejected criticism about the way it had handled the situation involving Kate Middleton and media scums early in 2007. To read the Commission’s response in full, [click here](#)

The Government endorsed self-regulation. It told the Committee that:

“We certainly agree with the report’s over-arching conclusion – that self-regulation of the press should be maintained. We further agree that there is no case for statutory regulation and that a free press is a hallmark of our democracy.”

It also welcomed the Commission’s recommendations to the industry on how to minimise the risks of another scandal involving phone message tapping.

“We believe that the implementation of these measures will do much to bolster public confidence in the way information for stories is gathered”, it concluded.

ENDS

16 October 2007