

Daily Star breached Code over Peaches claim

The Press Complaints Commission has ruled that the Daily Star was guilty of "sloppy journalism" in relation to a story that claimed Peaches Geldof received money for "showing up" to parties. In an article of 29th September 2008, headlined "Peaches: Spend the night with me for 5k", the newspaper made a number of non-specific claims about the complainant being paid for "her company" and for her "services". Ms Geldof's solicitor said that readers would be misled into believing that his client was exchanging sexual favours for money.

The newspaper said it had made no direct claim to the effect that Ms Geldof was offering sexual services – and added that the rather vague front page piece was clarified by an article on page 5. However, it agreed to publish an apology for the implication in the headline and offered to do so on page 2 or 5, above the fold, accompanied by a photograph. The complainant's solicitor said the offer was unsatisfactory and argued that the apology should appear on the front page, where the first part of the original article had been positioned.

The Commission agreed that an apology was necessary because the article had "fallen well short of the high standards of the Code [of Practice]". However, it did not agree with the complainant's solicitor that the newspaper should be required to publish the agreed wording on the front page. "While the [original] front page may have been open to a certain interpretation, it did not contain any specific claims about the 'services' offered by the complainant. The inside article [on page 5] did not suggest that the services were in any way sexual, and made clear that they related to non-controversial entertainment at parties."

The main inaccuracy, which had appeared on page 5, was that Peaches Geldof received money simply for "showing up" to parties. The decision to locate the apology prominently on page 2 (with a photograph) was, in the Commission's view, "proportionate".

On 28 February, the Daily Star published its apology to the complainant on page 2.
To see the full adjudication [click here](#)

ENDS

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