

PCC public members: our work goes on (8 July 2011)

The independent public members (listed below) of the Press Complaints Commission have today made clear that its work will continue.

It is important for everyone to recognise that the Government cannot simply order the replacement of the PCC, because it is an independent organisation. While we publicly accept the need for reform and improvement, and welcome the inquiries, our highly important work must still go on, in order that our service to the public (to obtain redress both before and after publication) can continue. Those who are calling for the end of the PCC have undervalued and underestimated its day-to-day work.

The PCC exists to handle the complaints and pre-publication concerns of every member of the public in this country, many of whom lack the means to instruct lawyers in defence of their rights. It has a brilliant, and dedicated, staff of professionals, who work around the clock. Their work must be built upon, not jettisoned.

While we hear the clearly-stated views of Members of Parliament, we call upon them to confirm that - pending the final outcome of both inquiries - the vital work of the PCC must be allowed to continue for the public good.

Members of the public will still come to us for help, and our staff will offer it to them. Intrusions will be prevented and inaccuracies corrected. Newspapers and magazines will still be held to account by the Commission. We are pleased that all sectors of the industry (national, regional and magazines) have pledged their renewed commitment to adhere to the Code enforced independently by the PCC.

Our work will go on.

Ian Nichol
Julie Spence OBE QPM
Simon Sapper
Esther Robertson
John Home Robertson
Jeremy Roberts QC
Lord Grade of Yarmouth OBE
Michael Smyth
Professor Ian Walden

ENDS

8 July 2011