



Department for
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Rt Hon Sir George Hayworth MP
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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 18 March, to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Oliver Dowden, CBE MP, on behalf of your constituents, regarding regulation of the press. I am responding as the minister responsible for this policy area.

The government is committed to a free and independent press and does not intervene in what the press can and cannot publish. This is vital to a strong and fully functioning democracy where the powerful can be held to account without fear.

Since the report of the Leveson Inquiry was published in 2012, we have seen a fundamental reform of the self-regulatory landscape for the press, including the establishment of two new regulators, IPSO and IMPRESS.

The majority of traditional publishers, including 95% of national newspapers by circulation, are members of IPSO. A small number of publishers have joined Impress, while others, including the Financial Times and the Guardian, have chosen to stay outside either self-regulator with their own detailed self-regulatory arrangements.

These regulators issue codes of conduct which provide guidelines on a range of areas, including discrimination, accuracy, privacy, and harassment. If they find that a newspaper has broken the code of conduct, they can order corrections or order critical adjudications.

There exists a framework which is intended to protect individuals from unwarranted intrusion. There is a robust oversight approach that holds publishers to account; ensuring systems are in place to support individuals where they wish to complain; and imposing appropriate remedies or sanctions where needed.

Rt Hon John Whittingdale OBE MP
Minister of State for Media and Data

