

Governance Review

Sent: 25 January 2010 19:44
To: Governance Review
Subject: PCC Review

Dear Vivien,

I am writing with regards to the review of the PCC and Editor's Code of Practice as it currently exists. I back the following five suggestions:

SUGGESTION ONE: Like-for-like placement of retractions, corrections and apologies in print and online (as standard).

Retractions, corrections, and apologies should normally be at least equally prominent to the original article, in both print and online editions. Any departure from this rule should only be in exceptional circumstances, and the onus on showing such circumstances should be on the publication.

SUGGESTION TWO: Original or redirected URLs for retractions, corrections & apologies online (as standard).

Retractions, corrections, and apologies in respect of online articles should always be displayed either at the original URL or at a URL to which the reader is redirected.

SUGGESTION THREE: The current Code contains no reference to headlines, and this loophole should be closed immediately.

Headlines should be covered by the same rules as the rest of a story. Further, headlines and titles for links should never be misleading in what they imply or offer and should always be substantiated by the article/contents.

SUGGESTION FOUR: Sources to be credited unless they do not wish to be credited or require anonymity/protection.

Sources should normally be credited. Any departure from this rule should only be when the source does not wish to be credited or if the source requires anonymity/protection.

SUGGESTION FIVE: A longer and more interactive consultation period for open discussion of more fundamental issues.

I submit all of the above without implying support for the PCC, the remainder of Code as it stands, or even the concept of self-regulation, and request that the 20th year of the PCC be marked with an open debate about its progress to date, and its future direction. I firmly believe that the PCC has proven utterly inadequate in regulating a press that regurgitates press releases as 'news', rumour as fact and pseudoscience as science. In particular Paul Dacre's position as chair of the Editor's code of conduct when the Daily Mail has more complaints than any other newspaper is particularly hard to take.

There are a growing number of websites that exist solely to correct on a daily basis some of the worst lies that are printed by the press, and without proper regulation of the press these websites will continue to grow. I sincerely hope that the PCC becomes a regulator in the future rather than a disinterested bystander.

Yours faithfully,

Kevin Arscott

<http://angrymob.uponnothing.co.uk>

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