

PRIVATE EYE

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David Wolfe QC
Chair of the Press Recognition Panel
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Email: consultation@pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk

8 October 2018

Dear Sir,

This letter is being written in relation to your 'Call for Information' for your 2018 statutory report and in particular the following section of it.

"As part of our 2018 report on the recognition system, we will provide an assessment of IPSO and some of the major publishers which are not members of IPSO including BuzzFeed UK, Facebook, the Financial Times, Google, the Guardian, HuffPost, the Independent, LADBible, Pink News, Private Eye, Reuters, Snapchat, Twitter, and Yahoo! News.

We have chosen significant publishers from across the press landscape and we consider it to be in the public interest for us to assess them as part of our Charter requirement to report on the success of the recognition system and as part of our consideration of how far the public is currently protected from potential harm. We will undertake this assessment based on facts available to us, including anything which those organisations provide in response to our requests to them.

...

Are you aware of any facts or evidence related to the following organisations that would be useful in assessing their compliance with the Royal Charter criteria: BuzzFeed UK, Facebook, the Financial Times, Google, the Guardian, HuffPost, the Independent, IPSO, LADBible, Pink News, Private Eye, Reuters, Snapchat, Twitter, Yahoo! News?"

As is well known, *Private Eye* is not a member of any regulatory body and was not a member of the Press Complaint Commission. We are not required to adhere to the Royal Charter, including the criteria set out in Schedule 3, which created the PRP, and we do not therefore understand how the PRP considers that the Charter can provide the PRP with the power, let alone the ability, to assess whether we do or do not comply with these criteria.

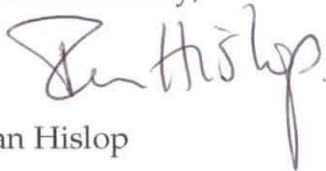
Furthermore we do not consider that it is appropriate for the PRP to conduct such a wide-ranging enquiry into publishers, such as ourselves, who have not joined IMPRESS and who accordingly are outside PRP's remit. PRP is not a regulator of the press in general - its remit is relevantly limited to IMPRESS, the only body it has recognized, how that body regulates those publications that choose to become members of IMPRESS, and the successes or failures of PRP's system, not other systems in general or in particular.

In addition, we do not see how you would be able to undertake any worthwhile assessment, given the likely unwillingness of those who you will seek to assess to volunteer private and confidential information to you about their processes, internal and otherwise, and the operation of them, to enable you to do so.

Private Eye has a long and well established system for dealing with any complaints that it receives. We see no purpose in your proceeding to undertake any 'assessment' of whether or not we comply with the Schedule 3 criteria, or of anything else, and in the circumstances formally object to your doing so.

Please confirm that you will not be doing so. In the meantime all our rights are reserved.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ian Hislop', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ian Hislop

Director