



IMPRESS

THE INDEPENDENT MONITOR
FOR THE PRESS

2019–20

ANNUAL REPORT

PRP

APPROVED
REGULATOR



Contents

Welcome to the IMPRESS Annual Report 2019–20. In these pages, you will find an overview of our regulatory services, public interest and public engagement activities between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. More information, as well as digital versions of our previous annual reports, is available at www.impress.press.

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The view from the Chair

Almost four years ago, IMPRESS became the first regulator to be officially approved as independent and effective by the Press Recognition Panel under the Royal Charter on self-regulation of the press. As such, IMPRESS sets the gold standard of publicly accountable regulation for print and digital press.

I am pleased to report another year of continued progress in our mission to raise press standards in the UK. The journalism produced by IMPRESS-regulated publications currently reaches over **15 million readers each month**, through a network of local, national, and international newspapers and websites, reaching diverse and under-served communities. By voluntarily joining IMPRESS, publishers have demonstrated their commitment to high-quality, publicly accountable reporting.

At IMPRESS, we are leading the way in driving up standards. I look forward to embarking on the **first review of our Code from November 2020**. Led by our Code Committee, this process provides us with a great opportunity to tackle some of the key standards issues the industry faces in the digital age. We will be reaching out to stakeholders and members of the public to take part in this review, and to help ensure that our Code remains fit for purpose for the future.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has presented a host of new challenges for publishers and journalists. In an era where disinformation and conspiracy

theories abound, the demand for trusted sources of news is greater than ever. With the crisis still ongoing, we will continue to support publishers to work to the highest standards, help members of the public to get access to effective means of redress, and ensure that well-regulated journalists are able to continue to work safely bringing trustworthy news to their readers.

This year has also seen **changes to our staff and board**. In March 2020, we welcomed Ed Procter as our new CEO. Having been our Chief Operations Officer for four years, Ed is now leading the Executive team into a new and exciting period of development for IMPRESS. Responding to recommendations of the Cairncross review into the sustainability of high-quality journalism, we took the initiative to support the establishment of the Public Interest News Foundation through the secondment of IMPRESS founder Jonathan Heawood. The Foundation has been registered as a charity and is positioning itself to provide financial and other much needed support to high-quality, public interest journalism.

I want to thank the board and committees for their support and for the part they play in our effectively governed organisation. I would like to welcome four distinguished individuals to the board. Shelina Janmohamed, Pam Vick, Debrah Harding and Cordella Bart-Stewart bring new skills and experiences and we are already benefitting from their contributions. I also want to thank three of the original

board members of IMPRESS who concluded their terms of office. Emma Jones, Máire Messenger Davies and Patrick Swaffer all played a substantial role in helping us get to the strong position we find ourselves in now.

Finally, I want to thank the Independent Press Regulation Trust for its continued funding support for IMPRESS, and the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust for providing additional funding this year for our independent publishers taskforce.

I look to the future with renewed confidence in our mission of raising standards and the quality of reporting in the UK. We go into 2020–21 with the challenge of finding new and better ways to support journalists and audiences in a rapidly changing environment, offline and online.



Walter Merricks

Walter Merricks CBE
Chair

October 2020

The view from the CEO

This has been another successful year at IMPRESS, marked by new partnerships, increasing membership, the expansion of our Trust in Journalism conference, and our engagement with online harms legislation.

We have been fully engaged in understanding the impact of proposed **online harms legislation** on the news websites that we regulate, and are fully supportive of Government plans to exempt well-regulated websites from the new regulations. This is an important opportunity for legislation to incentivise news websites to join an approved self-regulatory body as an alternative to coming under the remit of a statutory online harms regulator which is designed principally to regulate the large social media platforms.

This year at IMPRESS, we were happy to see our **membership growing steadily**, with a 9% growth in regulated publications. As this report goes to print, we regulate 94 publishers, who collectively publish 158 titles. We are attracting an increasing number of previously unregulated newspapers and news websites into self-regulation. However, too many newspapers and websites continue to sit outside the remit of a self-regulatory body and better incentives are needed to encourage them to sign up to approved regulation.

A central part of our work in 2019–20 involved working

closely with key stakeholders and partners on **central regulatory and reporting challenges**. We continued working closely with the Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe (AIPCE), exchanged ideas with international delegations, worked with Reporters Without Borders in the development of their Journalism Trust Initiative (JTI), and produced materials and guidance with the Market Research Society (MRS), the Conscious Advertising Network, JournoResources, the Transparency Project and Protect, among others.

In November 2019, we hosted our second **Trust in Journalism Conference** with great success. Almost twenty national and international speakers joined us on the day to talk about the role of transparency and training in building trust and the future of public interest news. November 2020 will see the third edition of this annual event presented online with scope to reach an even wider audience.

I am excited to have taken over the CEO role at IMPRESS, following Jonathan Heawood's secondment to the Public Interest News Foundation (PINF) and I look forward to working with Jonathan to ensure that IMPRESS and PINF serve journalism and the general public in complementary ways, with the support of our respective boards of directors and trustees.

As we move into 2020–21, I look forward to leading our staff into the next phase of IMPRESS's growth, working with our board, committees, publishers and wider stakeholders to develop the vision that will guide us in the coming years; a vision that finds new ways of meeting an increasing demand for trust and accountability in digital news.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to our patron, Sir Harry Evans. Sir Harry was a great supporter of IMPRESS, and a remarkable journalist and person, who understood the role that regulation plays in protecting the freedom and integrity of journalism. He will be missed, but his legacy certainly lives on.



Ed Procter
CEO

About IMPRESS

IMPRESS is a press regulator working on behalf of the public to raise the standards of print and digital news reporting and content in the UK.

We support news providers to develop and professionalise their internal governance and complaints management processes, so that they are accountable to their readers and can build trust with them. We provide guidance and resources for publishers to strengthen their editorial decision-making and content quality, to ensure that they are working to high standards.

Our IMPRESS community is growing. At the time of print of this report, we regulate 150+ digital and print publications across the UK, reaching more than 15 million readers each month, including underserved and diverse communities. More news brands join us each quarter.

Journalism and Approved Regulation

Born in 2015 following the recommendations of the Leveson Inquiry, IMPRESS continues to be the only self-regulatory body to be approved under the Royal Charter on self-regulation of the press. This means that we comply with the 29 recognition criteria of independence and effectiveness as set out in the Charter.

These criteria include having an independent board free from the influence of serving editors and politicians, having an independent Appointment Panel, and having a Standards Code under the control of the Board, which addresses freedom of speech and public interest.

For regulated publishers and the public, this means:

- Trusted sources of journalism
- Accountability
- Transparency

Funding and Recognition

IMPRESS will receive core funding from the Independent Press Regulation Trust (IPRT) until 2022, which is guaranteed by the Alexander Mosley Charitable Trust (AMCT). This year we also received grant funding from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (JRRT) for the creation and development of the Independent Publishers Taskforce project (see page 8). In addition, we are funded by membership fees paid by the publishers we regulate, as a percentage of their annual turnover.

Our funding arrangements are reviewed and audited by the Press Recognition Panel, according to the recognition criteria, to ensure that they do not compromise IMPRESS's independence to deal fairly and impartially with publishers and the public.

IMPRESS Standards Code

The IMPRESS Standards Code is the first co-created code for the print and digital press in the UK. The Code consists of ten code clauses, each with their own respective guidance.



More information about the IMPRESS Standards Code and guidance can be found at www.impress.press/standards

The Code clauses:

CLAUSE 1 Accuracy

CLAUSE 2 Attribution and plagiarism

CLAUSE 3 Children

CLAUSE 4 Discrimination

CLAUSE 5 Harassment

CLAUSE 6 Justice

CLAUSE 7 Privacy

CLAUSE 8 Sources

CLAUSE 9 Suicide

CLAUSE 10 Transparency

To learn more about approved press regulation in the UK visit www.pressrecognitionpanel.co.uk

Highlights from 2019–20



More than 130 people attended our second Trust in Journalism Conference in November 2019.

Total applications to join IMPRESS increased by 17% in 2019–20.



15 million monthly readers reached by IMPRESS-regulated publications.



We published podcasts featuring guest speakers looking at issues such as reporting on elections, family courts and countering hate speech.

We hosted delegations from 4 international press councils.



We developed new guidance on online media law and reporting on polls and surveys.



We expanded our work in partnership with organisations like the Market Research Society, JournoResources and the Conscious Advertising Network.

What we've done this year

Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, we have engaged in different activities and projects in the following areas:

- Public engagement and education
- Public interest and policy work
- Services and member benefits for regulated publishers
- Standards and high-quality reporting
- COVID-19 response

Public engagement and education

IMPRESS works on behalf of the public to raise the standards of news content and reporting in the UK. We engage with members of the public on issues of press standards and ethics and on working to improve media literacy.

Industry and academic events

This year we took part in a number of public industry and academic events across the UK and Europe.

In August 2019, IMPRESS hosted a panel discussion at **Byline Festival**, an annual 'international carnival of free speech and independent media' organised and crowdfunded by journalism platform, Byline. Our panel "Digital Killed the Journalism Star? The Future of News" featured IMPRESS-regulated publishers and was chaired by IMPRESS.

Appearing alongside prominent industry figures, IMPRESS Head of Regulation Lexie Kirkconnell-Kawana participated in a panel discussion on the future of journalism at the

JournoResources Live event, held at Sheffield Hallam University in October 2019.

IMPRESS staff gave a lecture to students at City University on press regulation and standards, as well as a lecture to LSE master's students on the history of press regulation and press freedom.

Members of the IMPRESS team travelled to Tbilisi, Georgia for the November **2019 Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe (AIPCE) conference**. Together with delegates representing a number of European countries, IMPRESS facilitated a panel looking at attribution and plagiarism.

We attended the **2019 Internet Governance Forum**



▲ Jonathan Heawood and IMPRESS publishers at Byline Festival

in London, a conference looking at data governance, digital inclusion and security and resilience online, and the **Engaged Journalism Accelerator** conference (of the European Journalism Centre) held in Berlin.

We attended OFCOM's **Making Sense of Media** launch event at the British Library in London, which works to help improve the online skills, knowledge and understanding of UK adults and children through providing robust research and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.



◀ Engaged Journalism Accelerator Conference, Berlin



▲ Trust in Journalism Conference,
November 2019

Facebook News Day for Independents ►



IMPRESS events

Between April and September 2019, we convened the **Independent Publishers Taskforce**, with funding from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (JRRT). This taskforce brought IMPRESS-regulated publishers and key industry stakeholders together, with the goal of addressing the proposals of the Cairncross Review. Discussions covered issues of public interest news and high standards, as well as the broader development of the sector. The process resulted in the creation of the Public Interest News Foundation (PINF), supported by IMPRESS.

In September 2019, IMPRESS co-hosted a **workshop session with Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** to consult on international

standards for journalism developed under the auspices of the Journalism Trust Initiative (JTI), a programme to combat disinformation online. Attendees included independent publishers, fact-checking organisations, and other industry leaders.

November 2019 saw the return of the **IMPRESS Trust in Journalism Conference** for its second year, under the theme 'The World of Independent Publishing'. Industry leaders, stakeholders and independent publishers from across the UK and Europe took to the stage to discuss the main issues facing the sector, showcase innovative initiatives and to share experiences. (See page 12 for further detail about the 2019 Trust in Journalism Conference.)

Also in November, the IMPRESS Communications Team co-hosted a **Facebook News Day for Independents** at the Facebook offices in central London, which independent publishers were able to attend online. The programme included presentations by top members of the Facebook News Team as well as by IMPRESS-regulated publication *Plant Based News*, who presented their social media strategies and talked about their growth.

Finally, in March 2020, members of the IMPRESS team took a trip to Southport to provide open talks with local school students and members of the public about press regulation in the UK, journalism standards and exercising media rights.

Public interest and policy work

IMPRESS works to raise the standards of journalism in the UK. In doing so, we regularly engage with government, policymakers, Peers and MPs across the political spectrum and wider policy networks to help ensure that media policy supports and serves the public, as well as publishers.

During 2019–20, IMPRESS held meetings with various Peers, MPs and government officials working on key media policy issues that impact on press regulation. These issues included the Online Harms consultation, its implications for User-Generated Content on news websites, and the co-regulation implications for IMPRESS and the wider regulatory landscape.

As part of our ongoing engagement strategy, we met with fellow regulatory bodies and key policy networks. We

engaged with the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** on their journalism and age-appropriate design codes. We also engaged with **Ofcom** on media policy updates and attended sessions of their 'Making Sense of Media' network. We engaged with the Law Commission on our ongoing project work in the area of hate speech and abusive and offensive online communications.

We liaised with Ministers, Secretaries and officials at the **Department of Digital,**

Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) about the Online Harms Consultation and attended their Journalism Roundtable alongside other relevant industry bodies and publishers.

In addition, IMPRESS made a number of formal submissions including a response to the Online Harms White Paper, submissions to the Online Advertising Call for Evidence, to the **House of Lords inquiry** on the **Future of Journalism**, and to the **APPG on Religion and the Media inquiry**.



Services and benefits for regulated publishers

At IMPRESS, we regularly review our processes and systems to ensure that we provide the most effective and efficient service for regulated publishers and members of the public.

We improved and promoted our Standards Advice service for IMPRESS regulated publishers. These efforts helped us to increase the number of standards advice requests by **133%** compared to 2018–19 (see details on page 20).

We continued to produce regular newsletters and media updates for our regulated publishers to share with them relevant standards guidance, updates on our services, and alert them to relevant media policies.

We expanded the resources available to IMPRESS members by producing more episodes of our podcast series. This year we covered issues such as 'conscious advertising' (with

the **Conscious Advertising Network**), polling and the 2019 elections (with **IPSOS Mori** CEO Ben Page), the challenges of Family Court Reporting (with the **Transparency Project**), and hate speech and the challenges of online abuse (with the **European Journalism Centre**).

We produced new guidance, resources and best practice notes on topics including 'online media law' and 'providing an opportunity to respond' with the input of our Code Committee.

We worked closely with whistleblowing charity Protect, who operate the IMPRESS Whistleblowing line, to produce a webinar for

IMPRESS members about the role of whistleblowing in the newsroom.

We continued to develop our relationships with Facebook and Twitter to enable us to offer IMPRESS members access to training events and account verification support.

We also organised a series of meetings between IMPRESS members and key stakeholders, including **DCMS** officials, and representatives from big tech including **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Google**, to discuss the vision and concerns of publishers working to shape the future of news in the UK, particularly on how to build trust and promote accountability.



▲ IMPRESS resources for regulated publications

Standards and #HighQualityReporting

In 2019–20, IMPRESS worked on campaigns to support and promote high standards of journalism and high-quality reporting.

In November 2019, in partnership with the **Market Research Society**, IMPRESS created guidance on “Using Polls and Surveys in your Journalism”, which is available online to practising journalists and students. Based on insight from both practitioners and

experts from the polling industry, the guidance offers simple tips for journalists to follow when handling statistical data to ensure responsible reporting. Using the hashtag **#HighQualityReporting** we shared highlights from the guidance in a campaign across Twitter.

We also used the **#HighQualityReporting** hashtag for other campaigns aimed at supporting high

standards of journalism, including Standards Code clause reminders in reference to current affairs such as World Suicide Prevention Day and the Coronavirus outbreak.

IMPRESS has also formed working partnerships with other organisations with a shared interest in supporting high-quality journalism, such as the **Conscious Advertising Network (CAN)** and **JournoResources**.

COVID-19 response

Upon the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of the 2019–20 financial year, we engaged with our regulated publishers to remind them of key considerations emerging from our Standards Code to take into account when reporting on health matters, particularly focusing on accuracy, discrimination and privacy.

We engaged with **DCMS** and relevant authorities to ensure IMPRESS-regulated publishers would be recognised as essential workers during the period of lockdown.

IMPRESS also supported a survey into independent news publishers and COVID-19,

alongside the **Public Interest News Foundation (PINF)**, the **Independent Community News Network (ICNN)** and

Bureau Local (of the Bureau of Investigative Journalism). Results of this survey were published at the end of March 2020.



Media Coverage

This year IMPRESS and its work was featured in several media outlets including BBC Radio 4, *The Drum*, the *Guardian*, the *Spectator*, *Press Gazette*,

Journalism.co.uk and *Hold the Front Page*.

Coverage highlighted new guidance released by IMPRESS, adjudication outcomes and

new members that have come under the IMPRESS regulatory scheme, as well as IMPRESS policy work.

Trust in Journalism Conference 2019

On 14 November 2019, we held our second Trust in Journalism Conference in central London. This IMPRESS annual event brings together some of the leading media professionals in the UK and internationally.

The themes

This year's sessions featured industry experts and practitioners who provided insights on the future of the independent news sector, its sustainability, and its inherent democratic value, underpinned by the need to build trust in journalism.

The sessions addressed topics such as:

- The future of public interest news
- What the audience wants and how to meet readers' expectations
- The sustainability of ad-free business models for news
- The role of transparency and training in building trust
- Cross-border investigative collaborations and the dangers of burnout
- Addressing the democratic deficit via independent news

The day in numbers:

130+ attendees

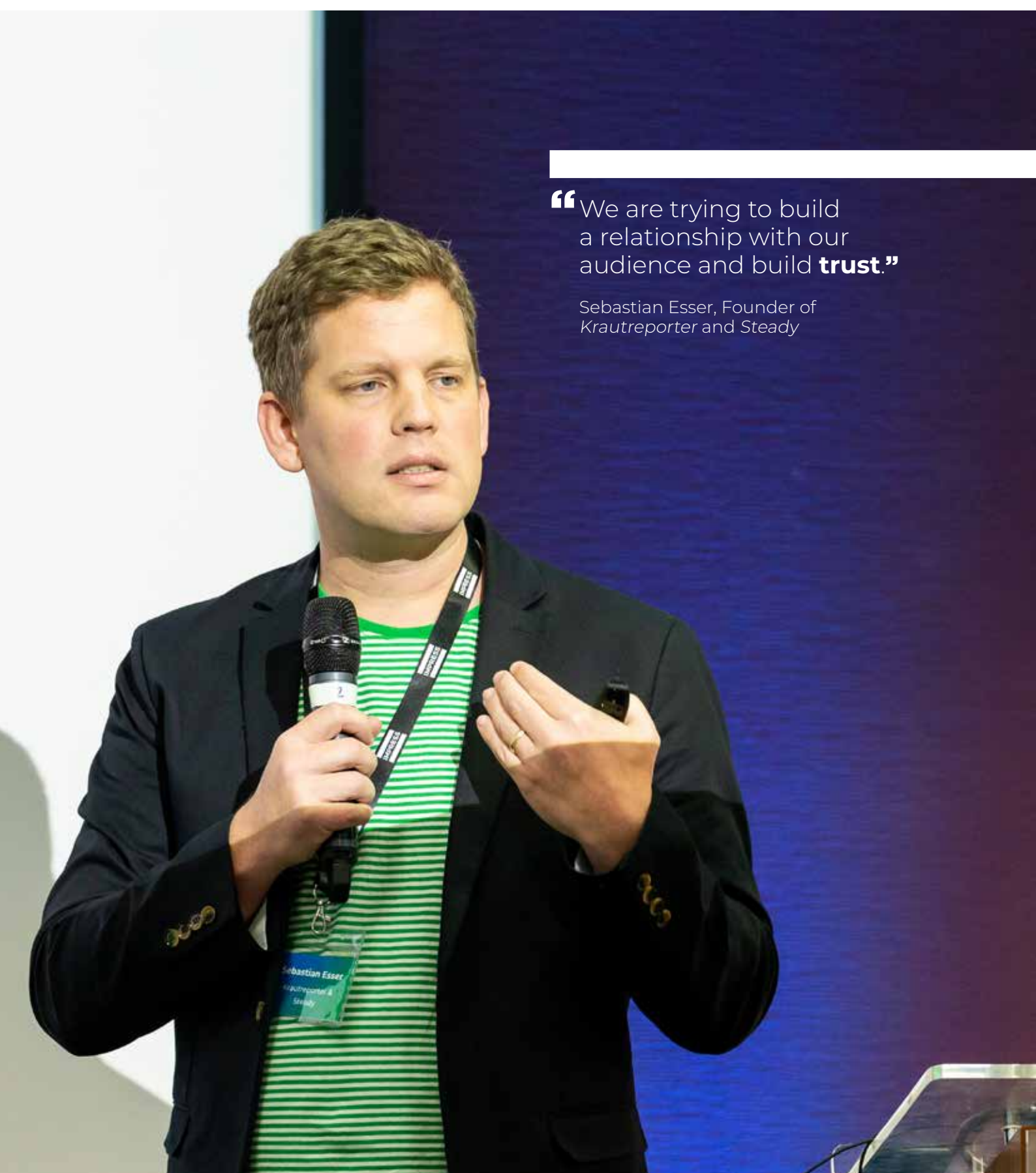
7 panels

18 external speakers



Left to right:
Hardeep Matharu, *Byline Times*;
Lydia Ragoonanan, on behalf
of Nesta ►



A photograph of Sebastian Esser, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue blazer over a green and white striped t-shirt. He is holding a microphone in his right hand and gesturing with his left hand. A lanyard with a badge is around his neck. The background is a dark blue wall.

“We are trying to build a relationship with our audience and build **trust.**”

Sebastian Esser, Founder of
Krautreporter and *Steady*

The speakers

This year's speaker line-up included a variety of professionals from different areas of the media sector.

Speakers included:

- **Dame Frances Cairncross**, Author of the Cairncross Review
- **Lord Inglewood**, Former Chair of the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications
- **Will Gore**, Head of Partnerships and Projects at NCTJ
- **Polly Curtis**, Partner and Editor of *Tortoise*
- **Adam Cantwell-Corn**, Co-founder of *The Bristol Cable*
- **Rachel Oldroyd**, Managing Editor at *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*
- **Sebastian Esser**, Founder of *Krautreporter* and *Steady*
- **Olaf Steenfadt**, Project Director at Reporters Without Borders
- **Harriet Kingaby**, Co-Chair of the Conscious Advertising Network
- **Alison Preston**, Head of Research, Making Sense of Media at Ofcom
- **Hardeep Matharu**, Editor of *Byline Times*
- **Anna-Sophie Harling**, NewsGuard's Head of Europe
- **Mar Cabra**, Head of Data Unit at ICIJ during the Panama Papers investigation
- **Jane Martinson**, Media Columnist at the *Guardian*
- **Kathryn Geels**, Director of the Engaged Journalism Accelerator (EJC)
- **Stephen Khan**, Editor of *The Conversation*
- **Vanessa Baird**, Co-Editor of *New Internationalist*
- **Erica Roffe**, Editor of *Bedford Independent*



▲ Stephen Khan, *The Conversation*

► Left to right: Lord Inglewood;
Dame Frances Cairncross;
Jonathan Heawood





Publishers take the stage

The 2019 Trust in Journalism Conference showcased independent publishers operating all over the world.

UK-based projects represented on stage included slow-news outlet *Tortoise*, the membership-oriented *Bristol Cable*, *New Internationalist*, the *Bedford Independent*, academic journalism publisher *The Conversation*, *Byline Times*, and *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*.

Two sessions in particular helped to demonstrate the invaluable lessons to be learned from Europe. Spanish journalist Mar Cabra, in conversation with media columnist Jane Martinson, discussed her role in the monumental investigative journalism collaboration of the Panama Papers. While in a segment co-organised with the Engaged Journalism Accelerator (of the European Journalism Centre), founder of Berlin-based title *Krautreporter* Sebastian Esser presented on the sustainability of ad-free news and membership models for independent news.

The **Trust in Journalism Conference 2020** will take place in November 2020, online.

For more information on this year's programme, speakers and how to attend, please visit www.trustinjournalism.co.uk



Video highlights from the 2019 Conference are available online: www.trustinjournalism.co.uk

▲ Left to right: Jane Martinson, *The Guardian*; Mar Cabra, ICIJ Data Unit on the Panama Papers

◆ Left to right: Ed Procter, IMPRESS; Michael Casey, *Your Harlow*

IMPRESS and the regulatory community

As an active member of the regulatory community, IMPRESS engages with other regulators and standards initiatives both in the UK and beyond.

Reporters Without Borders

In September 2019, IMPRESS co-hosted a workshop with **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** in London aimed at practising journalists, to consult on international standards for journalism developed under the auspices of the **Journalism Trust Initiative (JTI)**.

The JTI was launched by RSF in April 2019. It is an 'innovative

media self-regulatory initiative designed to combat disinformation online', created in partnership with Agence France Presse, the European Broadcasting Union and the Global Editors Network.

The initiative aims at 'defining indicators for trustworthy journalism. Compliance with them is expected to provide tangible benefits for media

outlets, big and small, and thus, support them to cater to a healthy information space at large.'

In preparation for the launch of the JTI, more than 120 experts including global, national and local outlets, tech companies, regulators and NGOs – including **IMPRESS** – worked together to develop the standards now set out as the JTI indicators.



◀ Above and left: IMPRESS and Reporters Without Borders workshop

Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe (AIPCE)

As part of our membership of the AIPCE, an international network of independent media regulators for both press and broadcast media, we engage with other professionals on best practice in regulation and standards.

For example, we attended the **2019 AIPCE Conference**, which took place in Tbilisi, Georgia in October. The event

was a two-day gathering attended by representatives of self-regulatory bodies, press ombudsmen and media experts from more than 20 European countries. Our Head of Regulation Lexie Kirkconnell-Kawana facilitated a panel discussion looking at best practice in setting standards for attribution and plagiarism.



Global delegations

IMPRESS welcomed delegations from **South Korea, Sri Lanka, Myanmar** and **China** this year. We shared experiences about regulation in our respective jurisdictions and the main challenges that lie ahead for independent and effective regulation in countries around the world.



► Top: Delegates from the South Korean Press Arbitration Commission
Bottom: Delegates from IREX Sri Lanka

Additional regulatory engagement

IMPRESS regularly liaises with other regulatory bodies on a variety of regulatory issues and media policies, including the

Information Commissioner's Office, with regards to its data protection and journalism code of practice; and **Ofcom** with

regards to the proposed Online Harms response and the impact this will have on the UK media regulation landscape.

Keep up to date with the latest IMPRESS news and events on Twitter [@impressreg](https://twitter.com/impressreg).



IMPRESS Standards

This section of the annual report explores aspects of our standards work across 2019–20:

- **Supporting #HighQualityReporting**
- **Code Committee**
- **IMPRESS Services**
 - Standards advice
 - Standards resources
 - Additional standards guidance
- **Standards focal points 2019–20**

Supporting #HighQualityReporting

A central focus of our work at IMPRESS is to raise the standards of journalism in the UK. We do this through the work of our executive staff, our Board and our Code Committee, and by offering different resources, processes and services as part of our Regulatory Scheme.

Key to our standards work are our dedicated services, our Standards Code, and guidance and resources emerging from the work of our Code Committee, as well as specific partnerships with key stakeholders.

Code Committee

Words from the Chair

The Code Committee writes and updates the IMPRESS Standards Code, one of the most important documents of the IMPRESS Regulatory Scheme. We make this document public so that anyone can read and understand the standards IMPRESS and the publications we regulate aspire to, and so that the performance of our publishers can be judged against it.

While the Code can never replace the need for journalists and editors to use their common sense and the knowledge they have gained from their practical experiences when faced with difficult editorial challenges, their judgements can be informed by reference to the Code's clauses to ensure the best possible responses in challenging circumstances.

This year, the Code Committee produced an Opportunity to Respond Best Practice Note to help IMPRESS regulated publishers to make difficult editorial judgements about when to offer an opportunity to respond to those they intend to criticise in their publications. This note is based on real cases and lessons learned from the experience of our Regulatory Committee in adjudicating standards complaints.

The Code Committee is committed to continually improving the Code, which was first published in 2017 after a wide consultation process. We want to ensure it is a live working document for IMPRESS Publishers, which enables them to think their way through some of the most difficult journalistic dilemmas they may face.

This is why the Code Committee has embarked on the first review of the IMPRESS

Standards Code since its initial publication. We are in the very early stages of this process, with the aim of publishing a second edition in 2022 to mark the fifth anniversary of its original publication. The revisions will consider the changing media regulatory framework in the UK, such as the work around Online Harms legislation, the changing challenges of the digital environment and the new realities facing journalism today.



Andrea Wills
Code Committee Chair

Find out more about the Code Committee at www.impress.press/about-us

Services

Standards Advice

IMPRESS receives enquiries from regulated publishers who may have concerns about how some aspect of their journalism may engage the IMPRESS Standards Code.

The Standards Advice service provides IMPRESS members with information and guidance regarding the Standards Code and the Regulatory Scheme. Publishers can contact a member of the regulatory team to get advice on a range of issues, from what clauses of the Standards Code may be relevant to a piece of published work, to how the public interest defence works, and information about the IMPRESS complaints policy and arbitration service.

By offering this service to members and encouraging them to engage with the Code and to scrutinise their decision-making process as part of their editorial work, IMPRESS seeks to actively assist publishers to produce high-quality journalism.

While our Standards Advice

service cannot offer formal legal advice and our regulatory staff cannot take a position that would prejudice their case-handling function, IMPRESS regulated publishers have the option of talking through the ethical or standards compliance implications of their editorial work.

Our staff encourage publishers to critically question their **decision-making process** to:

- ensure appropriate **editorial scrutiny** has been applied;
- consider the application of the Code in-depth;
- conduct **public interest analysis** prior to publication,

to weigh up if the public interest value of publishing outweighs any potential harm to the public; and,

- consider what an investigatory committee might ask about their journalism **in the case of a complaint**.

Receiving information about what the IMPRESS Regulatory Scheme requires from them and how they are protected provides publishers with the reassurance they need to undertake high-quality reporting. It is important to note that, ultimately, the decision of what to publish always lies with the publisher.

“The IMPRESS standards advice service is a quick and reassuring way to make sure that we deal with potential complaints and legal issues in the best way possible.”

Daniel Ionescu, Managing Director, *The Lincolnite & Lincolnshire Reporter*



Standards Resources

Underpinning the high-quality journalism that IMPRESS regulated publications produce is their commitment and adherence to the IMPRESS Standards Code and guidance.

At IMPRESS, our Code Committee is responsible for advising the IMPRESS Board and the Executive on the Standards Code and guidance. Regularly reviewing both is necessary to ensure that these tools continue to meet the needs of publishers and the public.

The Code Committee and the Executive work hand in hand to ensure that the Standards Code continues to be fit for purpose, and that any additional guidance is provided as needed. The Executive collects data from publishers via standards advice requests, adjudication and arbitration decisions, as well as through public enquiries and submissions. This information is then fed back to the Code Committee which asks if, in light of this new information, the Standards Code continues to be fit for purpose.

The Code Committee can also proactively assess whether there are any gaps in the application of the Code that may need to be addressed by producing new guidance or resources.

This year for example, we have produced standards resources complementing our code and guidance on providing an opportunity to respond, online media law and reporting on polls and surveys, amongst others.

BEST PRACTICE NOTE OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND

IMPRESS

February 2020

This IMPRESS Best Practice Note is intended to help IMPRESS regulated publishers make difficult editorial judgements about whether to offer people an opportunity to respond before a story about them is published, when that story has the potential to negatively impact on their reputation and/or some aspect of their personal or professional lives.

It is not obligatory to offer someone an opportunity to respond, and there may be occasions when to do so is not appropriate and/or it is not in the interests of investigative journalism.

This Best Practice Note is based on real cases and lessons learned from the experience of our Regulatory Committee in adjudicating complaints against the IMPRESS Standards Code.

THIS BEST PRACTICE NOTE RELATES TO THE **ACCURACY** CODE CLAUSE

- > 1.1. Publishers must take all reasonable steps to ensure accuracy.

It also relates to the following Guidance on Code Clause 1.1:

- > "The Code does not create an absolute duty to publish only incontrovertibly true facts. Instead, it means that publishers must take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to verify the truth of the information presented."

CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO

The significance of possible inaccuracies and their likely consequences.



The likely reliability of the source(s) being used.



The attempts made to corroborate a story.



The urgency of publishing the story.



Whether reasonable attempts were made, prior to publication, to contact people for whom publication could potentially have a significant adverse impact in relation to privacy, confidentiality, family and children or professional and/or personal reputations, and consider whether to publish their responses to those criticism(s).



Additional Standards Guidance

IMPRESS engages with specialist organisations and experts to co-create standards resources for regulated publishers on specific reporting issues.

This year, we have worked with The Transparency Project, The Market Research Society and other experts to produce a range of additional guidance documents, podcasts and guest blog posts on issues

including the reporting of polls and statistics, family court reporting, and responsible coverage of Muslims and Islam.

We also worked with online media law expert Dr Holly Powell-Jones to produce a four-part video series exclusive to IMPRESS members, 'Online Media Law: The Basics'. This training resource provides an overview of essential aspects of online media law from

libel and defamation, to user generated content and a journalist's rights when dealing with online harassment, which publishers can access at their convenience.

These additional resources draw on the expertise of specialists to help support the high standard of journalism we expect from our regulated publishers and to complement the IMPRESS Standards Code.



Reporting on Muslims and Islam: Key takeaways.

- 1 Carefully consider how the Muslim community is **portrayed** in your reporting & be sure to **seek the views of Muslims themselves**.
- 2 Be careful **not to sensationalise** stories involving Muslims & check with experts about the use of **terminology**, including in quotations from others.
- 3 When writing about Muslims, remember the acronym '**PART**' for **Portrayal, Accuracy, Representation and Terminology**.

Source: Media Guidelines - Reporting on Muslims and Islam, Mir & Hopkins, 2019.

“By signing up to the IMPRESS Standards Code, members commit to quality and accountability in all aspects of their journalism. Our role is to affirm that commitment by providing ongoing support with a range of standards resources.”

Lexie Kirkconnell-Kawana,
Head of Regulation

Standards focal points 2019–20

Polls, surveys and research

IMPRESS encouraged the responsible reporting of statistical data with the production of a dedicated guidance resource, co-created with the Market Research Society (MRS), and a podcast on coverage of the 2019 Elections with IPSOS Mori.



Online media law

We provided publishers with an understanding of the essentials of online media law, through the creation of a dedicated video series exclusive for IMPRESS regulated publishers, covering themes like contempt of court, reporting restrictions, and protecting sources in the digital age.



Family Court reporting

We shared guidance created by the Transparency Project on attending and reporting on family law cases and produced a dedicated podcast.

Opportunity to respond

We provided guidance on how to offer an opportunity to respond to individuals and organisations who may be potentially affected by published material.



Hate speech

We featured a discussion about hate speech and dealing with abuse online, with the European Journalism Centre (EJC).



Code review

The Code Committee has embarked on the first review of the IMPRESS Standards Code since its initial publication. Revisions will consider the changing media regulatory framework in the UK and involve a series of consultations.

Additional guidance and resources separate from our Standards Code are available on www.impress.press/standards

Who we regulate

The IMPRESS network of regulated publications continues to expand. In the year 2019–20, the number of publishers applying to join IMPRESS grew by **17%**, and the total number of regulated publications increased by **9%** (see page 27 for details).

Accountable journalism for diverse audiences across the UK

IMPRESS publications serve diverse communities across the UK with both digital and print news. From niche and specialist audiences to religious and cultural denominations, and rural and remote areas to inner city neighbourhoods, our regulated publishers are reaching

communities across the country and across the world.

From international publishers who reach millions of readers every month, to local titles serving their local communities, all of the publishers under our scheme have voluntarily applied to be regulated by IMPRESS, as part of a commitment to

producing high-quality public interest journalism that is accountable to their readers.

Our publishers have an incredible impact on the people their journalism serves; here's a handful of examples demonstrating the great range of our publishers and their work.

Visit www.impress.press/regulated-publications for more information about our members.

The journalism produced by IMPRESS-regulated publications reaches **15 million readers** each month.

We regulate **94** publishers, collectively publishing **158** publications.*

*Correct at time of print, October 2020.

International news and current affairs:

New Internationalist. A leading independent news organization publishing in-depth journalism on international human rights, politics, and social and environmental justice since 1973. **Asian Lite.** A digital newspaper serving the Indian diaspora across the world. **Wielka Brytania Online.** London-based news site covering UK and international news for the Polish community in the UK.

Specialised news:

Plant Based News. Award-winning multi-platform news company covering health content for the global vegan community. **The Conversation UK.** Independent publisher of news and views sourced from over 112,000 specialist scholars and researchers from the worldwide academic and research community. **EachOther.** Digital publication that brings together journalists, professional storytellers and creatives to increase public knowledge of and support for human rights. **NursingNotes.** Online site covering nursing and healthcare news.

Independent investigative news:

BellingCat. Award-winning collective of researchers, investigators and citizen journalists using open source and social media investigation. **The Ferret.** Scottish investigative journalism platform and fact-checking service. **DeSmog.** An investigative media outlet focusing on climate science news.

Local news, community news & citizen journalism:

Star & Crescent. An independent news site 'by and for the people of Portsmouth', that regularly publishes under-represented voices. **West Leeds Dispatch.** A community-led local news organisation for West Leeds, also providing regular training for citizen reporters. **The Lincolnite.** Website for Lincoln news, events, jobs and property. **Now Then magazine.** Free high-quality print citizen journalism exploring politics, culture and social change in Sheffield and Manchester. **Your Thurrock.** Online newspaper covering 3,000 stories a year about life in Thurrock.



Regulatory report

Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020:

- IMPRESS received **21** applications from publishers wishing to join the Regulatory Scheme.
- **15** publishers successfully completed pre-regulation compliance assessments and entered into a Regulatory Scheme Agreement with IMPRESS.
- IMPRESS received **46** complaints, **21** standards advice requests, and **1** advisory notice request. In addition, IMPRESS finalised **1** investigation conducted under its own initiative.

Applications to IMPRESS

In this past year, **21** publishers have applied to be regulated by IMPRESS.

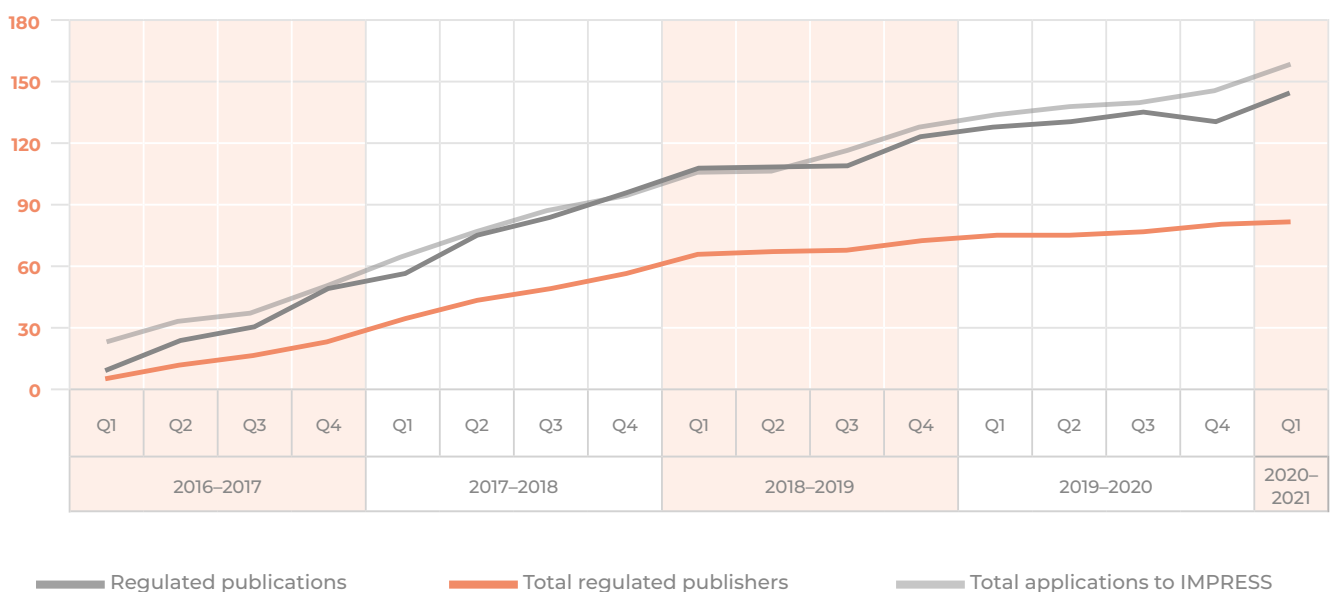
The total number of publisher applications to join IMPRESS received by 31 March 2020 was **148**. This represents a 17% increase in applications.

Regulated publishers

In 2019–20, **15** new publishers (**29** publications) successfully completed pre-regulation compliance assessments and came under the remit of the IMPRESS Regulatory Scheme.

In this same period, **4** publishers withdrew from the Scheme owing to change in company structure, financial difficulty or ceasing publication.

On 31 March 2020, a total of **80** publishers (**133** publications) were regulated by IMPRESS. This represents a **9%** increase in regulated publications since last year.



Referrals to IMPRESS

Complaints

During the year ended 31 March 2020, IMPRESS received a total of 46 complaints. Out of these:

7 (15%) were accepted and investigated

23 (50%) were referred back to the publisher to resolve within the 21-day period allowed and resulted in the complainant withdrawing their complaint to IMPRESS

5 (11%) were related to a publisher not regulated by IMPRESS

5 (11%) were outside the scope of the IMPRESS Regulatory Scheme*

4 (9%) were withdrawn by the complainant after being accepted by IMPRESS

2 (4%) are ongoing and yet to be resolved

*These were:

- A complaint that fell under the ASA's remit
- Complaints that did not engage with the IMPRESS Standards Code
- Complaints regarding copyright, an area which is not covered by the arbitration scheme



During the year ended 31 March 2020, **8** complaints were adjudicated*

Of the **8** complaints adjudicated:

2 (25%) were upheld

5 (62.5%) were dismissed

1 (12.5%) was not accepted

Of the complaints that were upheld or upheld in part, the following sanctions and remedies were directed by the Committee:

2 complaints were upheld: the first required a correction and the full adjudication to be published and the second required a correction, full adjudication, and an apology to be published.

In relation to the **8** complaints adjudicated, IMPRESS investigated 10 alleged breaches of the Code:

7 were related to Accuracy – Clause 1

1 was related to Discrimination – Clause 4

1 was related to Harassment – Clause 5

1 was related to Privacy – Clause 7

Further details of complaint volumes for IMPRESS regulated publishers (per publication) during 2019–20 can be found on pages 34–37.

*one complaint referred to IMPRESS in 2018–19 was adjudicated in 2019–20

Find out more at impress.press/complaints

Complaints case studies

When a complaint is accepted by IMPRESS, the result of the process is a ‘complaint adjudication’ (or decision) issued by a Regulatory Committee of the IMPRESS Board. All decisions are final.

During 2019–20, IMPRESS handled a variety of complaints regarding different clauses of our Standards Code. We include here three case studies from the past year, in which we summarise the decision process and outcome.

All complaint adjudications are made public on impress.press/regulation

Case 206 | 2019

Mr Tom Watson and The SKWAWKBOX

Complaint: A directly affected party complained about harassment and privacy regarding an article headlined “Watson’s party within party form should NOT be used to let him know what you think,” that appeared in The SKWAWKBOX on 11 March 2019. A complaint was escalated to IMPRESS after the complainant had first complained to the publisher and was not satisfied with the final decision and action of the publisher.

Clauses: Harassment 5.1 and Privacy 7.1 of the IMPRESS Standards Code.

Result and decision: Complaint dismissed. No breach of the Code.

Additional comments by the Committee: The Harassment clause of the Code is intended to cover a pattern of behaviour involving intimidating, threatening or abusive journalistic and newsgathering activity. The Committee did not consider that the Publisher’s conduct nor the article as published went so far as to engage the Harassment Clause. Rather, as part of ordinary political discourse, it was legitimate for someone to contact a senior public figure and member of parliament to put forward their views.

Case 264 | 2019

Gina Miller and Unity New Network

Complaint: A directly affected party complained about the accuracy of an article headlined “Gina Miller accused of new secret plot to HALT Brexit” which appeared on Unity News Network (online) on 14 December 2019. A complaint was escalated to IMPRESS after the complainant had first complained to the publisher and was not satisfied with the final decision and action of the publisher.

Clauses: Accuracy 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 of the IMPRESS Standards Code.

Result and decision: Complaint upheld. Breach of

Clauses 1.1 and 1.2. Publisher to publish correction, apology and full adjudication.

Additional comments by the Committee: The published article contained a serious allegation that could have exposed the Complainant to the risk of abuse or serious threats to her person. Indeed, the Committee was supplied with evidence from the Complainant which confirmed that she had in fact received online threats and harassment from third parties. The Committee considered that the steps required to ensure accuracy would have included putting the allegation to the Complainant before publication. The Publisher did not make any attempt to contact the Complainant, nor others mentioned in the article, in order to check the veracity of the story. The Committee also noted that no other attempts were made by the Publisher to corroborate the story.

Case 271 | 2020

Roman Solomatenko and BellingCat

Complaint: A third-party complained about the accuracy of an article headlined, “Dispatches From Asgardsrei: Ukraine’s Annual Neo-Nazi Music Festival,” that first appeared in BellingCat on 2 January 2020. A complaint was escalated to IMPRESS after the complainant had first complained to the publisher and was not satisfied with the final decision and action of the publisher.

Clauses: Accuracy 1.4 of the IMPRESS Standards Code.

Result and decision: Complaint not accepted. Regulatory scheme part 4.7.

Additional comments by the Committee: The Committee considered that this complaint of inaccuracy was manifestly unjustified and was an attempt to argue an opinion. The complaint should not have been accepted by IMPRESS and the publisher should not have been required to produce the comprehensive defence of its story that it did. The Committee therefore declined to accept the complaint.

Published complaint adjudications (during the year ended 31 March 2020)

271/2020 Roman Solomatenko and BellingCat

Publication: BellingCat

Date of complaint: 09 January 2020

Date complaint accepted: 19 January 2020

Date of adjudication: 24 March 2020

Relevant clauses: Accuracy 1.4 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint not accepted. Regulatory scheme part 4.7.

265/2019 Marc Harris and The SKWAWKBOX

Publication: The SKWAWKBOX

Date of complaint: 19 December 2019

Date complaint accepted: 07 January 2020

Date of adjudication: 10 February 2020

Relevant clauses: Accuracy 1.2 and 1.4 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint upheld. Breach of Clauses 1.2 and 1.4. Publisher to publish correction and full adjudication

264/2019 Gina Miller and Unity News Network

Publication: Unity News Network

Date of complaint: 16 December 2019

Date complaint accepted: 10 January 2020

Date of adjudication: 14 February 2020

Relevant clauses: Accuracy 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint upheld. Breach of Clauses 1.1 and 1.2. Publisher to publish correction, apology and full adjudication.

257/2019 Ashley Borges and Evolve Politics

Publication: Evolve Media Ltd (@evolvepolitics)

Date of complaint: 27 November 2019

Date complaint accepted: 07 January 2020

Date of adjudication: 10 February 2020

Relevant clauses: Accuracy 1.1 and 1.4 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint dismissed. No breach.

224/2019 Khayaal Theatre Company and 5PillarsUK (online)

Publication: 5Pillars UK

Date of complaint: 30 May 2019

Date complaint accepted: 07 November 2019

Date of adjudication: 12 February 2020

Relevant clauses: Accuracy 1.1 and 1.4 and Discrimination 4.3 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint dismissed. No breach.

463/2019 Mr Stuart Campbell and The Ferret (online)

Publication: The Ferret

Date of complaint: 29 July 2019

Date complaint accepted: 31 July 2019

Date of adjudication: 16 August 2019

Relevant clauses: Accuracy 1.2 and 1.4 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint dismissed. No breach.

222/2019 Mr Chris Rodger and Brixton Bugle

Publication: Brixton Bugle

Date of complaint: 24 May 2019

Date complaint accepted: 11 June 2019

Date of adjudication: 15 July 2019

Relevant clauses: Accuracy 1.1 and 1.2 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint dismissed. No breach.

206/2019 Mr Tom Watson and The SKWAWKBOX

Publication: The SKWAWKBOX

Date of complaint: 12 March 2019

Date complaint accepted: 03 April 2019

Date of adjudication: 03 May 2019

Relevant clauses: Harassment 5.1 and Privacy 7.1 of the IMPRESS Standards Code

Outcome: Complaint dismissed. No breach.

Requests for arbitration

Our arbitration process: When a member of the public seeks legal redress and compensation from a publisher, they may make a request for arbitration as an alternative to going to court. Such requests must include a legitimate course of action against a publisher in one or more of the six areas covered by our scheme: defamation, breach of confidence, misuse of private information, malicious falsehood, harassment, breach of the Data Protection Act. An independent arbitrator then issues a binding arbitration award.

IMPRESS has not received any arbitration requests this year.

Advisory notice requests

Our advisory notices process: Members of the public who are experiencing unwanted press intrusion may ask IMPRESS to issue a warning or advice to regulated publishers. The request may be considered if a subsequent complaint is received.

During the year ended 31 March 2020, IMPRESS issued one advisory notice in response to an advisory notice request.

This advisory notice was issued within 24 hours of being requested.

Advisory notice requests issued (in the year ended 31 March 2020)

274 Request on behalf of the family member of a recently incarcerated individual

Date of request: 05 February 2020

Date of notice: 05 February 2020

Request from a representative acting on behalf of the family member of an individual who had recently been imprisoned to respect their privacy and wish not to engage with the media, and to not link the family member by extraneous text references or in photographs to the activities for which their relative was convicted, on grounds of preventing them and their colleagues from experiencing harassment, alarm and distress.

IMPRESS-initiated investigations

How IMPRESS-initiated investigations work: If IMPRESS becomes aware of a serious or systemic breach of the Standards Code or internal governance requirements by a regulated publication, we have powers to investigate a matter on our own initiative.

During the year ended 31 March 2020, IMPRESS concluded one standards investigation from 2018–19, which produced a ‘no case to answer’ outcome.

Standards advice

How Standards Advice works: If an IMPRESS publisher requires specific advice and guidance on business practice, ethics or how the IMPRESS Standards Code may apply to a particular story, they can contact IMPRESS.

During the year ended 31 March 2020, IMPRESS handled 21 publisher enquiries concerning IMPRESS standards.

More information about the Standards Advice service is available on page 20.

Service Complaints Reviewer

IMPRESS aims to provide publishers, editors and members of the public with a consistently good level of service. However, if for any reason an individual or organisation is unhappy with the service we provide, our Service Complaints Reviewer, independent from our Board and staff, will consider in scope complaints. For more information visit our Service Standards page under Policies on our website.

Compliance process and procedures

IMPRESS conducts interim compliance checks throughout the year and an annual compliance return check at the end of each financial year to ensure regulated publications remain compliant with the requirements of our Regulatory Scheme.

There are two goals of the annual compliance returns. The first is to make sure governance information for all our regulated publications is up to date and that their respective complaints and compliance systems are working correctly. The second is to gather information about the complaints that publishers have received, whether the complaints were accepted or dismissed, and to understand how complaints were resolved.

Interim and annual return checks ensure publishers continue to be compliant, to operate ethically and to be accountable to the public.

In the annual compliance returns, completed through the IMPRESS Services Hub, publishers reconfirm, amend or submit:

- information about their internal governance processes
- information about any compliance failures
- details of steps taken to deal with compliance failures
- information about complaints they have received during each financial year.

This information is important input for IMPRESS Annual Reports. The 2019–20 detailed information is available on pages 34–37.

Behind the figures: Complaints received by IMPRESS regulated publishers in 2019–20

Internal complaints: In 2019–20, **34%** of our publishers received complaints from members of the public. Of those unique complaints made, **40%** were upheld by the publishers resulting in clarifications, corrections and apologies. We consider this shows the willingness of IMPRESS publishers to consistently engage with their readers, resolve complaints and be accountable to the public.

Further, publishers made **35** corrections either as a direct result of complaints or on their own initiative. As part of the regulatory process, we are aware of occasions when readers may request articles to be corrected immediately or to be taken down. It is important for readers to understand that the most efficient means of achieving corrections is by engaging with publishers directly through the complaints process, as investigations undertaken by IMPRESS can take up to 42 days and an adjudication by the committee may not decide in your favour. Therefore, we are pleased to note that our regulated publishers continue to respond to issues when they are alerted to them by readers and proactively correct information.

Reviewing internal complaints procedures in practice: Self-regulation provides publishers with the opportunity to respond to complaints in the first instance. When complainants are not satisfied with a publisher's response, they then have a right to escalate their complaint to IMPRESS. This is an important step in the complaints procedure, which allows for IMPRESS to review the steps taken by a publisher to resolve a complaint.

In 2019–20, of the total complainants that contacted IMPRESS, **27%** followed the complaints procedure correctly by contacting the publisher in question directly, before escalating their complaint to IMPRESS.

We are committed to informing and educating the public on our complaints procedure and IMPRESS standards so that both publishers and complainants can continue to meaningfully engage in self-regulatory best practice.

Further detail of 2019–20 complaint volumes for IMPRESS publishers is reflected in the table that follows.

Complaint volumes of IMPRESS regulated publishers (per publication) in 2019-20.*

The information on this table is provided by each publisher as part of our annual compliance returns (see page 33 for more information).

*Many businesses have been impacted by COVID-19 this year, including many news publishers. As a result of this, 5% of IMPRESS publishers were unable to submit their annual return for the 2019-20 financial year, in time for publication of this report, and have therefore been marked with an X in the table below.

Publisher	Publication	Complaints made to Publisher	Articles complained about	Complainants contacting IMPRESS	Complaints escalated to IMPRESS	Articles complained about escalated to IMPRESS	Complaints upheld by IMPRESS	Complaints dismissed by IMPRESS	Withdrawn
SPillars Media Ltd	SPillars	6	3	3	1	1	0	1	0
BellingCat	BellingCat	2	2	2	2	2	0	1	1
Bristol 24/7	Bristol 24/7	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Bristol24/7 Magazine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brixton Media C.I.C	Brixton Bugle	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
	Brixton Blog	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Byline Media Holdings Limited	Byline	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Canary Media Limited	The Canary	20	19	2	0	0	0	0	0
Climate Change News Ltd	Climate Home News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common Weal Limited	Common Space	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cornish Stuff	CornishStuff.com	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cranfield and Marston Vale Chronicle	Cranfield and Marston Vale Chronicle (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Cranfield and Marston Vale Chronicle (Print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crossing The Borders Ltd	Brexit Standard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Brexit Standard (Print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Derby News	Derby News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Descrier Limited	The Descrier	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DeSmog UK Limited	DeSmog UK	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
EachOther	EachOther	6	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Devon News.co.uk	East Devon News (online)	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
EEIO Ltd	Stroud Live	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Totnes Live	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emerging Europe Ltd	Emerging Europe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Emerging Europe (Quarterly Print)	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
EN.Two (Sole Trader)	entwo.org	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evolve Media LTD	Evolve Politics	3	3	2	1	1	0	1	0
Gosport Globe Community Publications CIC	The Gosport and Fareham Sunday Globe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Exeter CIC	Exeter Observer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hastings Online Times	Hastings Online Times	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hyperlocal News Ltd	Your Harlow	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Your Thurrock	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
indeMedia LTD	Nottingham Times	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	NursingNotes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inside Moray	Inside Moray	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
Iraq Business News Ltd	Iran Business News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Iraq Business News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Libya Business News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IW Observer Ltd	Isle of Wight Observer (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Isle of Wight Observer (print)	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
IW Publications (The Irish World)	The Irish World (Online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	The Irish World (Printed Edition)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JNPMedia Ltd	Politics Means Politics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Keynsham & Saltford Times Ltd	The Week In – Newspaper (NE Somerset & East Bristol)	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Keynsham & Saltford Times Ltd	The Week In – Online (NE Somerset and E Bristol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Left Foot Forward	Left Foot Forward	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lighthouse Media (C.I) Limited (Bailiwick Publishing)	Express Guernsey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Express Jersey	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Connect Guernsey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Connect Jersey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Llanelli Online	Llanelli Online	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	1
Local Communications Ltd	Denton Correspondent (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Denton Correspondent (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hyde Correspondent (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hyde Correspondent (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mossley Correspondent (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mossley Correspondent (Print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Royton Correspondent (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Royton Correspondent (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Saddleworth Independent (Print)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Saddleworth Independent (online)	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Shaw and Crompton Correspondent (Online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Shaw and Crompton Correspondent (Print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Stalybridge Correspondent (Online)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Stalybridge Correspondent (Print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Tameside Correspondent (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Tameside Correspondent (print)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Make Some Noise Communications Ltd (Gedling Eye)	Gedling Eye	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Media Bath Limited	Bath Echo (Online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Bath Echo (Print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Publisher	Publication	Complaints made to Publisher	Articles complained about	Complainants contacting IMPRESS	Complaints escalated to IMPRESS	Articles complained about escalated to IMPRESS	Complaints upheld by IMPRESS	Complaints dismissed by IMPRESS	Withdrawn
Media In & Out Lid	Cooltura (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Cooltura (Printed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Polskie Radio Londyn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
My Turriff	My Turriff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nailed (Belper Alternative News)	Nailed	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
Network Norwich & Norfolk (part of Christian Community	Good News for Norwich & Norfolk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Network Norwich & Norfolk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Internationalist Publications Ltd	New Internationalist Magazine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	New Internationalist Online	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newry.ie CIC	Newry.ie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
News and Media Republic Ltd	ArtsCulture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	D&CFilm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	The Devon Week	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
On the Wight Ltd	The PRSD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	On the Wight News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Opus Independents Ltd	Now Then (Sheffield print edition)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Now Then Magazine (Manchester)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Now Then Magazine (Sheffield)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PBT Media Relations (Southport Reporter)	Formby Reporter	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Liverpool Reporter	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mersey Reporter	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Southport Reporter	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planet: the Welsh Internationalist (Berw Ltd)	Planet Extra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Planet: the Welsh Internationalist (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Planet: the Welsh Internationalist (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plant Based News LTD	Plant Based News	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Post Newspapers Ltd	Bognor Regis Post Newspapers (online)	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Bognor Regis Post Newspapers (print)	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Chichester Post Newspapers (online)	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Chichester Post Newspapers (print)	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
Progress Publishing Ltd	Bedford Independent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Bedford Independent (online)	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	0
Ragged Trouser Productions Limited	Cornwall Reports	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Brand Media LTD (West Wales Chronicle)	Llanelli Standard (online)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Llanelli Standard (print)	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
	The West Wales Chronicle	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Reigate.uk Online Limited	Reigate.uk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SAAZ Digitech Ltd	Asian Lite (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Asian Lite newspaper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shetland News Online Ltd	Shetland News	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shropshire Live LLP	Shropshire Live	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small City, Big Personality	Small City, Big Personality	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0
So Counties	So Cheshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	So Derbyshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Spider CIC	EC1 Echo (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Enfield Dispatch (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Enfield Dispatch (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Tottenham Community Press (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Tottenham Community Press (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Waltham Forest Echo – Online	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Waltham Forest Echo – Print Edition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Leeds Life C.I.C	South Leeds Life (online)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	South Leeds Life (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Molton & District News	South Molton & District News	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Star & Crescent Community Media CIC	Star & Crescent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stonebow Media Limited	Lincolnshire Reporter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	The Lincolnite	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
The Bellman (Sole Trader – Jane Cruickshank)	The Bellman	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Conversation Trust (UK) Limited	The Conversation UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Ferret Media Ltd	The Ferret	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	0
The Guildford Dragon	The Guildford Dragon NEWS	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Isle of Thanet News	The Isle of Thanet News (online)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	The Isle of Thanet News (print)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Lochside Press	The Lochside Press	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The SKWAWKBOX	The Skwawkbox	4	4	6	2	2	1	0	1
Thousand Hands Ltd t/as Novara Media	Novara Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
union-news.co.uk	union-news.co.uk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unity News Network LTD	Unity News Network	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
VIEW/digital	View Magazine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	VIEW/digital	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WBO MEDIA LIMITED	Wielka Brytania Online	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wendover News Ltd	Wendover News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wendover News (Printed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Leeds Dispatch	West Leeds Dispatch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wycombe Today	Wycombe Today	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL				41	11	11	2	5	4

Board

IMPRESS is governed by a board with a wealth of skills and experience. Appointed by an independent Appointment Panel. The Chair and Board members of IMPRESS meet regularly and adjudicate all complaints escalated to the Board. The Board has ultimate responsibility for IMPRESS's Regulatory Scheme, Standards Code, adjudications, strategic planning and oversees the delivery of this strategy by working closely in collaboration with the CEO and executive team.

Chair



Walter Merricks CBE was the first Chief Ombudsman of the Financial Ombudsman Service, with responsibility for an organisation of 1,500 staff and a £90m budget. He recently completed a six-year term as a member of the board of the Gambling Commission and has been involved in dispute resolution and regulation in the fields of legal services, healthcare, insurance, energy and intellectual property, among others. He is a member of the Civil Aviation Authority's consumer panel. Earlier in his career he also worked as a legal journalist and academic.

Members



Deborah Arnott is Chief Executive of Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), which has a reputation as one of the UK's most effective campaigning charities. She was awarded the Alwyn Smith prize by the Faculty of Public Health for her role in getting the ban on smoking in public places. After gaining an MBA from Cranfield and working in print and TV journalism she set up and ran the Financial Service Authority's consumer education function. As a producer and programme editor in current affairs and documentaries she developed and ran a wide range of programmes for ITV and Channel 4.



Cordella Bart-Stewart has over 30 years' experience as a solicitor and established her own general legal practice in North London in 1990. She has a strong interest in equality and human rights issues and has specialised in family and immigration law for over 25 years. She has been a fee paid Judge of the First Tier Tribunal since 2000. Formerly an independent Governor of Staffordshire University, which awarded her an Honorary Doctorate. She is a Chartered Manager and Companion of the Chartered Management Institute. She is a serving Director and founding member of the award winning Black Solicitors Network, was shortlisted as the Law Society Gazette Legal Personality of the Year in the Law Society Excellence Awards 2014 and is a member of the Council of Law Society of England & Wales.



Debrah Harding has worked on behalf of the research sector for over 20 years. As Managing Director of the Market Research Society (MRS), Debrah leads on its standards, policy and public affairs activities, working extensively with government departments and global institutions. Debrah has a wealth of knowledge of ethical Codes, quality standards, guidelines and data protection/GDPR and their enforcement. Debrah is also Chair of the Global Business Research Network (GRBN), Vice-President of the European Research Federation (EFAMRO), a member of the BSI Standards Policy & Strategy Committee, a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and Fellow of the RSA.



Shelina Janmohamed is an author, public speaker and newspaper columnist. She has written for publications such as The Telegraph, The Guardian, the BBC and Campaign Magazine, and is a regular opinion columnist in The National UAE. She works in the advertising and branding industry and has worked with some of the world's biggest companies such as Coca-Cola, Unilever and Nestle. She sits as an advisor on WPP's Inclusion Board as well as the Inclusion Board for Ogilvy. She is a globally recognised expert on Muslim consumer trends. She has been named one of the UK's 100 most powerful Muslim women.



David Leigh was Anthony Sampson professor of reporting at City, University of London 2006-18. Until he retired from the paper in 2013, he was investigations editor at The Guardian for 13 years. In a journalism career spanning over 40 years he also worked for The Observer, The Times, The Scotsman, Granada TV, Thames TV and the Washington Post. He has won numerous journalism awards including Investigation of the Year 2015 (British Journalism Awards), Lifetime Achievement Award 2013, Global Investigative Journalism Network, and awards at the British Press Awards in 1979, 1996 and 1997. His latest book is *Investigative Journalism – a survival guide*.



David Robinson (Treasurer and Senior Independent Board Member) is Non-Executive Director and Audit Committee Chair of Forester Life (UK), Trustee of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, lay member of the Investigations Committee of the Chartered Accountants of Scotland, and a Trustee of diversity charity, 'Changing the Chemistry'. He is the former Chair of insurer Engage Mutual, former Governor and Audit & Risk Committee Chair of Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh and former Chair of the charity 'Smalls for All'. An actuary, he was the founder and former CEO of life insurer, Bright Grey (Royal London).



Pam Vick is the Founder of Caspia Consultancy Ltd and is a highly regarded commercial business development and strategic consultant, advising Boards and business owners for over 15 years. She specialises in B2B and digital transformation, with experience across many sectors including Professional Services, Software, Recruitment, Finance, Technology (inc FinTech), Travel, Manufacturing, Media and Charities. Her executive board and C-Suite experience includes a \$1.5b global advertising agency and a €500m online recruitment European IPO success story. She was also European Marketing Director of Hertz, a \$9.5b leading travel brand. Pam is an Ambassador for Women on Boards UK and Boardroom Advisors, a member of the Advisory Board for the charity DEBRA, a member of the Chairman's Network, and has contributed to advertising effectiveness textbooks and articles including IPA Advertising Effectiveness Awards.



Andrea Wills has exceptional experience in broadcasting regulation, standard setting, and investigating serious editorial failings in the UK and Australia. She was Independent Editorial Adviser to the BBC Trust and investigated over 60 complaints about BBC content over the decade it existed. She began her career as a journalist and news editor in local radio, moved to television as an executive producer, before joining the BBC's Editorial Policy team as its Chief Adviser. In Australia she worked for the ABC in Sydney, conducting independent reviews of broadcast content, developing editorial and media ethics standards, and training senior journalists. Andrea is on the Appeals Panel for the Video Standards Council Rating Board and is vice-chair of the board of the West Country based Learn@Multi-Academy Trust and chair of its Quality and Standards Committee.

Iain Christie (retired 30/09/2019)

Emma Jones (retired 31/12/2019)

Máire Messenger-Davies (retired 30/09/2019)

Patrick Swaffer (retired 19/02/2020)

Panels and Committees

(October 2020)

Appointment Panel

Caroline Instance (Chair)
Jean Gray
Chris Kenny
Paul McFarlane
Walter Merricks CBE
David Robinson
Damian Tambini

Tom Murdoch (retired 19 July 2020)

Finance and Audit Committee

David Robinson (Chair)
James Flint
Walter Merricks CBE
Pam Vick

Richard Fass (retired 31/07/2020)

Code Committee

Andrea Wills (Chair)
Vanessa Baird
Shelina Janmohamed
Emma Jones
Walter Merricks CBE
Gavin Phillipson
Matt Walsh
Lorna Woods
Dr Paul Wragg

Communications Committee

Deborah Arnott (Chair)
Walter Merricks CBE
David Robinson

Supplementary Regulatory Committee Members

Iain Christie
Claire De Than
Chris Elliott
Ato Erzan-Essien
Conor Heaney
Paul Herbert
Rachel Matthews
Liz Munro

Staff



Ed Procter (Chief Executive Officer) joined IMPRESS as Chief Operating Officer in 2016. He is an established chief executive who over a nine-year period led the development of Sport Resolutions into the premier independent arbiter of sport disputes in the United Kingdom. He previously held senior leadership positions at the Legal Services Commission and Sport England. Earlier in his career he worked in criminal justice and the newspaper and advertising industries.



Lexie Kirkconnell-Kawana (Head of Regulation) is a New Zealand qualified barrister and solicitor who has worked in all forms of media regulation. She has previously worked at the Advertising Standards Authority in the investigations team and at the New Zealand Office of Film and Literature Classification, an independent state media regulator, in a research and semi-judicial capacity.

Business Manager & Company Secretary: Lee Hall

Communications & Engagement Manager: Clara Aguirre

Complaints Executive: Sonia Giga

Business & Communications Executive: Alexandra Ward

Jonathan Heawood: on secondment to the Public Interest News Foundation.

Regulated publications

- 5Pillars
- Armagh I
- ArtsCulture
- Asian Lite
- Asian Lite newspaper (print)
- Bath Echo
- Bath Echo (print)
- Bedford Bulletin
- Bedford Independent
- Bedford Independent (print)
- Beds Bulletin (print)
- BellingCat
- Brexit Standard
- Brexit Standard (print)
- Bristol 24/7
- Bristol24/7 Magazine (print)
- Brixton Blog
- Brixton Bugle
- Byline
- Byline Investigates
- Climate Home News
- Connect Guernsey
- Connect Jersey
- Cooltura (print)
- Cooltura 24
- CornishStuff.com
- Cornwall Reports
- Cranfield and Marston Vale Chronicle
- Cranfield and Marston Vale Chronicle (print)
- Crewe News
- D&CFilm
- Democratic Integrity
- Derby News
- DeSmog UK
- Down News
- EachOther
- East Devon News
- East Northants Reporter
- East Northants Reporter (print)
- ECI Echo (online and print)
- Emerging Europe
- Enfield Dispatch
- Enfield Dispatch (print)
- entwo.org
- Evolve Politics
- Exeter Observer
- Express Guernsey
- Express Jersey
- Formby Reporter
- Forres Local
- Gedling Eye
- Good News for Norwich & Norfolk
- Great Barr Gazette
- Greater Govanhill
- Hastings Online Times
- Iran Business News
- Iraq Business News
- Isle of Wight Observer
- Isle of Wight Observer (print)
- Kempston Calling
- Kempston Calling (print)
- Kingston Enquirer
- Left Foot Forward
- Leicestershire Updates
- Libya Business News
- Lincolnshire Reporter
- Liverpool Reporter
- Llanelli Online
- Llanelli Standard
- Llanelli Standard (print)
- Llanelli Standard Weekly
- Mersey Reporter
- My Turriff
- Nailed
- Network Norwich & Norfolk
- New Internationalist Magazine (print)
- New Internationalist
- Newry.ie
- Nottingham Times
- Novara Media
- Now Then (Sheffield print edition)
- Now Then Magazine (Manchester)
- Now Then Magazine (Sheffield)
- NursingNotes
- On the Wight News
- Perth Gazette
- Planet Extra
- Planet: the Welsh Internationalist

- Planet: the Welsh Internationalist (print)
- Plant Based News
- Politics Means Politics
- Polskie Radio Londyn
- Reigate.uk
- Resurgence & Ecologist
- Saddleworth Independent
- Saddleworth Independent (print)
- Shaw and Royton Correspondent
- Shetland News
- Shropshire Live
- Small City, Big Personality
- So Cheshire
- So Derbyshire
- Source News
- South Leeds Life
- South Leeds Life (print)
- South Molton & District News
- Southport Reporter
- Star & Crescent
- Stroud Live
- Tameside Correspondent
- Tameside Correspondent (print)
- The Bellman
- The Broadstairs Beacon
- The Canary
- The Conversation UK
- The Descrier
- The Devon Week
- The Ecologist
- The Edinburgh Reporter
- The Edinburgh Reporter (print)
- The Ferret
- The Guildford Dragon NEWS
- The Irish World
- The Irish World (print)
- The Isle of Thanet News
- The Isle of Thanet News (print)
- The Lincolnite
- The Lochside Press
- The Margate Mercury
- The Muslim News
- The Muslim News (print)
- The Oxford Whisperer
- The Pioneer Magazines Villages Edition
- The Pioneer Magazines Walsall Edition
- The PRSD
- The Ramsgate Recorder
- The Resurgence
- The Skwawkbox
- The Stray Ferret
- The Week In - Newspaper (NE Somerset & East Bristol, print)
- The Week In (NE Somerset and E Bristol)
- The West Wales Chronicle
- Totnes Live
- Tottenham Community Press
- Tottenham Community Press (print)
- union-news.co.uk
- Unity News Network
- View Magazine
- VIEW/digital
- Waltham Forest Echo - Online
- Waltham Forest Echo - Print Edition
- Wendover News
- Wendover News (print)
- West Leeds Dispatch
- Wielka Brytania Online
- Wycombe Today
- Your Harlow
- Your Thurrock

Note: correct at time of print,
October 2020

Visit impress.press/regulated-publications for details about
all the publications regulated by IMPRESS.

“We joined IMPRESS a couple of years ago to ensure our team is following a proper journalist’s code of conduct and was being held accountable. It has ensured we’ve maintained very high standards and had very few complaints.

Any questions or queries we’ve come across have been dealt with quickly and efficiently by the friendly and helpful team.

During COVID-19 they were an important source of information and advice, such as grant opportunities, and it was a great help to have a network of like-minded publishers close by.”

Aimee Belmore, Editor in Chief, Local Communications Limited

“We have always found IMPRESS to be a fair, rigorous and completely trustworthy press regulator. Their ethos of conserving the integrity of public interest journalism and respect for the freedom of the press informs everything they do.

We have found that IMPRESS have been very helpful in making all administrative tasks associated with membership as time-efficient as possible without compromising on scrutiny, which is vital for the regulation of small, independent media outlets with limited staff capacity.”

Emily Trahair, Editor, Planet Magazine





THE INDEPENDENT MONITOR
FOR THE PRESS

IMPRESS, 16–18 New Bridge Street, London, EC4V 6AG

T 020 3325 4288
@impressreg

E info@impressreg.org.uk
/impress-press

W impress.press