

**From:** Susie Uppal  
**Sent:** 24 October 2016 14:10  
**To:** Susie Uppal <suppal@pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk>  
**Subject:** Fwd: press letters

## Press freedom

Sir, The independence of Impress ("Not Impressed", leading article, Oct 20) will be judged not by *The Times*, but by the Press Recognition Panel, a body set up at arm's length from government to ensure that press regulation is truly independent and effective.

This new framework for press regulation was approved by all major parties in parliament, a majority of the public and the National Union of Journalists. If we are to rebuild the public's trust in journalism then it is time for a new era in press regulation.

There is no danger to local news publishers from the implementation of Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act. On the contrary, they will gain new protections if they join a regulator that meets the standards required by the recognition panel.

WALTER MERRICKS  
Chair, Impress

Sir, Both your leading article (Oct 20) and Matthew Parris (Oct 22) omit a vital fact about press regulation: under the relevant legislation, a newspaper can only be ordered to pay the costs of both sides if it has first refused to submit to inexpensive arbitration.

Sir Brian Leveson's proposals, and the resulting Royal Charter, were aimed at protecting the vast majority of the population who cannot afford to risk £1 million in court costs. His solution is inexpensive independent arbitration. If a newspaper refuses and insists on going to court (as is its right), it should pay the costs of both sides. After all, if we are going on a journey and you insist on a Rolls-Royce when I can only afford the bus, it's only fair you pay.

Sir Brian's idea works the other way round, too. If a rich individual intimidates a small local paper with threats of litigation, the paper can propose the same inexpensive arbitration. Then, if the rich individual refuses and goes to court, he or she will have to pay both side's costs.

This is all about access to justice.

Luckily, I could afford to sue the *News of the World*. Most of its victims could not. This really matters and is why our family trust supports a charity (IPRT) which exists to fund a Leveson-compliant press regulator. That includes inexpensive arbitration.

If the major newspapers don't like Impress, there is nothing to prevent their Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) applying to the independent Press Recognition Panel for recognition with all the advantages this would bring, particularly for smaller news organisations. IPSO already complies with many of the requirements and could comply with the remainder without going anywhere near "state regulation". IPRT might even help fund it.

A recognised regulator and Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act will make it more difficult for big newspapers and rich individuals to bully ordinary people and small papers. No one who cares about fairness and access to justice should oppose this.  
MAX MOSLEY  
London SW3

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