

Dear Dr Wolfe and Members of the Board,

I write as one of those appalled by the behaviour of the press over many years, delighted by the revelations and recommendations of the first part of the Leveson enquiry, and bitterly disappointed by the government's failure to follow up with Leveson 2 as promised.

So far, there is no effective new system for overseeing press regulation. IPSO may have stronger powers and better intentions than the old discredited Press Council, but it is far from independent of the industry that it is supposed to regulate.

Leveson recommended that if some of that industry refused to join a truly independent system of press regulation *"the Government should be ready to consider the need for a statutory backstop regulator....to ensure, at the least, that the press are subject to regulation that would require the fullest compliance with the criminal and civil law, if not also to ensure consequences equivalent to those that would flow from an independent self-regulatory system."*

Leveson argued that regulators would seek Charter recognition and newspapers would support an approved regulator if such regulator were empowered to offer cheap arbitration to complainers and if publishers were protected from court costs when complainers refused arbitration. This should have been achieved by section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013, part of the Royal Charter system which Leveson recommended. Parliament approved this measure.

But the Government has been strangely reluctant to press on with it, which provokes much suspicion as to its real commitment to Leveson and truly independent press regulation. I hope that the Press Regulation Panel will recommend to Parliament and the Government that section 40 be implemented as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

D H L Batchelor