

To the Press Recognition Panel,

I understand that you have been set up to assess whether self-regulators meet Leveson's criteria and to report to Parliament on the state of the regulatory system.

Please remind Parliament what the Leveson Report said should happen if the industry tried to veto his recommendations and refused to comply. The Leveson Report says: "***if some or all of the industry are not willing to participate in effective independent regulation, my own concluded view is to reject the notion that they should escape regulation altogether. I cannot, and will not, recommend another last chance saloon for the press. With some measure of regret, therefore, I am driven to conclude that the Government should be ready to consider the need for a statutory backstop regulator being established, 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.***"

I feel it is essential that section 40 of The Crime and Courts Act should be brought into effect as parliament intended. Leveson foresaw that ordinary people could be guaranteed access to low-cost arbitration and publishers could be free to publish stories without the subject of the story threatening to bankrupt the journalist or publisher. They could also be free from potential court costs if a rich individual or company chooses to reject the route to arbitration and instead goes to court.

This is good for everyone. Why is it questioned?

I urge you to recommend to Parliament and to Government that section 40 of The Crime and Courts Act is "commenced" as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,
Nigel Clapcott