

I find it hard to believe that a proper independent press regulation body (in accordance with the Leveson recommendations) has yet to be set up and I find it galling that there is even a prospect that the Leveson recommendations could be punted into the 'long grass'. The presses own self regulation system under IMPRESS can hardly be seen as independent and does not accord with the Leveson recommendations. In view of this, I should like the PRP to take the following into account:-

1. Parliament should be reminded by the PRP 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.***"
2. In the meantime, regardless of whether IMPRESS is recognised by the PRP, the PRP should strongly recommend to Parliament that the key 'guaranteed access to justice incentive' (section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act) should be brought into effect as Parliament had intended.

Yours faithfully

Terence Roberts