

The Press Recognition Panel
107-111 Fleet Street
London EC4A 2AB
16 January 2015

By email

Sir Alan Moses
Chair, IPSO

Dear Sir Alan,

The Press Recognition Panel gave oral evidence to the House of Lords Communications Select Committee on Tuesday afternoon in connection with its inquiry into press regulation. I understand that you are scheduled to give evidence at their next meeting, on 20 January 2015.

I am writing formally to follow up and emphasise some of what Carolyn Regan and I said in evidence to the Committee.

As you know, the Press Recognition Panel came into existence as a legal entity on 3 November 2014 with the appointment of its Board Members under the Royal Charter on that date. Since then, we have started the work to put in place the organisational and regulatory system and processes required for us to consider and decide on applications from press self-regulatory organisations that want to be recognised as compliant with the recognition criteria in Schedule 3 of the Royal Charter.

We believe that is important to frame our approach to those things in the light of an understanding of the views of all interested persons and so we plan to consult on them in the next few months. We intend to be in a position to process any applications before 3 November 2015, the date when the provisions of the Crime and Courts Act 2013 relating to exemplary damages come into force for the purpose of legal actions brought against relevant publishers.

It is our understanding that IPSO has no current plans to make an application for recognition. However we wish to make clear that we would look to accelerate our plans if our timescales were putting IPSO to any disadvantage in regard to any decision it may make about submission of an application. Do please let us know if that is, or becomes, the case.

On a separate but related matter, we have made it clear that we are keen to hear from, and potentially meet with, anyone with an interest in our work. As part of that, our Board agreed at its meeting on Tuesday to hold a series of meetings with interested parties over the coming months including with regulators such as IPSO. We currently intend that to be later in the schedule but if you felt that an earlier meeting would be helpful, we would of course respond positively.

For the record, I should emphasise that it is the Board's policy that the fact of meetings with interested parties are a matter of public record. However, the Board is entirely open as to whether the content of the meeting itself would be wholly private, or whether it would be held in private but with an agreed note published afterwards, or indeed entirely in public.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the House of Lords Communications Committee, as these issues were touched on in our oral evidence on Tuesday.

I hope this clarification is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Wolfe', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Dr David Wolfe QC
Chair of the Press Recognition Panel
dwolfe@pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk

cc Lord Best
Chair, House of Lords Communications Committee
House of Lords
London SW1A 0PW

IPSO

Independent Press Standards Organisation
c/o Halton House, 20-23 Holborn, London, EC1N 2JD

28/1/15.

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter dated 16 January.

I think your suggestion of a meeting is an excellent idea and I hope we can arrange it wherever it is convenient for you.

I would also like to see you for a drink, perhaps, and a chat to renew old ties of friendship because we have hardly seen each other these past years. I do realise that nothing we say or write to each other is or should be private but I would like to say hello before more formal meetings take place.

The Press Recognition Panel
107-111 Fleet Street
London EC4A 2AB
10 February 2015

By email

Sir Alan Moses
Chair, IPSO

Dear Sir Alan,

Thank you for your letter of 28 January 2015.

It is great that you agree that meeting is a good idea. We would be keen for that to happen as soon as reasonably practicable so that we can inform our thinking with IPSO's views at the earliest stages. If dates permit, I imagine most of my Board members will try to attend. Could you please ask the relevant person at IPSO to get in touch with Holly Perry hperry@pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk to arrange a date?

Thanks also for the kind invitation for the two of us to meet informally for a drink ahead of the formal meeting. As you can imagine, in other circumstances, I would have welcomed that opportunity. But I am afraid that – however well-intentioned – meeting in that way would not help either of us in avoiding perceptions which led to concerns about press regulation in the past. Indeed, as you know, as part of its wider commitment to transparency and openness in decision-making, my Board is consulting on a policy which means that contact with others is only ever on a formal basis. I don't think either of us or our respective organisations will have any difficulty dealing with things on that basis.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'David Wolfe', written over a large, light-colored circular scribble.

Dr David Wolfe QC
Chair of the Press Recognition Panel
dwolfe@pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk