

To whom it may concern,

I am extremely concerned that the corporate press industry has failed to establish a system of independent self-regulation that meets the criteria set out by the Leveson report and that the Government is now also blocking the coming into effect of the law passed by Parliament in 2013 that guarantees access to justice for victims of libel and press intrusion.

As such I think that this consultation undertake the following;

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.

The corporate press in the UK has been unaccountable for too long and it seems this government is refusing to take up the opportunity for reform presented by Leveson and the unpleasant realities that led to his report. Something should be done to remove some of the powers of the unaccountable and privately owned press to behave as they wish and their unstated yet obvious control over government.

Yours,

Jekabs Zarins