



Press Recognition Panel
Mappin House
4 Winsley Street
London W1W 8HF

Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Sent by email

11 March 2019

Dear Secretary of State,

I wrote to you earlier this month to provide a copy of the Press Recognition Panel's (PRP) latest report on the recognition system. The report concludes that it is important for the PRP to share its learnings and experience with stakeholders, including those involved in the planning of new systems of regulation for social media platforms.

I understand that following the recent publication of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee's report on disinformation and 'fake news', the Government is exploring options for regulating social media platforms.

For social media platforms that are deemed to be relevant publishers (as defined by the Crime and Courts Act 2013) a system of regulatory oversight already exists in the form of the recognition system.

I also note that the Cairncross review recommends creating a new Institute for Public Interest News and that the chair of the new Institute should be appointed in a manner that was indubitably free from government influence. The Cairncross report states that one model for the process might be the approach taken for appointments to the PRP.

The PRP is committed to protecting the public from harm and to free speech, and I am writing to request a meeting to discuss the PRP's role in these matters further.

Our report also notes that the Government acknowledges that the PRP is an important part of the regulatory framework. However, the Government has pledged to remove the Section 40 incentives that would complete the recognition system. As we stated in our report, the PRP would welcome a meeting with you to help us understand the Government's rationale.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

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

David Wolfe QC
Chair of the Press Recognition Panel