

## THE EDITORS' CODE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

**For immediate release Tuesday, December 20, 2016**

### **New edition of The Editors' Codebook**

A new guide to the Editors' Code of Practice, under which the overwhelming majority of Britain's newspaper, magazine and news website journalists work, has been published by the committee responsible for creating the Code.

The Editors' Codebook is the handbook that sets the Editors' Code in context and highlights best practice and key adjudications made by the industry's regulator, the Independent Press Standards Organisation.

It is intended to help members of the public considering making a complaint, and editors facing a difficult decision on a story which might give rise to a breach of the Code, by providing examples of how IPSO has approached similar cases in the past.

The Editors' Code of Practice Committee, which prepares and publishes the Codebook, consulted IPSO during its production but the regulator is not bound by the advice it contains because each case is considered on its merits and IPSO remains the final arbiter of how the Code should be interpreted. IPSO is also not bound by the decisions of its predecessor, the Press Complaints Commission, but PCC cases are included where they are still relevant.

The Editors' Code is regarded as the cornerstone of voluntary press self-regulation. In his 2012 report on the press Lord Justice Leveson said: "The current Editors' Code has been widely praised by those in the industry. It has been developed by the industry over the last two decades and has adapted to take account of new concerns and issues that have arisen."

The Code of Practice Committee was re-constituted following the Leveson inquiry and now includes editors, independent lay members and the chairman and chief executive of IPSO.

In line with a Leveson recommendation, the committee conducted a wide-ranging public consultation on the Code and a revised version was introduced in January this year. Changes included a specific requirement that editors should not publish headlines not supported by the text of the article underneath.

Buckingham Palace used this new provision to bring a successful complaint against The Sun for a headline that read "Queen Backs Brexit".

**Code Committee members:** *National newspapers:* Paul Dacre, Daily Mail (chairman); John Witherow, The Times; Chris Evans, Daily Telegraph; Hugh Whittow, Daily Express. *Regional newspapers:* Neil Benson, Trinity Mirror Regionals; Ian Murray, Southern Daily Echo; Mike Sassi, Nottingham Evening Post; Hannah Walker, South London Press. *Scottish Press:* Damian Bates, Press & Journal, Aberdeen. *Magazines:* Harriet Wilson, Conde Nast Publications. *Lay members (ex officio):* Sir Alan Moses, Chairman, IPSO; Matt Tee, CEO, IPSO. *Independent lay members:* Christine Elliott; David Jessel; Kate Stone.

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That complaint features in the new Codebook and other cases include those involving The Times and the Daily Telegraph, where IPSO required a correction and an adjudication to be highlighted on the front page.

Other topics include coverage of suicide, discrimination, privacy, the use of subterfuge and the special protection provided for children.

Paul Dacre, chairman of the Editors' Code of Practice Committee, said: "The Editors' Code is the rock on which self-regulation of the press is founded.

"This new edition of the Codebook is a vital guide to how the Code has changed post-Leveson and how IPSO now enforces it.

"I commend it to everyone - journalists and the public alike - who needs to know how the Code works and how IPSO are likely to interpret it when there is a complaint."

IPSO chairman, Sir Alan Moses, said: "IPSO welcomes the publication of a new edition of the handbook. It is a fresh and vital source of what the Code means in practice. It sets out the steps editors and journalists should take to avoid breaches of the Code. It demonstrates the ambition of all those committed to its provisions to maintain a regulated but untamed press."

The new Editors' Codebook is published online on the Editors' Code of Practice Committee website: [http://www.editorcode.org.uk/the\\_code\\_book.php](http://www.editorcode.org.uk/the_code_book.php)

The Editors' Code of Practice Committee is currently conducting another public consultation on the Code. Suggestions for changes to the Code should be sent via the Editors' Code Committee website – [www.editorcode.org.uk](http://www.editorcode.org.uk) - by email to: [codereview2017@gmail.com](mailto:codereview2017@gmail.com) or by post to: Editors' Code of Practice Committee, c/o News Media Association, 292 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1AE. The closing date for submissions is Friday, March 3, 2017.

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