

IPSO response to Home Affairs Committee call for information on hate crime

About IPSO

1. The Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) is the independent regulator for the newspaper and magazine industry in the UK. We hold newspapers and magazines to account for their actions, protect individual rights, uphold high standards of journalism and help to maintain freedom of expression for the press. We currently regulate over 1500 print titles and 1100 online titles, comprising 95% of the national daily newspapers by circulation and the majority of magazines, local and regional newspapers in the UK.
2. IPSO provides a free-to-use complaints service regarding possible breaches of the [Editors' Code of Practice](#). Where resolution between the parties is not possible, IPSO adjudicates on complaints. Adjudications are made by IPSO's Complaints Committee a panel of twelve with expertise in journalism and a lay majority. If a complaint is upheld, the Committee can require publications to publish a correction or its adjudication. The Committee also has the power to determine the nature, extent and placement of these corrections and adjudications.
3. In addition to the Committee's work, IPSO monitors complaints for thematic issues and works with publishers to improve their compliance with the Code. We also help members of the public with unwanted press attention or harassment concerns, provide advice on the Code, run a Journalists' Whistleblowing Hotline, monitor on-going compliance, and produce guidance for journalists and the public. We operate a low cost arbitration scheme which provides an alternative dispute resolution process for media law claims.

Clause 12 complaints

4. In response to your request for information we conducted a review of the Clause 12 (Discrimination) complaints we received over the past year (1 December 2016 to 1 December 2017). All data included in this response relates to complaints received during this period.
5. Clause 12 states:
 - "i) The press must avoid prejudicial or pejorative reference to an individual's, race, colour, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or to any physical or mental illness or disability.
 - ii) Details of an individual's race, colour, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental illness or disability must be avoided unless genuinely relevant to the story."

6. Clause 12 acts to prevent the use of prejudicial language against identifiable individuals, but does not apply to commentary about groups in general. It does not make reference to inciting hatred, which is a legal matter to be properly investigated by the police, and may therefore provide for the resolution of disputes which would not meet the legal threshold for inciting hatred.
7. We received 8148 complaints citing Clause 12¹ which related to 846 articles. Of these complaints, 2328 also cited Clause 3 (Harassment). The articles we received the highest volume of complaints for were as follows:

Table 1: Articles for which we received the highest number of complaints citing Clause 12

Headline	Publication	Number of complaints
Never mind Brexit, who won Legs-it!	Daily Mail	1955
GIRL, 11, KILLED ON WATER RIDE / Pupil suffered cardiac arrest after fall on wild rapids ride	Metro	1437
BLOOD ON HIS HANDS	The Sun	709

8. These three articles represent half of the total number of complaints we received citing Clause 12. Articles that attract large numbers of complaints can indicate areas of particular public concern, but do not, in and of themselves, highlight compliance issues. They may for instance attract more complaints because, whilst compliant with the Code, they are controversial, have a greater audience or are the subject of social media campaigns. Conversely, articles with only a single complaint made against them may raise greater concerns under the Code.
9. We judge compliance on a case-by-case basis where it comes to complaints, but monitor themes and matters of public concern as part of our wider regulatory function. In order to provide context to the data provided in this document we have set out the general process by which we deal with complaints below.

Complaints Process

10. We conduct an initial assessment of each complaint we receive to make sure it falls within our remit and discloses a possible breach of the Code. Where this is not the case we close the complaint and designate it as Outside Remit or Rejection.
11. We refer² the remaining complaints to the relevant publisher so that the complaint can be dealt with quickly. If the complaint is not resolved at this stage we can investigate and help to mediate a resolution.

¹ 4274 of these related solely to Clause 12

² Referral means that we send a copy of the complaint to the publication and ask them to try to resolve the complaint directly. We generally give the publication 28 days in which to attempt this but will proceed to investigate the complaint at the point that correspondence between the parties is exhausted.

12. This means that complaints that come to IPSO can be resolved directly with the publisher, or through IPSO mediation, without a ruling being required from the Committee. Complaints that are resolved are often dealt with more quickly. They can also result in a more innovative and tailored set of remedies being agreed to by the parties. These may represent a better outcome, and therefore provide greater complainant satisfaction, than the remedies available from the Committee.

13. The Committee can rule on whether the Code was breached if the complaint is not resolved.³

Our decisions

14. Due to the large volume of complaints involved we cannot detail the reasons for each decision we make. However, in Table 2 we have provided a general list of outcomes and in Table 3 a list of rulings made by the Committee in respect of complaints citing Clause 12. A link has been provided to each Ruling, in which the Committee gives its reasoning.

Table 2: Outcome of Clause 12 complaints received between 1 December 2016 and 1 December 2017

Outcome	Number of Complaints
On-going as of 13/12/2017	38
Upheld*	3
Resolved**	23
Not upheld	8
Not Pursued	266
Initial copy letter***	1
Outside Remit	5209
Rejected as no possible breach	2309
Multiple****	291
Total	8148

*These complaints cited Clause 12, but none was upheld as a breach of Clause 12.

** Resolved through an agreed outcome between the parties, either directly within the publication's internal processes, or via IPSO mediation. This does not necessarily mean that there was a breach of the Code.

*** Complaints directed to the publisher by the complainant into which we were copied but received no formal complaint following that correspondence.

**** For articles in respect of which we receive a large number of similar complaints which get through the initial assessment we select a lead complainant to take the complaint forward. The remaining complaints are designated 'multiple' complaints.

Table 3: Published rulings by the Complaints Committee for Clause 12 complaints received between 1 December 2016 and 1 December 2017

Complaint reference	Name	Publication	Outcome
14203-16	Robert Granger	The Scottish Sun (Sunday) (News UK)	No Breach

³ Further information about our complaints process and the complaints we receive is set out in our [Annual Reports](#).

00342-17	Mufti Mohammed Pandor	Daily Mail (Associated Newspapers Limited)	Upheld (in part)
01157-17	Neeraj Patil	The Times (News UK)	No Breach
06279-17	Malcolm Marr	Milngavie & Bearsden Herald (Johnston Press)	No Breach
06585-17	Nicola McLean	New! (Northern & Shell PLC)	Upheld (in part)
06756-17	Michael Clift	Berwickshire News (Johnston Press)	No Breach
07867-17	Rebecca Kelly	devonlive.com (Trinity Mirror PLC)	No Breach
16646-17	A Man	South Wales Evening Post (Trinity Mirror PLC)	Upheld (in part)
17497-17	Linfield Football Club	Daily Record (Trinity Mirror PLC)	No Breach
17562-17	Rachel Elgy	The Sun (News UK)	No Breach
18326-17	Chris Webster	Sunday Mirror (Trinity Mirror PLC)	No Breach

15. A list of the publications/publishers in respect of which we received complaints citing Clause 12 has also been added as an annex to this response. This includes complaints made against non-members.

Broader compliance monitoring

16. As part of our thematic monitoring of complaints we assess the complaints we receive. This allows us to identify potential compliance concerns and act where a problem is identified. We also monitor issues which are of clear concern to the public, regardless of whether there is evidence of a potential compliance concern. Such topics include: the coverage of the EU debate, stories about Islam and the use of social media by journalists to gather information.

17. We are aware of the serious public concern about Clause 12 (Discrimination) as a wider (systemic) compliance issue, and continue to monitor our complaints in this regard. To better understand those concerns we also engage with a number of interest groups, such as:

1. The Cross Government Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred,
2. The Independent Hate Crime Working Group,
3. Citizens UK,
4. Tell Mama,
5. No more Page 3,
6. Transmedia Watch,
7. Mermaids,
8. Regents Park Mosque, and
9. Leicester Mosque.

18. We hope this information has been useful to the Inquiry, and are available to discuss the issues and our response further.

Annex – Number of complaints received between 1 December 2016 and 1 December 2017 citing Clause 12 (Discrimination) listed by publication

Publication	Number of Complaints
Aintree & Maghull Champion (Waypride Ltd T/A Champion Media Group)	2
Aldershot News & Mail (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Asian Image (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Ayrshire Post (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
BBC (Does not subscribe)	7
BBC History (Immediate Media Company Limited)	1
belfastlive.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
Berwick Advertiser (Johnston Press)	1
Berwickshire News (Johnston Press)	1
Birmingham Mail (Trinity Mirror PLC)	6
Bournemouth Echo (Newsquest Media Group)	2
Braintree and Witham Times (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Bristol Post (Trinity Mirror PLC)	5
Bucks Free Press (Newsquest Media Group)	2
Bury Times (Newsquest Media Group)	2
Business Insider Magazine (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Cambridge News (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
cambridge-news.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
Chard & Ilminster News (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Chester & District Standard (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Chichester Observer (Johnston Press)	1
Clacton, Frinton & Walton Gazette (Newsquest Media Group)	1
cornwalllive.com (Trinity Mirror PLC)	3
Cosmopolitan (The National Magazine Limited) (Hearst Magazines UK)	3
County Times (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Coventry Telegraph (Trinity Mirror PLC)	3
coventrytelegraph.net (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Croydon Guardian (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Daily Express (Northern & Shell PLC)	35
Daily Mail (Associated Newspapers Limited)	2478
Daily Mirror (Trinity Mirror)	37
Daily Post (Trinity Mirror PLC)	3
Daily Record (Trinity Mirror PLC)	36
Daily Star (Northern & Shell PLC)	8
dailyrecord.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	6
dailystar.co.uk (Northern & Shell PLC)	3
Derby Telegraph (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
devonlive.com (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
Digital Spy (The National Magazine Limited) (Hearst Magazines UK)	1
Diss Mercury (Archant)	1
dissexpress.co.uk (Illiffe Media)	1
Doncaster Free Press (Johnston Press)	1
Doncaster Star (Johnston Press)	1
Dorset Echo (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Dumbarton & Vale of Leven Reporter (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Dunstable Gazette (Johnston Press)	1
Eastbourne Herald (Johnston Press)	1
Eastern Daily Press (Archant)	10
Echo (Basildon) (Newsquest Media Group)	2

Edinburgh Evening News (Johnston Press)	1
Enfield Gazette & Advertiser (Tindle Newspapers Limited) (Discontinued)	1
Esquire (The National Magazine Limited) (Hearst Magazines UK)	6
Essex Chronicle (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
Essex County Standard (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Evening Express (DC Thomson Group)	1
Evening Standard (Does not subscribe)	5
Evening Telegraph (Dundee) (DC Thomson Group)	1
Evening Times (Newsquest Media Group)	3
Exeter Express & Echo (Trinity Mirror PLC)	13
Express & Star (The Midland News Association Limited (Claverley))	4
express.co.uk (Northern & Shell PLC)	34
Frome Standard (Mid Somerset Srries) (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Gloucestershire Echo (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
Great Yarmouth Mercury (Archant)	1
grimsbytelegraph.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Hartlepool Mail (Johnston Press)	1
Hertfordshire Mercury (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
hertfordshiremercury.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Horse & Hound (Time INC. UK)	1
Huddersfield Daily Examiner (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Hull Daily Mail (Trinity Mirror PLC)	5
I (Johnston Press)	3
Ilford Recorder (Archant)	3
Irish Sunday Times (News UK) (Does not subscribe)	31
Isle of Wight County Press (Newsquest Media Group)	2
Islington Gazette (Archant)	1
ITV (Does not subscribe)	1
Kentish Gazette (Canterbury, Whitstable, Herne Bay) (KM Media Group)	1
kentonline.co.uk (KM Media Group)	9
Lancashire Evening Post (Johnston Press)	2
Lancashire Telegraph (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Leicester Mercury (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
leicestermercury.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Lichfield Mercury (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Lincolnshire Echo (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Liverpool Echo (Daily and Extra) (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Liverpool Echo (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
liverpoolecho.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	4
Lowestoft Journal (Archant)	1
Luton & Dunstable Herald & Post (Johnston Press)	2
Luton News (Johnston Press)	1
Lynn News (Illiffe Media)	1
Mail Online (Associated Newspapers Limited)	856
Manchester Evening News (Trinity Mirror PLC)	7
Market Drayton Advertiser (MNA)	1
Metro (Associated Newspapers Limited)	1454
Metro.co.uk (Associated Newspapers Limited)	19
Mid Somerset Group (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Milngavie & Bearsden Herald (Johnston Press)	1
mirror.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	39
New! (Northern & Shell PLC)	1
News & Star (CN Group Limited)	1
newsletter.co.uk (Belfast) (Johnston Press)	1

NME (Time Inc. UK)	1
Not Specified	19
Nottingham Post (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
OK! (Northern & Shell PLC)	1
Oldham Evening Chronicle (Hirst, Kidd and Rennie Limited) (Discontinued)	1
Oxford Mail (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Peterborough Telegraph (Johnston Press)	1
Plymouth Herald (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Press & Journal (DC Thomson Group)	3
Real People (The National Magazine Limited) (Hearst Magazines UK)	1
Salisbury Journal (Newsquest Media Group)	1
scotsman.com (Johnston Press)	1
Scottish Daily Mail (Associated Newspapers Limited)	2
Shrewsbury Chronicle (MNA)	1
Shropshire Star (County, Shrewsbury and Last) (MNA)	1
Sky News (Does not subscribe)	1
Slough & South Bucks Observer (Newsquest Media Group)	1
somersetlive.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
South Wales Argus (Newsquest Media Group)	3
South Wales Evening Post (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Southern Daily Echo (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Southport Visiter (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
St Albans & Harpenden Review (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Strathearn Herald (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Strathspey & Badenoch Herald (Scottish Provincial Press Limited)	1
Stylist (Shortlist Media)	1
Suffolk Free Press (Illiffe Media)	2
Sunday Herald (Newsquest Media Group)	3
Sunday Life (Independent News & Media)	2
Sunday Mail (Trinity Mirror PLC)	5
Sunday Mercury (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Sunday Mirror (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Sunday Post (DC Thomson Group)	3
Sutton Guardian (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Tatler (The Condé Nast Publications Ltd)	1
Telegraph & Argus (Newsquest Media Group)	2
Telegraph.co.uk (Telegraph Media Group Ltd)	237
The Argus (Brighton) (Newsquest Media Group)	5
The Belfast Telegraph (Independent News & Media)	2
The Bolton News (Newsquest Media Group)	3
The Brecon & Radnor Express (Tindle Newspapers Limited)	3
The Cornishman (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
The Courier (DC Thomson Group)	6
The Daily Telegraph (Telegraph Media Group Ltd)	56
The Gazette (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
The Guardian (Does not subscribe)	7
The Herald (Newsquest Media Group)	2
The Herald (Plymouth) (Trinity Mirror PLC)	2
The Independent (Does not subscribe)	8
The Journal (Newcastle) (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
The Mail on Sunday (Associated Newspapers Limited)	221
The National (Newsquest Media Group)	3
The New European (Archant)	16

The Northern Echo (Newsquest Media Group)	1
The Scotsman (Johnston Press)	1
The Scottish Sun (News UK)	3
The Scottish Sun (Sunday) (News UK)	1
The Sentinel (Trinity Mirror PLC)	9
The Shields Gazette (Johnston Press)	1
The Spectator (The Spectator)	7
The Stage (The Stage Media Company Ltd)	2
The Star (Sheffield) (Johnston Press)	9
The Sun (News UK)	1847
The Sun (Sunday) (News UK)	108
The Sunday Telegraph (Telegraph Media Group Ltd)	1
The Sunday Times (News UK)	37
The Times (News UK)	164
thescottishsun.co.uk (News UK)	3
thesun.co.uk (News UK)	67
thetimes.co.uk (News UK)	2
TV Times (Time Inc. UK)	1
Wales on Sunday (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
walesonline.co.uk (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Waltham Forest Guardian (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Welwyn & Hatfield Times (Archant)	1
West Briton (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Western Gazette (Yeovil) (Trinity Mirror PLC)	1
Whitby Gazette (Johnston Press)	2
Wirral Globe (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Worcester News (Newsquest Media Group)	1
Yellow Advertiser (Tindle Newspapers Limited)	1
Yorkshire Post (Johnston Press)	2
yorkshirepost.co.uk (Johnston Press)	1

Grand Total	8148
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