

MINUTES

Complaints Committee, Independent Press Standards Organisation

Halton House, 20-23 Holborn, London EC1N 2JD

18 February 2015 at 10:30

Present: Sir Alan Moses (Chairman)
Richard Best (Deputy Chairman)
Lara Fielden
Janette Harkess
David Jessel
Matthew Lohn
Jill May
Elisabeth Ribbans
Neil Watts
Peter Wright
Nina Wrightson

Attending: Matt Tee, Chief Executive
Charlotte Dewar, Director of Operations
Martyn Lewis, IPSO Board Member
Charles Wilson, IPSO Board Member

The following members of the Executive were also in attendance: Xavier Bastin, Ben Gallop, Robyn Kelly, Tonia Milton, Holly Pick, Bianca Strohmann, Hugo Wallis.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Gill Hudson.

2. Update by the Chairman

The Chairman updated the Committee on his recent meetings, including with the Regulatory Funding Company and the Youth Justice Network. He informed the Complaints Committee that its decision on complaint 0071-14 had been challenged on the grounds that a conflict of interest by a Committee member had not been fully declared. The Chairman noted that he had asked the Complaints Reviewer, Rick Hill MBE, to review the matter.

3. Update by the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that a reorganisation of IPSO's structure was well under way, which included the appointment of Ben Gallop and Bianca Strohmann as Senior Complaints Officers. In addition, he

confirmed that IPSO would shortly be moving to new offices and would next meet at the new premises.

4. Minutes – January 2015 meeting

The Committee approved the minutes for its meeting of 21 January 2015.

5. Matters arising

There were none.

6. Complaint 01710-14 Burrows v Mail Online

Peter Wright left the room and was not involved in the consideration of this complaint.

The remainder of the Committee discussed the complaint and ruled that it was not upheld. A copy of its ruling appears in **Appendix A**.

7. 01350-14 Brooks Newmark and Sunday Mirror

Peter Wright returned to the room.

The Committee discussed this matter and reached initial conclusions on the relevant issues under Clause 10 (Clandestine devices and subterfuge) of the Editors' Code. It agreed to release a statement setting out its findings, in terms to be confirmed via correspondence.

8. Complaint 01983-14 Hartley v Lancaster Guardian

The Committee discussed this complaint and ruled that it was not upheld. A copy of its ruling appears in **Appendix B**.

9. Complaint 02183-14 IPCC v The Times

The Committee discussed this complaint and ruled that it was not upheld. A copy of its ruling appears in **Appendix C**.

10. Complaint 02184-14 Rooney v Wetherby News

The Committee discussed this complaint and ruled that it was partially upheld. A copy of its ruling appears in **Appendix D**.

11. Complaint 03097-14 Ambridge v Essex Chronicle

The Committee discussed this complaint and ruled that it was not upheld. A copy of its ruling appears in **Appendix E**.

12. Complaints 01999-14 et al. Various v Daily Record

The Committee discussed the lead complaint and ruled that it was upheld. A copy of its ruling appears in **Appendix F**.

13. Complaint 01456-14 Manson v Daily Express

The Committee discussed this complaint and ruled that it was not upheld. A copy of its ruling appears in **Appendix G**.

14. Complaints not adjudicated at a Complaints Committee meeting

The Committee confirmed its formal approval of IPSO complaints listed in **Appendix H**, all of which had been previously circulated to the Complaints Committee.

15. Any other business

There was none.

Next meeting: 18 March 2015 at 15:30 at Gate House, 1 Farringdon Street, London.

Appendix A

Decision of the Complaints Committee 01710-14 Burrows v Mail Online

Summary of Complaint

1. Nick Burrows complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that Mail Online had breached Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors' Code of Practice in an article headlined "How does losing your virginity at just 13 REALLY affect you? As children in schools are taught that this is normal, one woman explains her deep regret over doing so", published on 7 November 2014.
2. The article was an interview with an adult woman who had lost her virginity at the age of 13, and was presented against the background of new training packs which had been issued to teachers, detailing a "traffic light tool" to assess sexual activity among children.
3. The complainant said that the headline was inaccurate, as children in schools were not taught that losing their virginity at 13 was "normal". Rather, the training packs referred to in the article were part of guidance which had been issued to teachers to look out for potentially worrying behaviour.
4. The newspaper did not accept that the headline was significantly inaccurate. It said that the guidance issued to teachers included a "traffic light tool" which referred to "consenting oral and/or penetrative sex with others of the same or opposite gender who are of a similar age and developmental ability" as "green" behaviour for those aged 13-17. Green behaviours are said to reflect "safe and healthy sexual development" and it was not unreasonable to refer to them as "normal" in the context of such an article. Nonetheless, it accepted that the headline could have made the full facts clearer and, on receipt of the complaint, it had amended the headline to "How does losing your virginity at just 13 REALLY affect you? One woman expresses her deep regrets, as teachers are issued with guidance suggesting this is 'normal'".

Relevant Code provisions

5. Clause 1 (Accuracy)
 - (i) The Press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures.
 - (ii) A significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distortion once recognised must be corrected, promptly and with due prominence, and – where appropriate – an apology published.

Findings of the Committee

6. The complainant had not disputed that guidance had been issued to schools which stated that “consenting oral and/or penetrative sex with others of the same or opposite gender who are of a similar age and developmental ability” was behaviour which was said to represent safe and healthy sexual development for those aged 13-17. The Committee acknowledged that the guidance did not form part of the curriculum and was not actively taught. However, the guidance was issued to inform teachers as to the approach they should adopt with pupils when such issues arose. The Committee further noted that the article was not an in-depth analysis of the guidance which had been issued to teachers; rather it was a piece in which one woman discussed her sexual experiences. In the context of such a piece, the newspaper was not obliged to provide full details of the precise status of the guidance and, given the nature of the guidelines, the article was not significantly inaccurate such that a correction would be required. Nonetheless, the Committee welcomed the publication’s decision to amend the headline following contact from the complainant.

Conclusions

7. The complaint was not upheld.

Appendix B

Decision of the Complaints Committee 01983-14 Hartley v Lancaster Guardian

Summary of Complaint

1. Anne Hartley complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that the Lancaster Guardian had breached Clause 5 (Intrusion into grief or shock) of the Editors' Code of Practice in an article headlined "Man dies from gunshot injury", published on 20 November 2014.
2. The article was a report of the inquest into the death of Paul Tidswell, in which the coroner had concluded that he had taken his own life with a shotgun.
3. The complainant was Mr Tidswell's aunt, and she was complaining on behalf of his parents. The complainant said that the family had been extremely upset by the publication of the article, which she considered had contained excessive detail about the nature of Mr Tidswell's death. She particularly objected to the description of Mr Tidswell's being "covered in blood" and to the inclusion of details regarding the position of the shotgun. Family members had left the court while the post-mortem results were discussed, and some family members had chosen not to attend the proceedings at all; the publication of this information meant that they were subjected to further distress.
4. The complainant said that the article was unbalanced because it omitted evidence heard in court about Mr Tidswell's "more positive" state of mind in the weeks before his death and his interest in fixing things. The family had discussed selling the gun, a family heirloom, and the family believed that Mr Tidswell intended to "check" the gun and did not intend to take his own life. This should have been given more emphasis. Further, it was disrespectful that Mr Tidswell's mother had been referred to by her first name, and that the article had been placed beneath a separate item about an award to some of the newspaper's journalists.
5. The complainant also said the article contained inaccuracies concerning Mr Tidswell's age, details of his health, the circumstances in which he had been found, and the state of the shotgun. While she did not frame her complaint under Clause 1 (Accuracy), and emphasised that she was not seeking a correction, she considered that this represented a failure to handle publication of the report sensitively. Some of the disputed claims originated with a statement by a family member, which had been read out in court; the family member had been extremely traumatised at the time he had given the statement, and the newspaper should have taken greater care to report it in a sensitive manner.

6. The newspaper said that it was very sorry to learn of the complainant's concerns about the article, which it considered to be a non-sensational report of the court proceedings. It said that it had made an effort to ensure that the report was fair and accurate, and that no unnecessary distressing information was included to upset Mr Tidswell's family members or friends further. The details regarding the manner of the death were from statements by a family member and police who had attended the scene, and the pathologist's cause of death; graphic detail given by the pathologist while the family was out of the room was omitted. The report had included the information about the positioning of the shotgun as it was central to the coroner's conclusion that it was a case of suicide, rather than accidental death. However, the article had also made clear that the family did not agree.
7. The claims disputed by the complainant on factual grounds originated with information heard in court, and reported in good faith. Mr Tidswell's family had been visibly distressed during proceedings, and it would not have been appropriate to approach them at such a time to verify the information. Nonetheless, the newspaper was happy to clarify Mr Tidswell's age if the complainant wished. The use of Mr Tidswell's mother's first name was standard reporting procedure, but the newspaper apologised for any distress caused by the placement of the article. On receipt of the complaint it had withheld the article from its website and sister publication.

Relevant Code provisions

8. Clause 5 (Intrusion into grief or shock)
 - (i) In cases involving personal grief or shock, enquiries and approaches must be made with sympathy and discretion and publication handled sensitively.
 - (ii) When reporting suicide, care should be taken to avoid excessive detail about the method used.

Findings of the Committee

9. The Committee considered first the complainant's concern that the information about the position of the shotgun constituted "excessive detail" in breach of Clause 5 (ii). This detail had been expressly cited by the coroner as key to her conclusion that it had been an intentional act, despite the family's disagreement. The inclusion of this information served an important purpose in explaining why the coroner had come to this decision; indeed, the coroner had stated that because of the placement of the gun, she "[could] not see an alternative

explanation". It was not, therefore, excessive; the report did not breach Clause 5 (ii).

10. The complainant also believed that the report had been handled insensitively, in breach of Clause 5 (i). The Committee expressed some concern about the reference to Mr Tidswell's being "covered in blood", and acknowledged that this detail had caused further distress to the family. It had regard, however, for the fact that this information – which had originated with a statement by Mr Tidswell's father, which had been read in court -- had formed part of a generally factual and non-sensational description of the circumstances in which the body had been found. In this context, the Committee concluded that, on balance, there was no breach of Clause 5 (i) in relation to the use of this phrase.
11. The complainant had raised a further concern under Clause 5 (i) in relation to the inclusion of inaccuracies in the article, which she said showed a lack of sensitivity. The article had been based on information heard in open court, which the newspaper was entitled to report. While some of the details given in court were inaccurate, and this was a matter of regret, in this context their inclusion did not constitute a failure to deal sensitively with publication, in breach of Clause 5. The Committee also wished to make clear that the Code does not include a requirement for balance. While it acknowledged that the complainant would have preferred for the article to include positive statements about Mr Tidswell's state of mind which had been given in court, the omission of such information did not raise a breach of the Code, particularly as the article had made clear the essential point, that the family did not believe that it was an intentional act, and included their suggestion that he might have been testing the gun.
12. The newspaper was entitled to refer to Mr Tidswell's mother by her first name, which had been given in court, in line with its house style. While the complainant considered this to be disrespectful, it did not raise a breach of Clause 5; nor did the placement of the article beneath a story that was positive in tone. Nonetheless, the Committee welcomed the newspaper's apology to the complainant for having caused the family distress on the latter point. The decision to withhold the article from the newspaper's website and sister publication to avoid causing further distress to the complainant was also welcomed.

Conclusion

13. The complaint was not upheld.

APPENDIX C

Decision of the Complaints Committee 02183-14 Independent Police Complaints Commission v The Times

Summary of complaint

1. The Independent Police Complaints Commission complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that The Times had breached Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors' Code of Practice in an article headlined "Police watchdog hid truth about Duggan shooting", published on 28 October 2014 in print and online.
2. The article claimed that the newspaper had obtained new information, through a Freedom of Information Act request, which showed that the IPCC "hid the truth" about the fatal shooting of Mark Duggan "to protect Scotland Yard from 'anti-police feelings'". This referred to a decision by the IPCC to delay for four days the release of a ballistics report showing that a bullet which had lodged in a police officer's radio during the incident, narrowly avoiding injury to him, was police-issue. (It was subsequently established that, in fact, Mr Duggan had not fired a gun during the encounter.) The IPCC had received the ballistics report on 5 August and released it on 9 August. The article noted that on the same day, another newspaper had published a report questioning the likelihood that Mr Duggan had fired at police.
3. It further claimed that the IPCC had "suppressed" the report, which it said "indicated that Mark Duggan had not shot at officers when he was stopped by police". It quoted an "internal briefing note" by then-IPCC Commissioner Rachel Cerfontyne, giving as a reason for delaying publication "our knowledge that a number of community events are taking place this weekend, where it is considered that tensions and anti-police feeling will be high". The article acknowledged that Ms Cerfontyne had also cited as a reason the fact that the police officers involved were shortly to be interviewed, and were as yet unaware of the results.
4. The complainant said the claims that it had "hid the truth" in order to protect the police, and that the ballistics report "indicated that Mark Duggan had not shot at officers when he was stopped by police" were inaccurate, damaging, and not substantiated by the material the newspaper had obtained via the FOI request. The ballistics report did not establish that Mr Duggan had not fired at police; it only ruled out the bullet lodged in the radio as possible evidence that he had done so. It was not, at that stage, clear whether a non-police-issue weapon found at the scene had been fired. The article suggested wrongly that Ms Cerfontyne had failed to act impartially.

5. Further, the article had misled readers as to the reason for the delay. Ms Cerfontyne had cited three reasons in her internal note setting out the reasons why the information would not be published “at this stage”: “Our preference for the officers to provide their statements... without being aware of this[;] The unpredictability of the community impact of this information, and our knowledge that a number of community events are taking place this weekend, where it is already considered that tensions and anti police feeling will be high[;] Our inability to context the information, so it would only be partial and we could not control the interpretation or speculation, the [post mortem] result, total number of shots discharged and further forensic analysis will enable us to provide a fuller and more comprehensive account”. Ms Cerfontyne concluded by stating that it was her “strong wish that we issue this information in a controlled and managed way”. Ms Cerfontyne had given an interview to the newspaper, prior to publication, in which she had explained further the reasons she had decided to delay publication of the report; this information was not properly reflected in the published article.
6. The complainant argued that in light of the concerns it had raised, the newspaper should withdraw the article from its website.
7. The newspaper defended its report as fair and accurate. The IPCC had made a deliberate decision not to release information which it knew contradicted widely-circulated accounts of the shooting. This was significant in the context of widespread reporting during this period that there had been an “exchange of fire” at the scene. This followed a briefing by a member of the IPCC press office, for which the IPCC had subsequently apologised (although the newspaper did not dispute the complainant’s position that Ms Cerfontyne had not been aware of that briefing at the time). The ballistics report was the first piece of information to undermine this narrative.
8. It was perfectly accurate to describe that decision as suppression, and given that the report challenged the false narrative that Mr Duggan had fired at officers, it was not inaccurate to use the phrase “hid the truth”. Ms Cerfontyne’s reasons for not releasing the report had been quoted at length in the article; three substantial paragraphs had explained the IPCC’s position on this point.
9. The article had not claimed that the ballistics report had “established” that Mr Duggan had not fired at police; it said that the report “indicated” this. This was accurate: the only evidence to support the idea of an “exchange of fire” – which had been promulgated by the IPCC itself – had been the bullet lodged in the police radio. Police officers present at the scene may have feared that Mr Duggan would shoot them, but they had never stated that he actually did so.

10. The newspaper saw no reason to remove the article from its website. While it did not believe it was required to do so under the terms of the Code, after receiving a complaint direct from the IPCC the newspaper had published a clarification in its regular corrections and clarifications column – and as a footnote to the online article – as follows:

We stated (News, Oct 28) that a ballistics report the day after the shooting of Mark Duggan “indicated that [he] had not shot at officers when he was stopped by police.” The Independent Police Complaints Commission has asked us to clarify that the report revealed only that the bullet which hit a policeman and lodged in his radio was police-issue; it was not known at that stage whether Duggan’s gun had been fired.”

Relevant Code provisions

11. Clause 1 (Accuracy)

- i. The Press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures.
- ii. A significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distortion once recognised must be corrected, promptly and with due prominence, and - where appropriate - an apology published. In cases involving the Regulator, prominence should be agreed with the Regulator in advance.
- iii. The Press, while free to be partisan, must distinguish clearly between comment, conjecture and fact.

Findings of the Committee

12. The complainant strongly denied that the documents obtained by the newspaper justified its claim that the complainant had “hid the truth” or “suppressed” the report.
13. These claims represented an interpretation of the documents obtained under a FOI request, which had been extensively quoted from. The IPCC had accepted that, in the immediate aftermath of the shooting, a member of its staff had added credibility to false claims in circulation that Mr Duggan had fired at officers, and had later apologised. The decision to withhold the ballistics report prevented the public circulation of information that tended to undermine these false claims. The Committee acknowledged Ms Cerfontyne’s position that she had not been aware of this at the time. The Committee concluded that the references were not significantly misleading in this context.

14. As both parties accepted, the ballistics report did not prove that Mr Duggan had not fired at police; however, it did rule out one potential piece of evidence that some had taken to suggest that he had. In this context, it was not significantly misleading to say that the ballistics report “indicated” this. Similarly, “anti-police feeling” was among the three reasons cited by the IPCC Commissioner who had made the decision not to release the report.
15. Finally, the Committee did not agree that characterising the Commissioner’s comments about “anti-police feeling” as a desire to “protect Scotland Yard” suggested that the Commissioner had failed to act impartially. It had clearly been part of her consideration that releasing this information could further inflame tensions with the police. This aspect of the Commissioner’s email was quoted in full, and the article had set out the other reasons she had given for not releasing information about the report.

Conclusion

16. The complaint was not upheld.

APPENDIX D

Decision of the Complaints Committee 02184-14 Rooney v Wetherby News

Summary of complaint

1. Anna Rooney complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that the Wetherby News had breached Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors' Code of Practice in an article headlined "New leaders set to stay at high school", published on 3 October 2014. The complainant further complained that the newspaper had breached Clause 3 (Privacy) in handling her complaint about the article.
2. The article reported a partnership between two local schools, Wetherby High and Carr Manor Community School, and included comments from the acting head teacher of Wetherby High. The complainant is the deputy head teacher at a nearby school.
3. The complainant said that Carr Manor Community School had never been rated "outstanding" overall by Ofsted. Further, the quoted claim by the acting head teacher of Wetherby High that "we are not in partnership [with Carr Manor] because there is anything wrong with the school" was also inaccurate, as the school had been judged to "require improvement". The complainant had initially contacted the reporter to raise her concerns about the accuracy of the article, suggesting that parents considering where to place their children would be misled by these claims. She decided not to pursue the matter further, but subsequently learned that information about her complaint had been passed to a local councillor and her employer, at which point she complained to IPSO. She said that the disclosure of information about her complaint had represented an intrusion into her privacy and had caused her significant embarrassment and distress.
4. When first contacted by the complainant, the reporter had denied that the newspaper had inaccurately reported the Ofsted grading for Carr Manor; she said that under the new grading scheme, "outstanding" had been replaced by "good". After receiving the complaint via IPSO, however, the newspaper had acknowledged the inaccuracy and offered to print the following correction on page 1 of a forthcoming edition:

"An article in the Wetherby News on October 3, 2014, referred to Carr Manor school as having an Ofsted grade of Outstanding. We have been asked to point out that the correct Ofsted grade for Carr Manor school is 'Good' and we apologise for the error".

5. The newspaper said that it had accurately reported the comments of the acting head teacher, and had distinguished them as her opinion. It did not believe that this aspect of the article raised a breach of the Code.
6. The newspaper said that the reporter had received two similar complaints about the accuracy of the article, one of which was the complainant's, in which she had described herself as a "senior leader in secondary education". The reporter had been concerned that there was a campaign being mounted against Carr Manor Community School, and had therefore asked a local contact if he knew who the complainant was. The newspaper said that the reporter had disclosed only the complainant's name, and the fact that she had complained about the article, not the details of her correspondence. It said that the journalist had emphasised the confidential nature of her query to the third party, and the contact confirmed that the information would not be passed on. It accepted that the third party – who it declined to identify, regarding them as a confidential source – had subsequently disclosed the information to others. This was a matter of regret, but it was not the responsibility of the newspaper.

Relevant Code provisions

7. Clause 1 (Accuracy)

- (i) The press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures.
- (ii) A significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distortion once recognised must be corrected, promptly and with due prominence, and – where appropriate – an apology published.
- (iii) The press, whilst free to be partisan, must distinguish clearly between comment, conjecture and fact.

Clause 3 (Privacy)

- (i) Everyone is entitled to respect for his or her private and family life, home, health and correspondence, including digital communications.

Findings of the Committee

8. The newspaper had not explained persuasively why it had disclosed information about the complaint to a third party. Furthermore, on receipt of the first contact from the complainant raising concerns about the accuracy of the article, the newspaper should have recognised that an inaccuracy had been published, and promptly offered to remedy it. The inaccuracy regarding Carr Manor's Ofsted rating was significant in the context of the report, and its publication constituted a failure to take care not to publish inaccurate or misleading information. A correction was necessary; this aspect of the complaint was upheld.

9. On both of these points, the newspaper's handling of the complainant's concerns represented extremely poor practice. This was a matter of concern.
10. The Committee did not find a further breach of Clause 1 in relation to the inclusion of the claim by the acting head teacher of Wetherby High regarding the reasons for the school's partnership with another institution. This was clearly distinguished as her opinion and was not significantly misleading.
11. The newspaper accepted that it had disclosed the complainant's name, and the fact that she had complained about its coverage of Wetherby High, to a third party. As the complainant had pointed out – in the course of questioning why the newspaper had decided to make enquiries as to her identity – the complaint related to a general point of fact. It did not contain information about the complainant which could reasonably be considered private. For these reasons, while this disclosure constituted poor practice, it did not breach Clause 3.

Conclusions

12. The complaint was upheld in part under Clause 1.

Remedial action required

13. Having partially upheld the complaint under Clause 1 (i), the Committee considered what remedial action should be required. The Committee has the power to require the publication of a correction and/or adjudication, the nature, extent and placement of which is to be determined by IPSO. In cases where a publication's arrangements for enforcing standards and compliance have been found to be at fault, IPSO may also inform the publication that further remedial action is required to ensure that the requirements of the Editors' Code are met.
14. The Committee noted that the newspaper had offered to publish a front-page correction acknowledging the error and making clear the correct position. The Committee welcomed the offer of a particularly prominent correction, following the complaint to IPSO. In all the circumstances, this was sufficient to remedy the established breach of the Code, and the newspaper should publish it promptly, in print and online, in order to avoid a breach of Clause 1 (ii).
15. However, the newspaper's failures in the handling of the complaint demonstrated that its arrangements for enforcing standards and compliance were at fault. IPSO will therefore be notifying the publication that further remedial action is required to answer the criticism made of its processes above. The publication will be required to take further steps to ensure that its staff are aware of the proper operation of its complaints procedure, and to provide assurances

to IPSO that it has taken steps to implement an appropriate confidentiality procedure for complainants' correspondence, including clear guidance as to when and how such correspondence may be disclosed to third parties.

APPENDIX E

Decision of the Complaints Committee 03097-14 Ambridge v Essex Chronicle

Summary of complaint

1. Robert Ambridge complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that the Essex Chronicle had breached Clause 3 (Privacy) and Clause 4 (Harassment) of the Editors' Code of Practice in an article published on 19 December 2014, headlined "Twitter troll Old Holborn leaves town...and moves to Chelmsford".
2. The article reported that the complainant had recently moved from his home in Braintree to Chelmsford, after his name, picture, home address and workplace were revealed online. It detailed the complainant's reputation as an internet "troll", under the identity "Old Holborn". It noted that he had posted "distasteful tweets about the Hillsborough stadium disaster and murdered children", leading to death threats after his identity was revealed online a few months previously. It included the partial address of his new home.
3. The complainant said that the inclusion of his partial address, when the newspaper knew that he had received death threats, posed potential safety concerns for him and his family, and therefore breached Clause 3. He provided examples of some of the threatening messages he had received since the article under complaint was published, and said that his wife's employer had introduced protective measures in her workplace to prevent her from receiving further abuse. He also said that it was the eighth article concerning him which had been published by the newspaper, despite the fact that he had committed no crime. He said that this constituted harassment and was a breach of Clause 4.
4. The newspaper said that the complainant was a notorious Twitter troll, who had had 36 different Twitter accounts over an 18-month period, as his accounts are regularly suspended. He refers to himself as "Britain's vilest troll", and has previously appeared in television documentaries defending his actions. The newspaper said that because of his notoriety, the complainant's full address had previously been published on social media sites, and he had been "doxxed", which meant that his identifying personal details – including his address, mobile telephone number, and a link to a photograph of the exterior of his home – had been published online. The newspaper did not accept that its publication of his partial address posed any intrusion, or that the incidents cited by the complainant since the article's publication could be linked to its article. It noted that the

complainant was regularly tweeting for up to 18 hours per day, and that this included dozens of comments which could be deemed offensive, and could provoke a hostile response.

5. The newspaper said that it was central to the article that the complainant lived in Chelmsford, as that was what gave the story news value for its readers. It said that it was standard practice in regional newspapers to publish the addresses of subjects of articles, and that the complainant's house number was omitted; there were around 20 houses on the road. Several "R. Ambridges" were listed locally, and so it had been important to publish his address in order to correctly identify him. In April 2014 the complainant had received abusive messages and death threats via his employer, but the newspaper was not aware of any more recent threats, and it noted that the complainant had not supplied any evidence of death threats, nor had a report been made to the police. Nonetheless, when the newspaper had been contacted by the complainant directly, it had removed his address from the online article, as a gesture of goodwill.

Relevant Code provisions

6. Clause 3 (Privacy)

- (i) Everyone is entitled to respect for his or her private and family life, home, health and correspondence, including digital communications.
- (ii) Editors will be expected to justify intrusions into any individual's private life without consent. Account will be taken of the complainant's own public disclosures of information.

Clause 4 (Harassment)

- (i) Journalists must not engage in intimidation, harassment or persistent pursuit.

The Public Interest

- (iii) The Regulator will consider the extent to which material is already in the public domain, or will become so.

Findings of the Committee

7. The Committee generally takes the view that newspapers are entitled to publish the partial addresses of subjects of articles. Nonetheless, it considers each case on its merits, and in this instance, serious consideration had to be given to the fact that the newspaper had been aware that the complainant had previously received death threats. This had clear potential relevance to the question of whether the publication of his address would intrude into his private life by posing a safety risk to him and his family.

8. The Editors' Code requires that the Committee considers the extent to which material is already in the public domain, as this has the potential to mitigate the intrusion posed by publication of material which could otherwise breach Clause 3. The complainant's full address had already been placed in the public domain, prior to publication of the article under complaint, by virtue of postings by other internet users. Extensive personal information had been published about the complainant online, including his full new address. In this context, it was not clear that the publication, in the newspaper, of the partial address posed a specific threat to his safety. It was notable in any case that none of the hostile activity cited by the complainant in the period since the article was published appeared to have been directed to his home address; rather, he had referred to concerns about a threat to his wife's workplace, information which had not been published by the newspaper, and threats directed to his Twitter account. The Committee concluded that there was no breach of Clause 3.
9. The terms of Clause 4 generally relate to the conduct of journalists during the newsgathering process. The publication of a number of articles about the same person would not usually amount to harassment under the terms of the Editors' Code. The newspaper had been entitled to report on the on-going controversy regarding the complainant's online activities. This did not amount to a breach of Clause 4.

Conclusions

10. The complaint was not upheld.

APPENDIX F

Decision of the Complaints Committee Various Complainants v The Daily Record

Summary of Complaint

1. Six complainants complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that an article headlined "The Vow delivered", published in the Daily Record on 27 November 2014, and an article headlined "The Vow delivered: Scotland to be responsible for more tax and welfare worth billions of pounds in radical devolution package", published on the Daily Record's website on 26 November 2014, were inaccurate, in breach of Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors' Code of Practice.
2. The article was about the Report of The Smith Commission, which considered the further devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament. A front page sub-headline claimed, "Scottish Government budget to nearly double". The article went on to report that "the Scottish Government's current budget of about £30 billion a year will rise by two thirds to about £50 billion". The online article reported that "the historic power shift from Westminster should see the Scottish government's current budget of about £30 billion boosted by over 50 per cent". The newspaper said that the online article appeared on the home page of the Daily Record's website
3. The complainants said that the recommendations of the Smith Commission would not "nearly double" the Scottish Government's Budget. Some complainants referred to paragraph 95 (3) of the Smith Commission report, which stated that there should be no change in the size of the Scottish Government budget simply as a result of the initial transfer of tax and/or spending powers, before considering how they were used. Some complainants said that while certain tax receipts would be devolved to the Scottish Government under the recommendations, paragraph 95 (3) (a) made clear that this would be accompanied by an equivalent reduction in the block grant.
4. The newspaper explained that it had received information about the contents of the report shortly before its publication from a source with first-hand knowledge. It accepted that it had misunderstood the information provided to it on this point. It offered to publish a correction in the "Corrections and Complaints" column on page 2 of the Daily Record. It proposed the following wording:

In our report of November 27 we stated that the Smith Commission on Devolution would recommend that the Scottish Government budget should "nearly double" and that the current budget of about £30bn would rise to about £50bn. This was based on a misunderstanding of information provided by a source close to the Smith report. The estimated "doubling" related to the proportion of the budget raised from taxes devolved to the Scottish Government, rather than the overall size of the budget; the £50bn estimate for the "increased budget" was therefore incorrect. The impact of the increased devolved powers such as tax, welfare, air passenger duty and Crown Estates budget is yet to be fully determined.

5. The newspaper amended the online article, and offered to publish a correction, which it said would either be published at the bottom of the original online article, or as a stand-alone item published on the first news page of the Daily Record's website. It would then be published on the corrections and clarifications page of the website. It proposed the following wording:

In our report of November 26 we stated that the Smith Commission on Devolution would recommend that the Scottish Government's budget of about £30 billion could be boosted by over 50%. This was based on a misunderstanding of information provided by a source close to the Smith report. The estimated increase related to the proportion of the budget raised from taxes devolved to the Scottish Government, rather than the overall size of the budget; the 50% estimate for the "increased budget" was therefore incorrect. The impact of the increased devolved powers such as tax, welfare, air passenger duty and Crown Estates budget is yet to be fully determined.

Relevant Code Provisions

6. Clause 1 (Accuracy)
 - (i) The Press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures.
 - (ii) A significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distortion once recognised must be corrected, promptly and with due prominence, and - where appropriate - an apology published. In cases involving the Regulator, prominence should be agreed with the Regulator in advance.

Findings of the Committee

7. The Committee welcomed the newspaper's prompt recognition of the fact that it had misunderstood the information provided to it by a source. Nevertheless, in stating that the Scottish Government budget would "nearly double", or that it would be "boosted by over 50 per cent", the newspaper was making significant claims. The newspaper's publication of these claims, following a significant misunderstanding of the information provided to it, demonstrated a failure to take care not to publish inaccurate information. The complaint under Clause 1 (i) was therefore upheld. As a consequence of the inaccuracy, the article significantly misrepresented the fiscal consequences of the Smith Commission's recommendations. The article was therefore significantly inaccurate in a manner that required correction in accordance with Clause 1 (ii).

Conclusions

8. The complaint was upheld.

Remedial action required

- 9 Having upheld the complaint under Clause 1(i), the Committee considered what remedial action should be required. The Committee has the power to require the publication of a correction and/or adjudication, the nature, extent and placement of which is to be determined by IPSO. It may also inform the publication that further remedial action is required to ensure that the requirements of the Editors' Code are met.
- 10 The Committee welcomed the newspaper's prompt acknowledgment of the inaccuracy and offer of a correction. The wording and prominence of the print correction offered was sufficient to correct and address the initial error in the print article. In order to avoid a breach of the Code, this correction should now be published.
- 11 It noted that in some instances, depending on the nature of the original inaccuracy, it may be sufficient for a publication to amend the online article and append a footnote to the article. In this instance, however, the inaccuracy was particularly significant and prominent. In order to remedy the breach of Clause 1, the newspaper was now required to publish this wording both as a footnote to the online article under complaint, making clear to readers that the article had been amended, and as a stand-alone item linked for no less than 24 hours from the home page of the Daily Record's website, with a headline indicating the subject of the correction. The stand-alone item should then be archived on the corrections and clarifications page of the Daily Record's website.

APPENDIX G

Decision of the Complaints Committee 01456-14 Manson v Daily Express

Summary of complaint

1. Neil Manson complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that the Daily Express had breached Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors' Code of Practice in an article headlined "Climate change PROVED to be 'nothing but a lie', claims top meteorologist", published online on 23 October 2014.
2. The article reported that the co-founder of the Weather Channel had claimed that "man-made climate change was no longer scientifically credible", and discussed a variety of current opinions on global warming and greenhouse gases.
3. The complainant said that it was inaccurate to describe John Coleman, who co-founded the Weather Channel, as a "top meteorologist", as he is actually a journalist and not scientifically trained.
4. The newspaper said that the terms "weatherman" and "meteorologist" were interchangeable, as both involve the examination of weather patterns. It said that Mr Coleman had dedicated more than 61 years to weather forecasting, and that a weatherman's job is to forecast the weather based on meteorological observations. However, it amended the headline to read "'Global warming the greatest scam in history' claims founder of Weather Channel"; replaced a reference to "one of the world's leading meteorologists" in the sub-headline with "one of the world's best known climate change sceptic [sic]"; and appended the following footnote under the heading "Correction":

"This article originally referred to John Coleman as a top meteorologist; that reference has now been removed. It also claimed that in 2010 a high-level inquiry by the InterAcademy Council found there was 'little evidence' to support the IPCC's claims about global warming. In fact, the InterAcademy Council had not found that. The article has now been amended."

5. The complainant said that the newspaper's offers were unsatisfactory, as the footnote should include an apology to readers for misleading them.

Relevant Code provisions

6. Clause 1 (Accuracy)
 - (i) The press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures.

- (ii) A significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distortion once recognised must be corrected, promptly and with due prominence, and – where appropriate – an apology published.

Findings of the Committee

7. The article had made clear that Mr Coleman had co-founded the Weather Channel. While it had quoted Mr Coleman's claim to have "studied climate change seriously for years", it had not suggested that he had engaged in formal academic research into climate change. Mr Coleman has evidently spent several decades working as a television weatherman, and continues to contribute his views to the fields of weather and climate change. In this context, the newspaper's characterisation of Mr Coleman as a "top" and "leading" meteorologist had not been significantly misleading. There was no breach of Clause 1.
8. Nonetheless, the Committee welcomed the newspaper's decision to amend the article as a positive response to the complaint.

Conclusions

9. The complaint was not upheld.

APPENDIX H

Paper No.	File Number	Name v Publication
95	01755-14	Full Fact v The Times
96	143658	iERA v The Times
97	01248-14	Elton-Campbell v Daily Mail
98	01683-14	McCaffrey v Impartial Reporter
99	0661-14	Holling v Barnsley Chronicle
101	01226-14	Holling v The Sun
102	01227-14	Holling v Daily Mirror
103		IPSO Complaints –Request for review
104		IPSO Complaints – Third party
105	0334-14	HRH Sara bint Talal bin Abdulaziz v The Sunday Telegraph
106		A woman v Various
107	680.14	Millar v Perthshire Advertiser
109	01390-14	Dalton v TLS
110	01837-14	Adams v Belfast Telegraph
112		PCC Complaints – No Breach
113		PCC Complaints – Re-circ
114		IPSO Complaints – Request for review
116	01754-14	Thomason v The Daily Telegraph
117	01595-14	James v The Rutherglen Reformer
119	01597-14	Lane-Smith v The Times
120	01457-14	Perkins v Kentish Gazette
125	01659-14	de Pulford v The Daily Telegraph
134	02207-14	Bareham v The Times
135	01827-14	Farrell v Metro.co.uk
136		Various complainants v Daily Record
137		IPSO Complaints – Third party
138		IPSO Complaints – Request for review