

The Telegraph

IPSO Annual Report 2024

Reporting period: Jan 1 to Dec 31 2024

Introduction

The Regulated Entity (as defined in, and for the purposes of, the Independent Press Standards Organisation CIC Regulations 2013) is Telegraph Media Group Holdings Limited ('TMGH').

TMGH is a wholly owned subsidiary of Telegraph Media Group Limited (TMG), which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Press Acquisitions Limited. Our portfolio includes The Telegraph website and app, The Daily Telegraph and The Sunday Telegraph print titles.

Our regulated titles are:

The Daily Telegraph

The Sunday Telegraph

www.telegraph.co.uk

TMGH is focused on a subscriber-first strategy underpinned by long term investment in The Telegraph's digital transformation.

In November, The Telegraph's website, telegraph.co.uk, marked its 30th anniversary. In 1994, we launched 'The Electronic Telegraph', becoming the first national newspaper in Britain to launch online. We pioneered web publishing and news techniques that had never been tried before.

The Telegraph understands the needs of our customers. We invest in quality journalism and technology and are proud of our high professional and ethical standards.

Anna Jones is the Chief Executive and Stephen Welch and Boudewijn Wentink are directors of TMGH. They are supported by an executive team which is responsible for strategic planning, corporate governance, annual budgeting, financing, investment appraisal and executive remuneration.

TMGH remains a strong supporter of self-regulation. Chris Evans is Chairman of the Editors' Code Committee. We always do our best to assist IPSO and to co-operate with it by supplying information in a timely manner.

Editorial Structure

Chris Evans is Editor and Director of Content. Allister Heath is Sunday Telegraph Editor. Ben Clissitt is Managing Editor. They are supported by an editorial executive team.

The Group's 'responsible person' (under section 1.2 of IPSO Regulations Annex A) is Ben Clissitt, Managing Editor.



Our editorial standards

Telegraph Media Group Holdings is a supporter of voluntary press self-regulation and played a leading role in the creation of IPSO. It takes seriously its responsibility to uphold the highest editorial standards.

We have a dedicated Compliance team whose job is to manage and record complaints brought under the Editors' Code.

The Editorial Legal & Compliance team works closely with editorial departments to offer Code advice and

to handle complaints. Journalists are given regular feedback about Code issues and complaints. (see **Our training process**, below).

How we work

The Telegraph has a single newsroom that serves both digital and print. The work of editorial staff appears across all platforms.

Difficult or contentious stories are scrutinised by senior editorial staff, who sit in the centre of the newsroom to facilitate quick editorial decisions and rapid digital publication. *The Telegraph* prides itself on its high standards of journalism on all platforms.

Nowhere is rigour more important than in our investigative journalism. We have an award-winning investigations team dedicated to producing exclusive stories that expose issues of significant public interest. Most are contentious and legally sensitive. They demand painstaking, detailed work to comply with the Editors' Code.

Editorial Code guidance

The Editorial Legal & Compliance team offers pre-publication Code advice.

The team is sufficiently knowledgeable to advise journalists without recourse to IPSO. Exceptionally, where the issues are marginal or abstruse, advice might be sought from IPSO directly and relayed to staff.

This service is advisory only; once journalists are informed of potential Code issues and their possible consequences, it is for senior editorial staff to decide how to proceed. The team retains a responsibility to escalate matters directly to the Editor and/or Deputy Editor where it is deemed appropriate.

Post-publication, complaints are dealt with by staff in the Editorial Legal & Compliance department. Relevant journalists are normally involved, but management of complaints is the responsibility of that department, with final sign-off by the Head of Editorial Legal & Compliance in collaboration with the relevant editorial executive.

Details of all complaints are carefully recorded (see **Our complaints handling process**, below) and outcomes are fed back to journalists and their managers. Significant cases and ones involving adverse adjudications by IPSO are also circulated to editorial staff. (See **Our training process**.)

IPSO Code warnings

IPSO warnings and advisory notices are distributed to editorial staff by email shortly after they arrive. They are also collated on a shared spreadsheet to which editorial staff and lawyers have access. This is kept up to date with all such communications, together with legal and reporting restriction notices. They are searchable on demand.

The Editorial Legal & Compliance team from time to time also issues its own advisories to journalists when it is felt necessary or appropriate to bring to their attention any specific risks or problems.

Our complaints-handling process

We accept complaints via our webform at www.telegraph.co.uk/editorialcomplaints, which explains that we are regulated by IPSO and links to its website. The link to the webform appears in the footer of the telegraph.co.uk homepage where we state that we are a member of IPSO. The complaints webform links to our own published [complaints policy](#), which explains how complainants can appeal to IPSO if they are dissatisfied with our response.



We publicise our membership of IPSO in our newspapers (see left) and online.

Readers may also submit complaints about editorial content by post, to “Editorial Complaints” at *The Telegraph*’s usual postal address. We of course also accept complaints referred to us by IPSO under Regulation 13. Submissions via the webform and standard mail are monitored by a dedicated team reporting to the Head of Editorial Legal & Compliance. Editorial complaints are centrally handled by the Editorial Legal & Compliance team.

Where complainants get in touch via other channels raising concerns that appear to raise a potential breach of the Editors’ Code, they are referred to the Contact Us page or the editorial complaints webform (or the postal address if complainants have no internet access). We encourage users to fill in the webform because it guarantees that their complaint will be picked up quickly by the relevant staff and allows for recording and monitoring of complaints.

At this stage any complaints that are legal in nature - as opposed to Editors' Code matters - are dealt with by the lawyers within the Editorial Legal & Compliance department. Similarly, letters of complaint from solicitors are always dealt with by lawyers.

Whether they come to us directly, or are referred by IPSO under Regulation 13, most complaints receive a response/acknowledgement within two working days (within a week if sent by standard post).

We aim to conclude complaints speedily, whether by rejecting them or by upholding them and taking some form of remedial action. Our records show that in this reporting period we resolved 74% of editorial complaints within three working days. 98% were resolved within two weeks.

We keep detailed records of all complaints, which are coded and categorised to allow us to track issues of potential concern. The reports track key metrics such as total complaint numbers, the clauses of the Editors' Code under which they are brought, sections and journalists responsible for the material under complaint and breakdowns of outcomes (resolution remedies, complaints upheld, rejected, mediated etc). Details for the relevant reporting period are included below (see **Our record on compliance**).

Our training process

General

TMGH expects its journalists to adhere to the IPSO Editors' Code and as such it forms part of every journalist's contract of employment. It is also part of the contractual terms and conditions for editorial contributors/freelancers. In addition, staff are provided with training and information from Group Legal in relation to the Data Protection Act 2018 and Bribery Act 2010. The Editorial Legal and Compliance department maintains a google site, accessible company-wide, which contains guidance and advice on the IPSO Editors' Code and media law topics.

Editors' Code training

Most journalists come to *The Telegraph* either as beginners with a recognised postgraduate journalism qualification, or as established journalists with experience and knowledge of media law and regulation. Although very few recruits are unaware of the Editors' Code, we are conscious that the small handful that do fall into this

category need mandatory training. It is also felt to be important that experienced staff be given a regular reminder as the Code evolves, and new cases set precedents.

All new editorial staff must complete an introductory Editors' Code e-learning course provided by the Press Association. Thereafter all journalists must complete the Refresher course every two years.

Targeted Training

When there is a significant change in the law or there is a topic worthy of intense focus then seminars may be arranged in order to explain and discuss the topic or alternatively a note about the change in law with practical guidance is circulated. In 2024 we held a series of media law refresher seminars covering all the major areas including defamation; privacy/public interest amongst other topic areas. We also have an online Corrections & Clarifications column, which collates all print and online corrections

Compliance feedback

Lawyers from the Editorial Legal & Compliance department regularly meet face to face with journalists; desk editors; publishers and commissioners as and when complaints arise in order to discuss errors and the lessons that can be learned. In addition, the department circulates IPSO advisories in a timely manner and where appropriate will send emails which highlight specific issues that have arisen or noteworthy decisions.

Our record on compliance

Most (81%) complaints we received in the reporting period were solely or primarily concerned with Accuracy under clause 1 of the Editors' Code.

Of all the complaints we received about editorial content during 2024, we rejected more than 62%. We resolved the others with amendments to online articles and/or corrections acknowledging errors online and/or in print.

In 2024, 307 complaints made to IPSO about Telegraph articles were rejected. 234 of the rejections were under clause 1 (accuracy) and 115 under clause 12 (discrimination) of the Editors' Code.

IPSO adjudicated fourteen complaints under Regulation 19. Eight were rejected, two mediated, three partially upheld and one upheld.

Complaints not upheld by IPSO during 2024

- [01475-24 Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit](#)
- [19455-23 Hancock v The Daily Telegraph](#)
- [21744-23 Austin v The Daily Telegraph](#)
- [20762-23 Dale v telegraph.co.uk](#)
- [22501-23 Hmidan v telegraph.co.uk](#)
- [20544-23 Shaw v telegraph.co.uk](#)
- [20685-23 Adams v telegraph.co.uk](#)
- [20606-23 White v The Sunday Telegraph](#)

Complaints mediated by IPSO

- [Grigore v The Daily Telegraph](#)
- [Smith v telegraph.co.uk](#)

Partly upheld adjudications by IPSO during 2024 and Corrections published

- [03831-24 Various v The Daily Telegraph](#)

Print: “An article ‘52mph in a 20mph zone: How cyclists are turning UK roads into death traps’ (May, 17) referred to data taken from the Strava app. Strava has now removed some of the data included in the article and headline, which appear to have been erroneous. Data is uploaded to Strava by users, either automatically or manually, and cannot be checked or independently verified; the data is accepted on trust. We are happy to clarify this point and correct the record.”

Online: “This article and its headline have been amended to remove speeds recorded on Strava which Strava has now deleted and which appear to have been erroneous. Data is uploaded to Strava by users, either automatically or manually, and cannot be checked or independently verified; the data is accepted on trust. We are happy to clarify this point and correct the record.”

- [01552-24 Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit v The Daily Telegraph](#)

Print: An article headlined “Fall in weather delays erodes rail chief alert” (April, 4) referenced a “fall in weather delays” and said that “weather-related train disruption has decreased over the past few years”. We wish to make clear our analysis only showed that the share of weather-related delay minutes were falling in the selected dataset amongst total delay minutes, rather than weather-related delay minutes decreasing in absolute terms. This correction has been published following an upheld ruling by the Independent Press Standards Organisation.

Online: In respect of the headline and the first paragraph of this article we wish to make clear our analysis only showed that the share of weather-related delay minutes were falling in the selected dataset amongst total delay minutes, rather than weather-related delay minutes decreasing in absolute terms. This correction has been published following an upheld ruling by the Independent Press Standards Organisation

- [01241-24 Muslim Association of Britain v The Daily Telegraph](#)

Print: An article 'The Islamist threat is all too real - Gove understands it needs tackling' (March,18) reported that Michael Gove had declared the Muslim Association of Britain extremist. In fact, Michael Gove said the Government would assess if the Muslim Association of Britain was extremist. We are happy to correct the record.

The correction was also published in our online Corrections and Clarifications column, as well as a standalone on the home page for 24 hours.

Standalone Correction: An article 'The Islamist threat is all too real - Gove understands it needs tackling' (March 18) reported that Michael Gove had declared the Muslim Association of Britain extremist. In fact, Michael Gove said the Government would assess if the Muslim Association of Britain met their definition of extremism. This correction has been republished following an upheld ruling by the Independent Press Standards Organisation.

Upheld by IPSO during 2024 and published adjudication

- [19985-23 Sparks v The Daily Telegraph](#)

IPSO upholds accuracy complaint about disability Motability scheme against The Daily Telegraph

Grace Sparks complained to the Independent Press Standards Organisation that The Daily Telegraph breached Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors' Code of Practice in an article headlined "'Disabled' drivers claim £40k cars for free", published on 8 July 2023. A similar version of this article also appeared online, under the headline "People on benefits with mental health problems given cars worth £40k" and was shared on the newspaper's official "X" account.

The complaint was upheld, and IPSO required The Daily Telegraph to publish this adjudication to remedy the breach of the Editors' Code.

The complainant said the article misrepresented the Motability Scheme, designed to provide people entitled to mobility welfare payments with access to a vehicle. She denied that claimants could claim a vehicle "for free", as reported by the print headline; or that they were "given" cars, as reported by the online headline. She also said the article was inaccurate to report that "people who say they are immobilised by anxiety or depression can claim £40,000 cars on benefits" and that a survey found that "nearly a third of those who cited anxiety as

their primary condition were granted the enhanced rate, which would make them eligible for the car scheme”. While she accepted that those with a mental health condition – such as anxiety and depression – could qualify for the Scheme, she said that the threshold for qualification exceeded these conditions on their own.

The Daily Telegraph said that the text of the article – both online and in print – accurately reported how claimants applied to the Scheme. However, it accepted the headlines were inaccurate. The newspaper had published a correction, in print, and in its established Corrections and Clarifications column, 9 days after it had received the complaint from IPSO. It also amended the online headline and offered to publish a correction beneath the headline. Later, during IPSO’s investigation into the matter and 83 days after the article was published, the newspaper offered to publish a standalone correction on its website. It also offered to publish this correction on its “X” account.

IPSO found that the article – both online and in print as well as the newspaper’s post on X – had significantly misrepresented the Motability Scheme: claimants did not receive vehicles for free. Instead, those deemed eligible were able to claim subsidised leasehold cars through the scheme, and they had to meet at least some of the cost, either via giving up a portion, or all, of their Personal Independence Payments (PIP), or by paying additional amounts on top of their allowance.

Further, in IPSO’s view, the references in the article, taken together, including the findings of a survey from 2020, suggested that those with mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression could qualify for the scheme. However, the assessment criteria for the Scheme make clear that claimants are unable to qualify if they only have a mental health condition; diagnoses of depression or anxiety would not make a claimant eligible under the Scheme, unless these conditions also affect their mobility.

For these reasons, the Committee considered that the newspaper’s characterisation and presentation of the Scheme – information that was publicly available – represented a failure to take care not to publish inaccurate and misleading information, and a breach of Clause 1(i).

Given the article misrepresented the conditions of taxpayer-funded scheme, this was considered significantly misleading and, as such, required correction under Clause 1(ii) of the Editors’ Code.

The Committee concluded that the action taken – and offered – by the newspaper did not fulfil its obligations under Clause 1(ii). While the print correction had been published promptly and with sufficient prominence, it did not acknowledge the significantly misleading impression given by the headline and the article as a whole regarding the eligibility criteria of the Scheme, or adequately correct it. Further, the newspaper’s offer to publish a standalone correction – in relation to the online article and X post – was not considered sufficiently prompt, particularly given the prominence and significance of the breach: a standalone correction was required and had only been offered 83 days after the article was published, and 29 days after IPSO had launched its investigation into the matter.

The Committee therefore found a further breach of Clause 1(ii). The complaint under Clause 1 was upheld.

In all the above cases discussions were held with relevant writers and editors, explaining the ruling and the reasons for it. In some instances, where appropriate, there is a broader communication on the matter to the wider editorial group.