

**Press Council of Ireland  
and Office of the Press Ombudsman**



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**Annual Report 2009**



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## Report of the Chairman

Professor Thomas N Mitchell

The Press Council of Ireland has now completed two full years of operation. These have been years of high activity and a good deal of listening and learning and adjustment but I believe they represent an auspicious beginning. I have every confidence that the establishment of the Press Council will prove to have been a significant development in the history of Irish journalism and will benefit both the public and the profession.

The Office of the Press Ombudsman, one of the innovative aspects of the model, has been central to much of the success of the last two years, and I want to thank Professor Horgan and his two able colleagues, Bernie Grogan and Miriam Laffan, who, with modest resources, have done their work with the highest efficiency and professionalism. I also want to thank my colleagues on the Press Council for their support and dedication. I believe the composition of the Press Council, which has a majority of independent members combined with strong representation from the various elements of the industry, has proved its effectiveness. There has been complete unity of purpose, and the diversity of experience and expertise has brought better informed decisions and added credibility.

I want to mention a few developments during the year to which I attach particular importance. The Defamation Bill was signed into law by the President during the summer and came into force on 1 January, 2010. After the appropriate debates in the Dáil and Seanad, the Act now gives statutory recognition to the Press Council, and qualified privilege to the decisions and proceedings of the Press Council and the Press Ombudsman. There is further comment on the Act elsewhere in this Report, but it is especially significant that Ireland now has a regulatory body for the print media that has legal standing but is free of any control or influence by the state. It has the independence to command confidence as an impartial

arbiter, and to pursue without fear or favour its twin missions to promote a strong free press with high standards, and to provide a mode of redress for legitimate grievances of the public.

I am also pleased that there is a growing acceptance by all parties that appeals against decisions of the Press Ombudsman should only be made when there are adequate grounds. The Press Council will admit an appeal where there is significant new information or where it finds a procedural flaw or error in the interpretation of a Principle of the Code of Practice for Newspapers and Periodicals, but no system of appeal is intended to provide a second hearing simply because one party does not like a decision.

I also very much welcome the increase over the year in the number of cases successfully conciliated. There are so many instances where complainants are only seeking a correction or apology, or even an acknowledgement that they have a valid complaint. Conciliation should be possible in most of these cases. An open, generous attitude towards conciliation saves time and effort. It also generates goodwill and builds confidence in the media and support for a free press.

The one disappointment from the past year has been the fact that a number of newspapers and periodicals have still not become members of the Press Council. It is now our hope that the commencement of the Defamation Act 2009, which offers substantial benefits to members, will provide an added incentive to publishers to join. We also believe that publishers should be eager to show their readers and the general public that they, who rightly hold others to account, are themselves members of an appropriate form of accountability. The establishment of the Press Council was an initiative from within the media itself to create a body that would provide such a form of regulation. It is in the interests of all involved in the print media that the initiative should succeed and have the participation and support of the entire industry and of the wider public.

We hope that you will find the Annual Report informative. It is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the year's activities and to give a sense of some of the complexities and challenges involved in them. We welcome comments and suggestions from readers.

# Defamation Act 2009

The implementation of the Defamation Act 2009 has brought to a close a debate extending over 20 years about the form of legislation required by the constitutional obligation on the state to protect the right of all citizens to their good name and to vindicate that right when unjustly attacked.

The protracted debate surrounding defamation extended to broader issues of freedom of the press, and the risk of greater abuses of that freedom because of factors such as the emergence of powerful, market-driven and profit-driven media conglomerates, developments in the internet, and the rise of a much more diverse media, differing widely in mission and ethos. Alongside defamation, the government was also contemplating privacy legislation and the creation of a statutory Press Council to provide new forms of regulation.

The industry reacted with justifiable alarm to these proposed expansions of state control of the press. However it accepted that the press should be accountable to the public in a broader sense than merely complying with the law and that there should be a non-legal mechanism that would enable the public to pursue complaints quickly and at no expense and would compel publications to explain and justify their actions on the basis of agreed ethical and professional standards.

It therefore established a Steering Committee in 2004 to develop a model of Press Council that would provide such a mechanism to operate independently of both government and the industry. The Steering Committee worked closely with the Department of Justice and the then Minister, Michael McDowell TD, and agreement was reached about the form of a Press Council that would be constituted without any control of its membership by the state, and that would be given statutory recognition in the Defamation Bill together with the privileges and supports needed to ensure it could do its job effectively.

The Defamation Act 2009 therefore represents the final stage in the consolidation of the position of the Press Council of Ireland as the new regulatory body which will

ensure greater accountability by the press to the public, speedy redress of legitimate grievances, promotion of high ethical and professional standards, and protection of the fundamental democratic principle of freedom of the press. The Act provides many benefits for the Press Council. The public will now realise that this new regulatory structure has the sanction of statute law as part of an open system that is fair, free, and independent of both government and the press. Member publications of the Press Council, also, will know that courts can take cognisance of their membership, and of their adherence to the Code of Practice, when taking difficult decisions involving the freedom of the press and the rights of the individual.

A key provision of the new Act, where the Press Council and Press Ombudsman are concerned, is that it facilitates and encourages publications, where appropriate, to apologise for errors without a potentially costly admission of legal liability. The recognition of the Press Council and the Press Ombudsman under the Act strengthens the role of the Office of the Press Ombudsman in negotiating satisfactory resolutions to complaints that may involve apologies where these are agreed and appropriate.

Although it is technically possible for publications that are not member publications of the Press Council to claim similar privileges, they will have the difficult task, if they are to do so, of convincing a court that their standards and structures of accountability are no less rigorous and professional than those moderated by the Press Council. In these circumstances, membership of the Press Council will be, for all publications that have yet to take this step, a valuable asset.

All in all, this significant new legislation, and the recognition of the Press Council and the Press Ombudsman, is a vote of confidence by both the Oireachtas and the newspapers and periodicals of Ireland in the contribution that has been made by these new institutions over the past two years, and in the future of a printed press in Ireland that will play its full part in the growth and development of a vibrant, active and participatory democracy at all levels of society.

# Press Council Activities



Back row from left to right: Pat O'Connor, Seamus Boland, Peter O'Mahony, Frank Mulrennan, Michael McNiffe, Martin Fitzpatrick, Eoin McVey, Michael Denieffe.  
Front row from left to right: Rosemary Delaney, Mary Kotsonouris, Thomas N Mitchell (Chair), Eleanor O'Higgins, Maeve McDonagh (Deputy Chair).

## Activities

On 30 January the Press Council organized a seminar held in Athlone aimed at reviewing its first year of operations. During the two-day seminar, structured sessions were held at which presentations were given about the impact, effectiveness and policies of the Press Council over the previous twelve months.

Contributions were made by a number of invited newspaper editors and journalists, and there was a frank and beneficial exchange of views.

Mr Tim Toulmin, Director of the UK Press Complaints Commission, and Mr Will Gore, Director of Public Affairs at the Commission, were also present as observers by invitation.

## Company Report

The Press Council, as a company limited by guarantee, held its Annual General Meeting and an Extraordinary General Meeting in Dublin on 27 March. The AGM reviewed the previous year's activities and approved the accounts. It also agreed to re-appoint Grant Thornton as the company's auditors. The EGM, which was called to consider a number of proposed amendments to the

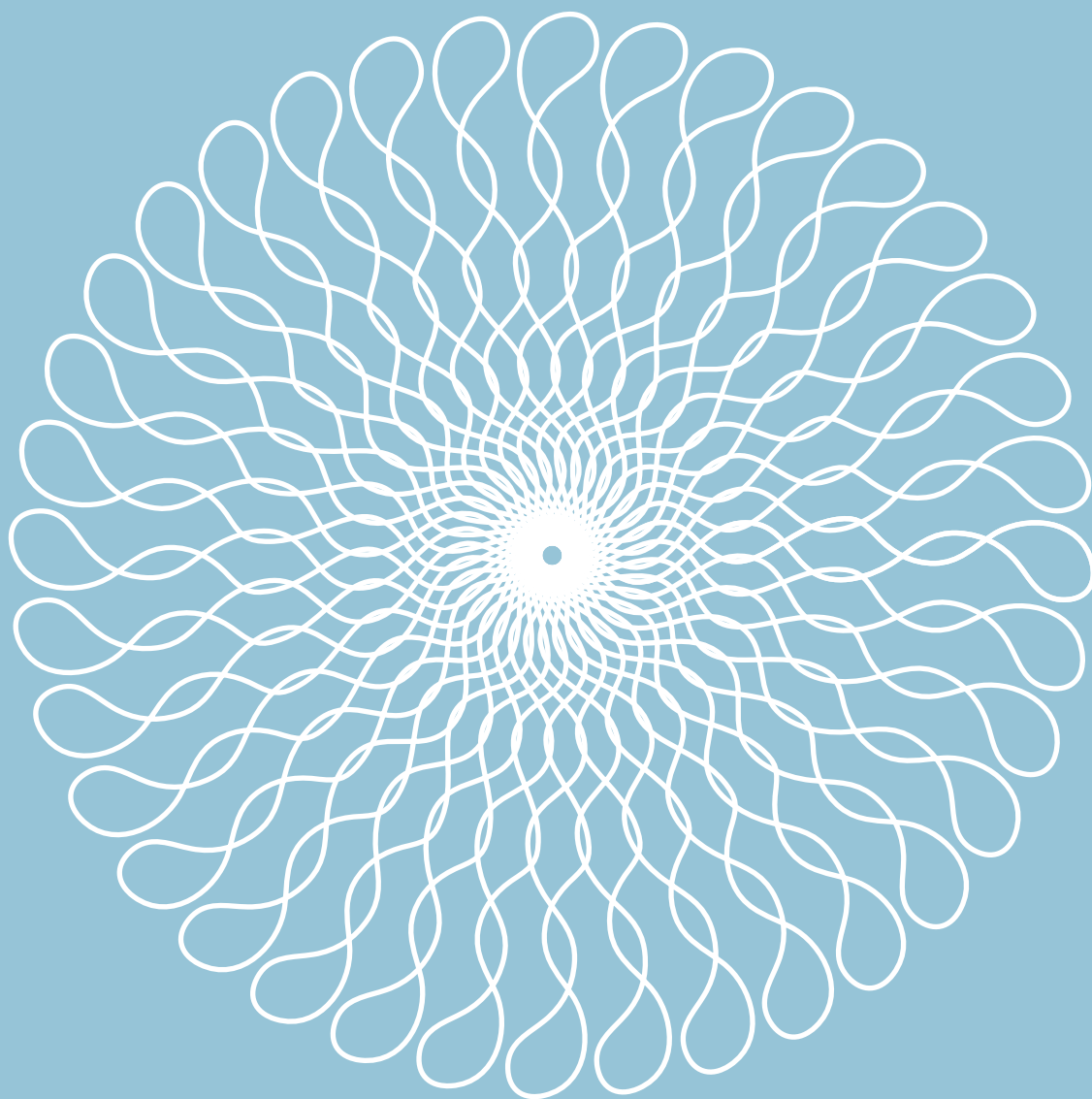
company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, was adjourned.

On 30 March the 2008 Annual Report of the Press Council of Ireland and Office of the Press Ombudsman was launched in Dublin by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr Dermot Ahern TD. The Minister paid tribute to the work of the Press Council and the Press Ombudsman in their first year of operation, and addresses were given by the Chairman of the Press Council, Professor Mitchell, and the Press Ombudsman, Professor Horgan. The launch included a press conference, and received widespread media coverage.

On 11 November Mr Andrew O'Rorke resigned as Company Secretary, and was replaced by Mr Seamus Boland.

## The Code Committee

The Code Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr Brendan Keenan, is charged with reviewing the Code of Practice in consultation with the Press Council. It held two meetings during the course of the year and agreed a number of minor drafting changes to the wording of the Code of Practice in order to clarify some of the Code's Principles. The Code of Practice is published on page 8.



# Referrals to the Press Council by the Press Ombudsman

When complaints about alleged breaches of the Code of Practice cannot be resolved by conciliation the Press Ombudsman, at his discretion, can decide not to consider a complaint but to refer it to the Press Council for direct consideration and determination. The general criteria are that any complaint so referred should be either significant or complex, but not all such complaints need to be referred. He referred five complaints to the Press Council in 2009. Two of these were referred as they related directly to a previous decision of the Press Council, and the other three were referred because he deemed the subject matter of the complaints in question to be sufficiently significant to justify their consideration directly by the Press Council.

Two of the complaints referred to the Press Council were cross-complaints from two journalists – one from *The Irish Times* and one from the *Irish Independent* - relating to publication of information regarding a previous decision of the Press Council. Of the remaining three, one complaint related to an alleged “vendetta” by the *Sunday World* against an organisation with which the complainant was associated, and the remaining two were from a family about the publication in the *Irish Sun* and the *Irish Daily Star* of pictures of the body of their son, who had been killed in controversial circumstances abroad.

In considering cases that have been referred to it, the Press Council takes into consideration all of the documentation on file and makes a decision. All decisions of the Press Council are accessible at [www.presscouncil.ie](http://www.presscouncil.ie)

## Mr Kevin Myers and *The Irish Times*

Mr Myers, a journalist with the *Irish Independent*, complained about an article published in *The Irish Times* by its Legal Affairs Editor, Carol Coulter, concerning a previous decision of the Press Council, made in 2008, on an article written by Mr Myers in the *Irish Independent*. The headline to the article about which

Mr Myers complained read “Press Council upholds complaint against Myers article”. He complained that the newspaper’s summary of the Press Council’s decision not only failed to mention the several complaints that had not been upheld, but gave the impression that the one complaint that was upheld under Principle 8 of the Code of Practice related to incitement to hatred, whereas it related only to that part of Principle 8 dealing with material “likely to cause grave offence”.

The Press Council found that the summary of its original decision in the opening paragraph of the article under complaint was inadequate and likely to create a seriously misleading impression, and that it therefore breached Principle 1 of the Code of Practice.

## Ms Carol Coulter and the *Irish Independent*

Ms Coulter, Legal Affairs Editor of *The Irish Times*, complained about an article published in the *Irish Independent* by Kevin Myers headlined “Twisting the facts to make me appear a racist bigot”, which commented on an earlier article she had written in *The Irish Times*. Ms Coulter complained that the article was an unwarranted attack on her professionalism and integrity as a journalist and that it did not truthfully and accurately represent what she had written.

Of critical importance to the Press Council in coming to its decision in this case was the fact that the Code of Practice includes a right of newspapers and periodicals to publish comment and to advocate strongly their own particular views and that while this right has limits, it nonetheless implies that complaints about breaches of the Code of Practice in comment articles must be based on evidence that is unambiguous and compelling. This guided it in coming to its decision that, while the tone of the article was provocative and the language often intemperate, the article did not breach the Code.



### **Ms Majella Meade and the *Sunday World***

Ms Majella Meade complained about a number of articles published about the "House of Prayer" in the *Sunday World*. She also complained that the newspaper was carrying out a sustained and unwarranted attack on the House of Prayer, which she believed to be a "vendetta" by the newspaper against the organization.

This was the first complaint received that alleged that a newspaper was carrying out a "vendetta", and was therefore given very careful consideration by the Press Council. The Press Council concluded that there was no evidence that the newspaper did not strive for truth and accuracy in publishing the information that it did, and that the article did not breach any of the seven Principles of the Code of Practice cited by the complainant.

### **Dwyer family and the *Irish Sun* and the *Irish Daily Star***

Two complaints were made on behalf of the Dwyer family, whose son was killed in Bolivia, about articles published in the *Irish Sun* and the *Irish Daily Star*. The article in the *Irish Sun* included photographs of Mr Dwyer's body after he was killed, and the article in the *Irish Daily Star* included a

photograph of Mr Dwyer in a morgue after he died. Both articles also included photographs of Mr Dwyer in combat clothing taken during an "Airsoft" game, which the family said gave the misleading impression of the context in which the photographs were taken.

The Press Council noted that the photographs in question were in the public domain and were not obtained through misrepresentation or subterfuge. However, it gave critical consideration to the family's complaint that the publication of the photographs of Mr Dwyer's body breached their privacy, since the Code of Practice provides that in publishing information in situations of personal grief or shock, the feelings of grieving families should be taken into account. It accepted that a close-up photograph of Mr Dwyer, who met a violent death in shocking circumstances, was certain to add to the grief of the family, and that strong justification was therefore required for publishing such a photograph.

However, it concluded that since the photographs were in the public domain, and since both stories had international significance, and the manner of death had relevance to the truth of what happened, there was, in these two particular instances, sufficient justification for publishing the photographs.



# Appeals from decisions of the Press Ombudsman

A complainant or a publication can lodge an appeal to the Press Council against any decision of the Press Ombudsman. To lodge an appeal against a decision of the Press Ombudsman, the appellant, whether a complainant or a publication, must state his or her grounds and show reasonable cause, either in relation to significant new information, or to any error in procedure or in the application of the Principles of the Code of Practice. Mere disagreement with the Press Ombudsman's decision cannot be submitted as grounds for appeal. The Press Council first of all decides on the admissibility of an appeal and, should the appeal be admitted, on the appeal itself.

If the Press Council decides to admit an appeal, it will state its grounds for doing so as part of its final decision. It also gives its reason for any decision not to admit an appeal. There were 11 appeals in all in relation to the 33 decisions made by the Press Ombudsman in 2009. Two of these appeals related to one particular decision, which was the subject of appeals both by the complainant and by the publication concerned. Of the remaining nine appeals, five were made by complainants and four by publications.

Eight of the eleven appeals were not admitted by the Press Council as the appellants' submissions did not provide adequate grounds either in relation to new evidence or to any error in procedure or in the application of the Principles of the Code of Practice to warrant consideration.

Three appeals were admitted and considered by the Press Council. The first appeal was admitted on the grounds that it concerned a decision of the Press Ombudsman of significant public interest, the second on a procedural issue and the third on the basis of the availability of new evidence. None of the appeals was upheld, and the decisions of the Press Ombudsman stood.

All decisions in relation to appeals are accessible at [www.presscouncil.ie](http://www.presscouncil.ie)

# Code of Practice for Newspapers and Periodicals

## Preamble

The freedom to publish is vital to the right of the people to be informed. This freedom includes the right of a newspaper to publish what it considers to be news, without fear or favour, and the right to comment upon it.

Freedom of the press carries responsibilities. Members of the press have a duty to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards. This Code sets the benchmark for those standards. It is the duty of the Press Ombudsman and Press Council of Ireland to ensure that it is honoured in the spirit as well as in the letter, and the duty of publications to assist them in that task.

In dealing with complaints, the Ombudsman and Press Council will give consideration to what they perceive to be the public interest. It is for them to define the public interest in each case, but the general principle is that the public interest is invoked in relation to a matter capable of affecting the people at large so that they may legitimately be interested in receiving and the press legitimately interested in providing information about it.

## Principle 1 – Truth and Accuracy

1.1 In reporting news and information, newspapers and periodicals shall strive at all times for truth and accuracy. 1.2 When a significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distorted report or picture has been published, it shall be corrected promptly and with due prominence. 1.3 When appropriate, a retraction, apology, clarification, explanation or response shall be published promptly and with due prominence.

## Principle 2 – Distinguishing Fact and Comment

2.1 Newspapers and periodicals are entitled to advocate strongly their own views on topics. 2.2 Comment, conjecture, rumour and unconfirmed reports shall not be reported as if they were fact. 2.3 Readers are entitled to expect that the content of a publication reflects the best judgment of editors and writers and has not been inappropriately influenced by undisclosed interests. Wherever relevant, any significant financial interest of an organization should be disclosed. Writers should disclose significant potential conflicts of interest to their editors.

## Principle 3 – Fairness and Honesty

3.1 Newspapers and periodicals shall strive at all times for fairness and honesty in the procuring and publishing of news and information. 3.2 Publications shall not obtain information, photographs or other material through misrepresentation or subterfuge, unless justified by the public interest. 3.3 Journalists and photographers must not obtain, or seek to obtain, information and photographs through harassment, unless their actions are justified in the public interest.

## Principle 4 – Respect for Rights

Everyone has constitutional protection for his or her good name. Newspapers and periodicals shall not knowingly publish matter based on malicious misrepresentation or unfounded accusations, and must take reasonable care in checking facts before publication.

## Principle 5 – Privacy

5.1 Privacy is a human right, protected as a personal right in the Irish Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights, which is incorporated into Irish law. The private and family life, home and correspondence of everyone must be respected. 5.2 Readers are entitled to have news and comment presented with respect for the privacy and sensibilities of individuals. However, the right to privacy should not prevent publication of matters of public record or in the public interest. 5.3 Sympathy and discretion must be shown at all times in seeking information in situations of personal grief or shock. In publishing such information, the feelings of grieving families should be taken into account. This should not be interpreted as restricting the right to report judicial proceedings. 5.4 Public persons are entitled to privacy. However, where a person holds public office, deals with public affairs, follows a public career, or has sought or obtained publicity for his activities, publication of relevant details of his private life and circumstances may be justifiable where the information revealed relates to the validity of the person's conduct, the credibility of his public statements, the value of his publicly expressed views or is otherwise in the public interest. 5.5 Taking photographs of individuals in private places without their consent is not acceptable, unless justified by the public interest.

## Principle 6 – Protection of Sources

Journalists shall protect confidential sources of information.

## Principle 7 – Court Reporting

Newspapers and periodicals shall strive to ensure that court reports (including the use of photographs) are fair and accurate, are not prejudicial to the right to a fair trial and that the presumption of innocence is respected.

## Principle 8 – Prejudice

Newspapers and periodicals shall not publish material intended or likely to cause grave offence or stir up hatred against an individual or group on the basis of their race, religion, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, membership of the travelling community, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, illness, or age.

## Principle 9 – Children

9.1 Newspapers and periodicals shall take particular care in seeking and presenting information or comment about a child under the age of 16. 9.2 Journalists and editors should have regard for the vulnerability of children, and in all dealings with children should bear in mind the age of the child, whether parental or other adult consent has been obtained for such dealings, the sensitivity of the subject-matter, and what circumstances if any make the story one of public interest. Young people should be free to complete their time at school without unnecessary intrusion. The fame, notoriety or position of a parent or guardian must not be used as sole justification for publishing details of a child's private life.

## Principle 10 – Publication of the Decision of the Press Ombudsman / Press Council

10.1 When requested or required by the Press Ombudsman and/or the Press Council to do so, newspapers and periodicals shall publish the decision in relation to a complaint with due prominence. 10.2 The content of this Code will be reviewed at regular intervals.



# Report of the Press Ombudsman

Professor John Horgan

The pattern established during the first year of the operation of The Office of the Press Ombudsman was broadly replicated in 2009. If one discounts the large number of complaints that were received early in 2008 and were ruled out of consideration because they referred to articles published in 2007, when the Code of Practice was not in force, the total number of complaints received in 2009 showed a marginal increase on 2008, from 335 to 351. The emphasis on certain Principles of the Code of Practice – notably Principle 1 (Truth and Accuracy) – was maintained.

It is too early to draw any firm conclusions from these patterns, other than that it suggests that members of the public are well aware of the new regulatory structures and do not hesitate to utilise them.

While the number of formal decisions made by me declined slightly year on year (from 35 in 2008 to 33 in 2009), the number of complaints referred by me to the Press Council of Ireland during the same period rose from two to five. There are no specific criteria governing a decision by me to refer complaints to the Press Council, other than that such complaints are either complex or significant. One such case referred by me to the Press Council during the year, for example, involved a complaint by a particular organisation alleging a substantial number of breaches of the Code of Practice by a single newspaper which had published a series of investigative articles about that organisation and its activities. On the other hand, not all complex or significant complaints have to be referred to the Press Council: the decision is at my discretion.

On a comparative basis, it is interesting that the ratio of complaints to population in Ireland is somewhat higher than that in the United Kingdom. In 2008, my Office received approximately 9.3 complaints per 100,000 of the

population: in the UK, for the same period, the equivalent figure was 7.8. There are so many variables here that it would be unwise to draw any conclusions from these figures, either positive or negative, except to say that – one way or another – readers in Ireland evidently take their print media seriously.

One noticeable trend is in the significant number of complaints that are resolved informally between complainants and newspapers. The most common pattern here is that when complainants approach my Office, they are advised, in accordance with our procedures, to take the matter up initially with the publication concerned. The fact that a number of these complainants see no need to subsequently involve the Office is strong evidence both of the willingness of publications to engage seriously with complainants in the first place, and of the growing effectiveness of the internal complaint-handling systems within these publications. The high number of complaints that are satisfactorily resolved by conciliation is also noteworthy.

Not all complaints are automatically investigated by my Office. It is a sign of the visibility of the Office that it regularly receives complaints from people about articles which have simply annoyed or upset them, or with which they passionately disagree, but which do not provide prima facie evidence of a breach of any of the Principles of the Code of Practice. While these complaints are not investigated, they underline the value, for the traditional print media in general, of responding to their readers rapidly and creatively. In this they can successfully emulate the interactive dimension of their new media rivals, and can maintain the loyalty of their readers by demonstrating an openness to controversy and criticism (including criticism of themselves) in areas that do not obviously fall within the Press Ombudsman's remit.

The passage of the Defamation Act 2009, and the subsequent recognition by the Oireachtas of the Press Ombudsman and of the Press Council, mark the opening of a new and positive chapter in the story of the relationship between the press and the public in Ireland. Our structures, policies and procedures are based on the belief that, for this relationship to flourish, press freedom and press accountability must go hand in hand.

# Complaints and the Code of Practice

The core element of all complaints has been the application of the Code of Practice for Newspapers and Periodicals to a wide range of situations and circumstances. Although the Code of Practice has had some minor revisions during 2009, these have – apart from one change to rectify an unintended omission – been presentational, and have not involved any modification of its key provisions. The full text of the Code is published on page 8.

The Code of Practice is a set of ten principles to which editors and journalists of all member publications have subscribed. It is a statement of principles rather than a detailed attempt to prescribe the appropriate action to be taken by journalists in the myriad of situations they encounter in their work. The application of these principles to the circumstances and context of each article that is the subject of a complaint is the best guide, both to journalists and to members of the public, of how the new regulatory system is working out in practice.

When complaints about alleged breaches of the Code of Practice cannot be resolved by conciliation, the Press Ombudsman will make a formal decision on whether or not a particular article has breached the Code. He made 33 such decisions in 2009.

The following is a sample of some of the main issues that arose in relation to decisions made by the Press Ombudsman during 2009. All decisions of the Press Ombudsman are accessible at [www.pressombudsman.ie](http://www.pressombudsman.ie).

## Truth and Accuracy

The continuing prevalence of complaints that invoked Principle 1 (Truth and Accuracy) of the Code of Practice is worthy of comment. One thing that emerges with some clarity from a review of last year's decisions in this area is that, while the Code requires journalistic accuracy, it is not always possible to determine with any certainty the rights and wrongs of many disagreements between complainants and publications – nor is it appropriate that the Press Ombudsman should be expected to do so.

For instance, a complaint made on behalf of the Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney TD, about the *Irish Daily Mail*, involved an article published as part of

a campaign by the newspaper about the government's health policy. The rights and wrongs of the controversy itself were outside the Press Ombudsman's remit, and the decision, at the end of the day, was solely and necessarily about the narrower but important issue of whether the specific headline complained about had been in breach of the Code of Practice or not. The newspaper stated that its headline was a fair and accurate summation of the key points made by the author of the article. The unmistakeable import of the headline, however, was that the author of the article had accused the Minister of lying. The Press Ombudsman's decision, therefore, was that because an allegation printed in quotation marks in the front page headline – 'Harney lied about Crumlin' had not been made by the writer of the article to which the headline referred, the Code of Practice had been breached.

An example of a similar decision where the rights and wrongs of each side of an argument could not be determined by the Press Ombudsman was demonstrated in the case of a complaint made by a Mr Gantley about the *Evening Herald*. In this case the complainant, who had been convicted of a criminal offence some 16 years earlier, vigorously rejected statements about his past made by a columnist who is a former member of an Garda Síochána. It was not possible for the Press Ombudsman to decide on the truth or accuracy of the claims and counter-claims made by both sides, as no persuasive evidence was offered by either in support of the viewpoints and the allegations made.

## Comment

While it is a truism that most people who are written about in the media would like to be portrayed in a more positive manner than they sometimes are, many complaints involving alleged inaccuracies dealt with during the year showed that some complainants characterise as inaccuracy what they perceive as a lack of fairness, particularly in articles that are substantially comment articles.

Articles that are plainly commentary on public events and individuals enjoy a wide measure of protection under the Preamble to the Code of Practice, which states "The

freedom to publish is vital to the right of the people to be informed. This freedom includes the right of a newspaper to publish what it considers to be news, without fear or favour, and the right to comment on it." While the right to comment does, of course, have limits, the strong statement of this right in the Code of Practice implies that complaints about breaches of the Code in comment articles must be based on evidence that is unambiguous and compelling.

The latter issue arose in relation to a complaint made by the businessman, Mr Sean Quinn, about an article published in the *Sunday Tribune*, commenting on the complainant's business activities. Mr Quinn complained that the article had not contained any objective evidence or justification for the conclusions it had drawn, and that he had not been contacted prior to publication or been given an opportunity to rebut the allegations. The newspaper stated that it believed that the activities, decisions and life of Mr Quinn and his company were legitimate subjects for comment. In his decision in this case, the Press Ombudsman highlighted the fact that the article complained of was clearly one of comment on current events and on individuals involved in those events and, as such, enjoyed a large measure of protection under the Code of Practice.

There will be circumstances in which the requirements of the Code of Practice will suggest the advisability of publications offering complainants a reasonable opportunity to comment on articles about them. In the case of the complaint by Mr Quinn the newspaper had, after receipt of his complaint, offered him a right of reply, either in its letters to the editor page or as a separate article. The Press Ombudsman concluded in his decision that this was sufficient remedial action on its part, in all of the circumstances. However, it will often be the case that the subjects of critical media coverage prefer not to make comment for publication in any article about themselves, and that is their right.

### **Attribution and Sourcing**

Another issue that came to the fore in 2009 was the question of attribution. Principle 2 of the Code of Practice states that "comment, conjecture, rumour and

unconfirmed reports shall not be reported as if they were fact." The simplest way of complying with this aspect of the Code is by ensuring that all such material is appropriately attributed to a source.

Publications are taking more care to distance themselves from unverifiable reports or rumours, and from the need to authenticate them, by attributing them to their sources, anonymous or otherwise. This is only a practical recognition of the fact that the publication of rumour and conjecture is part of the staple diet of the modern mass media, and is acceptable as long as it is clearly distinguished from fact.

A number of complaints were not upheld by the Press Ombudsman because the statements complained of had been appropriately attributed, and not presented as fact. For instance, a man made a complaint about statements made about him in an article published in the *News of the World*. The statements in the article, while far from flattering, and carrying a strong implication that the complainant had been engaged in various questionable activities, were not reported as fact but as statements attributed to anonymous Garda sources. As they were duly attributed, the complaint was not upheld. This does not imply that the Press Ombudsman accepted them as being true and accurate – merely that the newspaper concerned had, quite properly, made it clear to its readers both that the statements were made not by the publication itself but by one of its sources, and that it had provided some information about the nature of its source to underline its belief that the source was a credible one, even though the statements were not independently verifiable.

The Code of Practice's injunction to journalists to "protect confidential sources of information" under Principle 6, requires anonymity, but does not preclude the publication of additional information about the source that does not compromise its confidentiality

### **Reporting of Crime**

A number of issues arose during the year in relation to the coverage of crime, of people with criminal records, and the effects this may have on individuals and on third

parties. While criminality is a matter of public record, where individuals have been tried and found guilty in the courts, the subsequent publication of other information about them or their families has to be balanced against their continuing right to privacy under Principle 5 of the Code of Practice (which is qualified only where such publication is in the public interest). The Code does not deprive a person of privacy on the basis that he or she may have a criminal conviction.

Nor does it deprive such a person of the protection of other provisions of the Code of Practice. For instance, a young man complained about an article which stated that his late brother had been charged with membership of an illegal organisation and with drug dealing. As the newspaper presented these statements as fact, without attribution to any source, confidential or otherwise, it was deemed to be in breach of Principle 2 of the Code.

## Privacy

A number of complaints were made during the year about privacy. A considerable number of these complaints dealt with privacy issues under Principle 5.3 of the Code of Practice, which requires sympathy and discretion in seeking or publishing information about people in situations of personal grief or shock. Some complaints were received about the publication of information which was on the public record (such as court reports or coroners' reports). As distressing as the reporting of such information may be for the families and relatives of those involved, there is nothing in the Code that prevents the publication of such information, although editorial discretion is frequently involved.

However, publication of some private information which is not in the public interest or on the public record may breach the Code of Practice. In this regard, the Code's definition of "in the public interest" is clearly different from the "interest of the public". There is little doubt that some information of a private nature, particularly about public figures, may unquestionably be "of interest" to the public. However, the publication of such information may be a breach of the Code if it fails to meet the public interest test spelled out in the Preamble to the Code.

For instance, a woman complained that material published in the *Sunday Independent* about a private occasion connected with a family tragedy was a breach of her privacy. While the journalist who wrote the article in question had been invited to the family gathering, the Press Ombudsman found that this invitation did not vitiate the requirement for the newspaper to show sympathy and discretion towards private individuals present on that occasion, and to take the feelings of grieving families into account in publishing any information about such a tragic event, however obtained. He therefore found that the article breached the complainant's right to privacy under Principle 5 of the Code of Practice.

However, in another case relating to privacy, a woman complained that the publication of material about her personal finances in *The Irish Times* breached her privacy. The Press Ombudsman decided in this case that, to the extent that the complainant's financial arrangements had come under scrutiny at a public tribunal, she was a public person. The publication of material about some aspects of her financial affairs was directly related to the public scrutiny of those financial arrangements and was therefore justified in the public interest.

## Children

The application of the Code of Practice to specific sets of circumstances can give rise to interesting issues. A case in point is one about the publication of a photograph of a child who had, through his father, successfully sued for damages relating to a traffic accident. The father complained that publication of his child's photograph by the *Evening Herald* was in breach of Principle 5 (Privacy) and Principle 9 (Children) of the Code. The newspaper had, as part of its coverage of the civil case, published a photograph of the child concerned, taken in a public place on the day of the court hearing.

Because the case was a civil one and not a criminal one, the child was identified in open court and in the written account of the case that appeared in the newspaper. This was plainly not a breach of the Code of Practice. In the opinion of the Press Ombudsman, the accompanying photograph did not, in the circumstances, amount to a breach of the Code, although it was undoubtedly



unwelcome to the family concerned. However, because this was the first case of its kind and because of the flexibility inherent in the Code in its application in widely differing circumstances, his decision also advised editors of the value of caution in future when deciding about the printing of images of children which, although they might not be an unambiguous breach of the Code, raised reasonable doubts under Principle 5 or Principle 9.

The past year, like 2008, provided ample evidence that the Code of Practice has stood its initial testing period well, and the decisions based on its Principles will continue, it is hoped, to provide useful guidance for editors and members of the public alike in 2010. At the same time, the experience of the past year underlines the central fact that the Code is a set of principles, not a strait-jacket. It can guide, but not supplant, journalists' and editors' personal responsibility for taking appropriate professional decisions about what should or should not be published, especially in areas not explicitly covered by the Code.







# Report of the Case Officer

Bernie Grogan

Through its conciliation process, which is managed by the Case Officer, the Office provides a quick, fair and free method of resolving complaints by readers of newspapers and periodicals.

Any reader of a publication that is a member of the Press Council can make a complaint about an article or about the behaviour of a journalist that they feel breaches the Code of Practice, which is published on page 8. In the first instance, the Case Officer will try to resolve the complaint through a process of conciliation between the editor of the publication and the complainant. For the complainant, the conciliation process provides a channel through which the complaint can be resolved more speedily than if a formal decision has to be made by the Press Ombudsman. For the editor, he/she has the opportunity to deal directly, speedily and effectively with the complaint.

The range of outcomes that can be achieved for the complainant at the end of the conciliation process depends on the nature and significance of the complaint. There were a variety of ways in which complaints were resolved by conciliation in 2009, including:

- publication of a correction and/or apology
- publication of a clarification
- publication of a letter to the editor from the complainant
- private letter of apology to the complainant from the editor
- publication of a further article about the subject matter under complaint, taking the complainant's views into consideration
- assurances about future coverage of the subject matter under complaint
- the amendment and/or deletion of online material.

There is literally no limit to the range and type of agreement that can be reached through the conciliation process to address complaints flexibly, creatively, and satisfactorily. The prime function of the conciliation process is for the Case Officer to facilitate a resolution to the complaint between the complainant and the publication without putting pressure on either to accept any particular suggested resolution.

The Office also offers a mediation service for the resolution of complaints. This involves the voluntary agreement of both parties to the complaint to meet and discuss their differences on a confidential basis. The aim of mediation is to give the complainant and the publication an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of the complaint and to work towards reaching a mutually satisfactory resolution of the matter

The Case Officer is also happy to offer informal advice prior to complainants lodging an official complaint with the Office. Quite a number of complaints were resolved informally, where the complainant, following informal advice from the Case Officer, contacted the editor directly and the editor addressed the complaint immediately and to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Just over one-third of formal complaints received in 2009 were resolved through the conciliation process. Editors are more than keen to respond speedily to complaints that they feel have some basis. The Case Officer will continue to ensure that the conciliation process provides a creative conduit for the effective resolution of complaints to everyone's satisfaction.

# Outreach Programme



(L-R) Professor John Horgan, Press Ombudsman, with Ms Marie McGonagle, lecturer in Law at NUI, Galway, and Mr Johnny O'Hanlon, Director, Regional Newspapers and Printers Association of Ireland, at the September meeting of the Regional Newspapers and Printers Association of Ireland in Tullamore.

During 2009 the Press Ombudsman and his staff continued with an outreach programme aimed at ensuring that the knowledge and understanding of the new regulatory structures was made known to as many people as possible around the country.

In August the Office had an information stand at the Tullamore Agricultural Show in County Offaly, which was attended by over 50,000 people. It was an ideal opportunity to meet attendees and explain to them how the new regulatory system works.

The Press Ombudsman undertook a substantial number of speaking engagements throughout the year, and attended a number of conferences and seminars both nationally and internationally. At the invitation of the European Commission, he chaired an international conference in Ankara, Turkey, on freedom of expression and the media. He also addressed a number of third level institutions and responded to many interview requests from the media and from students engaged in postgraduate thesis work.

Towards the end of the year the Press Ombudsman held a series of meetings with editors of national newspapers. These informal meetings reflected on the year's work, on issues that arose during the year, and on how the Office and national newspapers could work more closely to the mutual benefit of editors and complainants.

Some of the principal engagements undertaken by the Press Ombudsman in 2009 were:

## **January**

University of Limerick – address on “Current Issues in Journalism” at the opening of the Journalism Student Newsroom

## **February**

Journalism Society, University College Cork – address to students

Medico-Legal Society of Ireland – address to AGM (Kildare)

## **March**

The Samaritans – address to AGM (Cork)

## **June**

Meeting under auspices of UN High Commissioner for Refugees - address on “Reporting Refugees” (Dublin)

## **July**

Dublin City University Centre for Talented Youth of Ireland – address to Summer Programme

## **August**

Parnell Summer School - address (Wicklow)

### **September**

Future of Journalism International Conference, University of Cardiff – joint presentation on press regulation with Public Affairs Director of the UK Press Complaints Commission (Wales)

Meeting with Regional Editors on Code of Practice and Defamation Act, 2009 (Tullamore)

Dublin City University – lecture to journalism and communications students

Coroners' Society of Ireland - address to AGM on 'Reporting Suicide' (Kildare)

### **October**

NUI Galway/Connaught Tribune Centenary Conference – participation in round table discussion on the future of the press (Galway)

EU Commission Conference on Freedom of Expression – Chairman, Ankara (Turkey)

Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe Conference – participation (Norway)

News of the World - joint training session of reporters and journalists with Public Affairs Director of UK Press Complaints Commission (Dublin)

### **November**

National University of Ireland Galway – lecture to journalism, communications and law students

Newspaper and Periodical History Forum of Ireland Second Annual Conference, Dublin Institute of Technology

### **December**

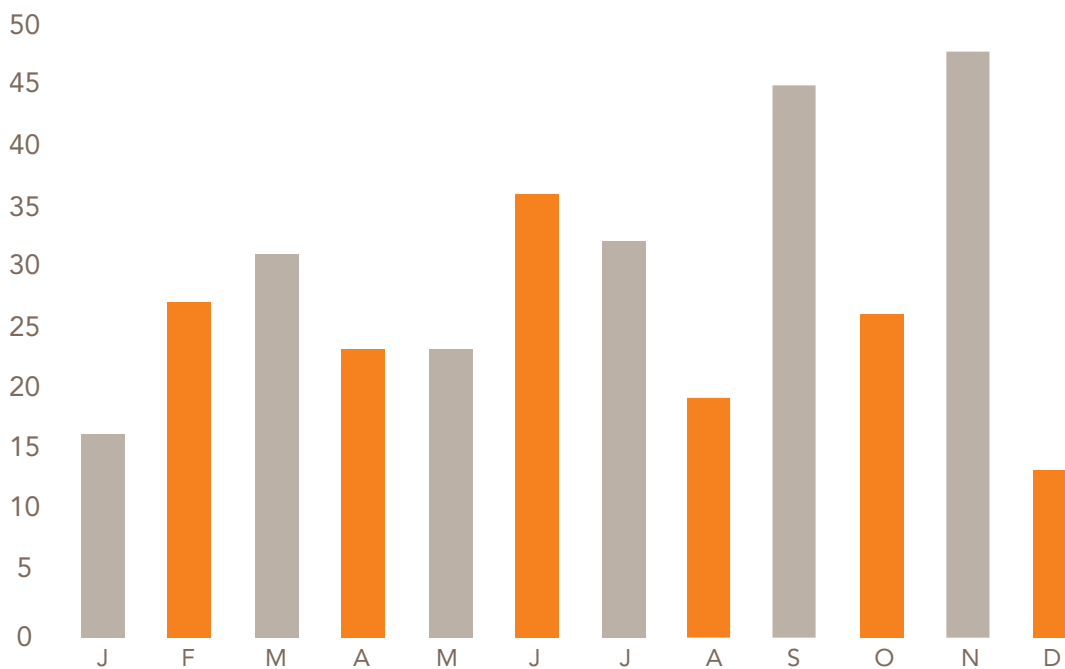
Launch of 'Headline' resource for journalists on reporting of suicide (Dublin)



Miriam Laffan, Personal Assistant to the Chairman of the Press Council and to the Press Ombudsman

# Statistics

## Number of complaints received



A total of 351 complaints were received in 2009.

Excluding one complaint which referred to an article published prior to 1 January 2008, this represents a modest increase of 15 or 4.8 % on the 335 complaints received in 2008 about articles published after 1 January 2008.

The Office received 512 calls to its local number 1890 208 080.

The website of the Press Council of Ireland ([www.presscouncil.ie](http://www.presscouncil.ie)) and Press Ombudsman ([www.pressombudsman.ie](http://www.pressombudsman.ie)) received a total of 11,041 unique visitors.

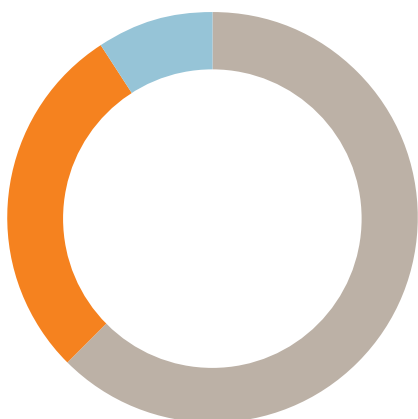
### Status of complaints at 31 December 2009

<b>Fully processed</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Decided by Press Ombudsman	33	35
Successfully conciliated	15	12
Decided by Press Council on referral	5	2

<b>Being processed</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
At conciliation	8	12
With Press Ombudsman for decision	2	1

<b>Other complaints considered/concluded</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Complaint not pursued beyond a preliminary enquiry by complainant	157	141
Out of remit	53	81
Ruled out on first reading (no prima facie evidence presented of a breach of the Code of Practice)	47	26
Non-member publications	28	45
Withdrawn by complainant/file closed	3	11
Consideration postponed due to legal proceedings	0	6

### Formal complaints concluded



#### Formal complaints concluded

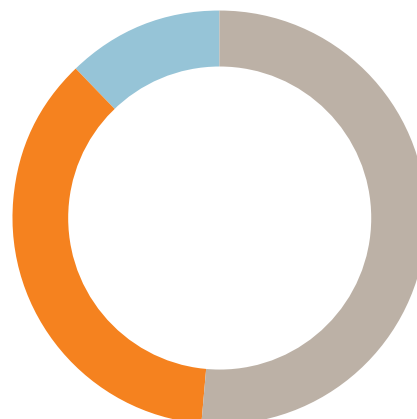
Decided by Press Ombudsman	(33)	62.3%
Conciliated	(15)	28.3%
Referred to Press Council	(5)	9.4%

Formal complaints were those complaints where the complainant pursued the matter with the Office after attempting to resolve the matter directly with the editor of the publication.

The Press Ombudsman has the discretion to refer certain cases that he considers to be of a significant or complex nature to the Press Council for its direct consideration. He did this on five occasions during the year. These complaints are considered in their entirety by the Press Council.

15 complaints were successfully conciliated. The conciliation process is outlined in some detail in the Case Officer's report on page 15.

### Decisions of Press Ombudsman



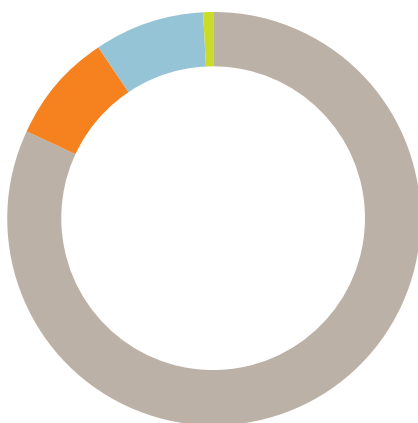
#### Decisions of the Press Ombudsman

Not upheld	(17)	51.5%
Upheld	(12)	36.4%
Sufficient remedial action offered by publication	(4)	12.1%

When the Press Ombudsman considers a complaint he will take into consideration any offer made by the publication to resolve the complaint. If, in his opinion, the publication has taken or has offered to take what he considers to be sufficient remedial action to resolve the complaint, he will not make a formal determination on a breach of the Code of Practice, but will conclude that the action offered or taken by the publication was sufficient in all the circumstances.



## Publications



### Publications

National newspaper	(242)	81.8%
Non-member publication	(26)	8.8%
Regional newspaper	(25)	8.4%
Periodical	(3)	1%

The majority of complaints were made about national newspapers, which reflects their frequency of publication and their substantial circulation figures.

The number of complaints about non-member publications fell from 45 in 2008 to 26 in 2009. The Press Council hopes that all newspapers and periodicals published in Ireland on a regular basis will become members following the enactment of the Defamation Act 2009. A list of current member publications is published on pages 25 to 29.

Complaints about regional newspapers increased from 15 in 2008 to 25 in 2009.

## Type of complaint



### Type of complaint

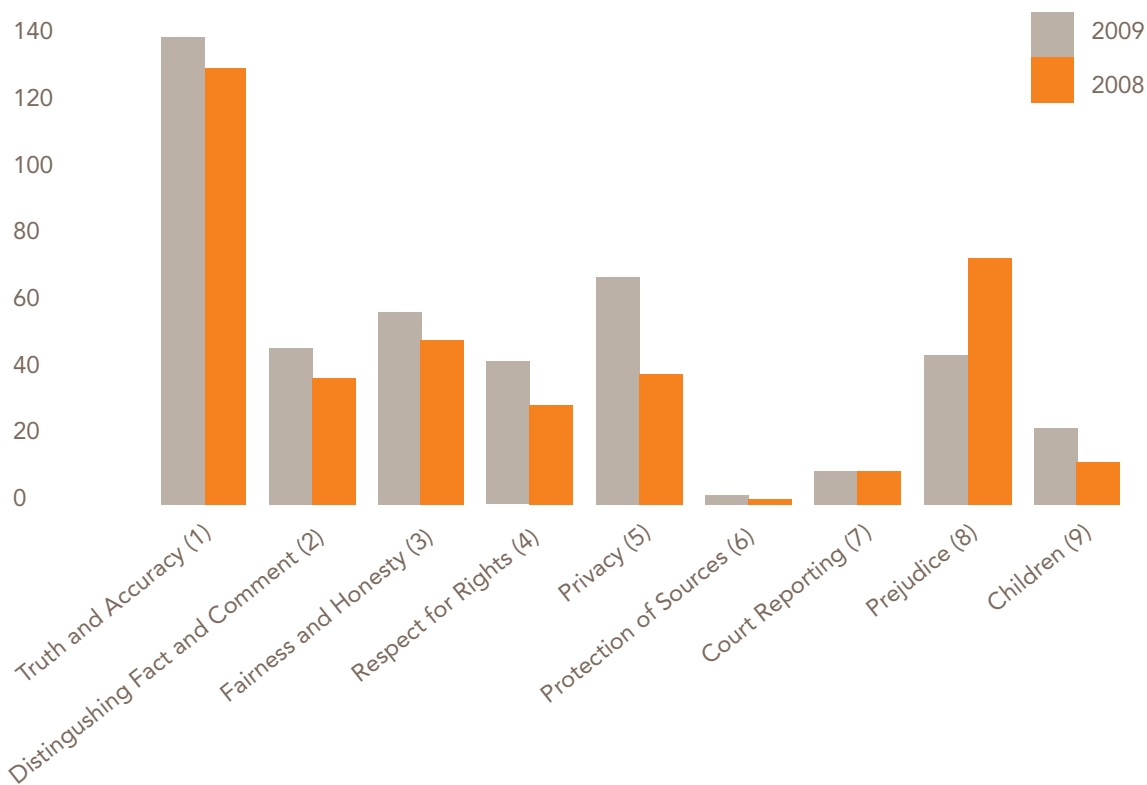
Breach of Code	(223)	63.5%
Outside remit	(53)	15.1%
Ruled out on first reading	(47)	13.4%
Non-member publication	(28)	8%

The majority of complaints received claimed breaches of the Code of Practice (the full text of which is printed on page 8).

Complaints that fell outside the remit of the Office are outlined on page 23.

When submitting a complaint, complainants are required to indicate how and why they believe the article under complaint breached the Code of Practice. 47 complaints were ruled out on a first reading on the basis that the complainant did not provide prima facie evidence of a breach of the Code.

### Principles of Code of Practice cited by complainant



It should be noted that many complainants submitted their complaint under more than one Principle of the Code of Practice: this is why the number of Principles cited is higher than the number of complaints actually received.

In 2009, as in 2008, the majority of complaints were made under Principle 1 of the Code (Truth and Accuracy). Principle 5 (Privacy) yielded the second-highest number of complaints in 2009, whereas the second-highest number of complaints in 2008 were made under Principle 8 (Prejudice). Three separate articles generated a total of 60 complaints in relation to this Principle in 2008.

The full text of the Code of Practice is printed on page 8.

## Complaints outside remit



### Complaints outside remit

Unauthorised third party	(16)	30.2%
Other regulatory authority	(16)	30.2%
Miscellaneous	(11)	20.7%
Out of time	(9)	17%
Pre-2008	(1)	1.9%

Unauthorised third party complaints were complaints where a person was named in the article but whose consent to make a complaint had not been obtained by the complainant.

Complaints about other regulatory authorities were mainly for the Advertising Standards Authority or the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland.

Miscellaneous complaints were complaints that did not fall within the remit of the Code of Practice or any other clear-cut category in the "out of remit" section. In 2009, they included a complaint about a newspaper distribution company, a website reproducing material from another website, the cost of newspapers, and the non-publication of a letter to the editor.

Out of time complaints were complaints that were made over three months after the publication of an article, or the behavior of a journalist, that was the subject of the complaint. One complaint was received about an article published before the establishment of the Office in 2008.

# Finance Report

The Administrative Committee of the Press Council of Ireland, which is chaired by an independent member of the Press Council, is, under the terms of the Articles of Association of the Press Council, responsible for the finances of the Press Council and the Press Ombudsman.

The Committee is charged with making full provision for the administrative needs of the Press Council and of the Office of the Press Ombudsman, including funding, premises and staffing.

It meets six times a year, approves funding arrangements and budgets, and monitors expenditure.

The Press Council and the Office of the Press Ombudsman are fully-funded by the print media in Ireland and each title is levied in accordance with its circulation.

The costs in 2009 of the Press Council and the Office of the Press Ombudsman, together with the comparative figures for 2008, are as follows:

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
	<b>€'000</b>	<b>€'000</b>
Payroll costs	<b>416</b>	382
Office and establishment costs	<b>124</b>	151
Communications costs	<b>30</b>	52
Computer and data management costs	<b>16</b>	35
Other costs	<b>92</b>	84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>704</b>

The Press Council has three full-time and eight part-time employees.

The members of the Administrative Committee are: Seamus Boland (Chairman), Seamus Dooley, Paul Cooke, Oliver Keenaghan, Geraldine Kennedy, Johnny O'Hanlon, Grace Aungier, Richard Hannaford and Frank Cullen.

# Member Publications – National Newspapers

## **Evening Herald**

Independent House  
27-32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1  
T + 353 (0)1 7055333  
www.independent.ie

## **Irish Daily Mail**

Associated Newspapers (Ireland)  
3rd Floor Embassy House  
Herbert Park Lane, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4  
T + 353 (0)1 6375800  
www.dailymail.ie

## **Irish Daily Mirror**

Park House, 4th Floor,  
191 - 197 North Circular Road  
Dublin 7  
T + 353 (0)1 8688600  
www.mirror.co.uk

## **Irish Daily Star**

Star House, 62a Terenure Road North,  
Dublin 6W  
T + 353 (0)1 4901228  
www.thestar.ie

## **Irish Daily Star Sunday**

Star House, 62a Terenure Road North  
Dublin 6W  
T + 353 (0)1 4901228  
www.thestar.ie

## **Irish Examiner**

Examiner Publications (Cork) Ltd  
City Quarter, Lapps Quay, Cork  
T + 353 (0)21 4272722  
www.irishexaminer.ie

## **Irish Farmers Journal**

Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12  
T + 353 (0)1 4199599  
www.farmersjournal.ie

## **Irish Independent**

Independent House,  
27-32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1  
T + 353 (0)1 7055333  
www.independent.ie

## **Irish Mail on Sunday**

Associated Newspapers (Ireland)  
3rd Floor Embassy House  
Herbert Park Lane  
Ballsbridge, Dublin 4  
T + 353 (0)1 6375800  
www.mailonsunday.ie

## **Irish News of the World**

4th Floor, Bishop's Square  
Redmond's Hill, Dublin 2  
T + 353 (0)1 4792500  
www.newsoftheworld.co.uk

## **Irish Sun**

4th Floor, Bishop's Square  
Redmond's Hill, Dublin 2  
T + 353 (0)1 4792579  
www.the-sun.ie

## **Irish Sunday Mirror**

Park House, 4th Floor  
191-197 North Circular Road, Dublin 7  
T + 353 (0)1 8688600  
www.mirror.co.uk

## **Sunday Business Post**

80 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2  
T + 353 (0)1 6026000  
www.sbpost.ie

## **Sunday Independent**

Independent House  
27-32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1  
T + 353 (0)1 7055333  
www.independent.ie

## **Sunday Tribune**

Independent House  
27-32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1  
T + 353 (0)1 631 4300  
www.tribune.ie

## **Sunday World**

5th Floor, Independent House  
27 - 32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1  
T + 353 (0)1 8848973  
www.sundayworld.ie

## **The Irish Times**

The Irish Times Building  
PO Box 74, 24-28 Tara Street, Dublin 2  
T + 353 (0)1 6758000  
www.irishtimes.com

## **The Sunday Times**

4th Floor, Bishop's Square  
Redmond's Hill, Dublin 2  
T + 353 (0)1 4792424  
www.sunday-times.ie

# Member Publications – Regional Newspapers

## **An Phoblacht**

58 Parnell Square, Dublin 1  
T + 353 (0)1 8733611  
www.anphoblacht.com

## **Anglo Celt**

Station House, Cavan, Co. Cavan  
T + 353 (0)49 4331100  
www.anglocelt.ie

## **Bray People**

Channing House, Upper Row Street  
Co. Wexford  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.independent.ie

## **Carlow Nationalist**

Hanover House, Hanover, Carlow  
T + 353 (0)59 9170100  
www.carlow-nationalist.ie

## **Carlow People**

Channing House, Upper Row Street  
Co. Wexford  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.independent.ie

## **Clare Champion**

Barrack Street, Ennis, Co. Clare  
T + 353 (0)65 6828105  
www.clarechampion.ie

## **Connacht Sentinel**

15 Market Street, Galway  
T + 353 (0)91 536222  
www.galwaynews.ie

## **Connacht Tribune**

15 Market Street, Galway  
T + 353 (0)91 536222  
www.galwaynews.ie

## **Connaught Telegraph**

Cavendish Lane, Castlebar, Co. Mayo  
T + 353 (0)94 9021711  
www.con-telegraph.ie

## **Derry Journal**

22 Buncrana Road, Derry, BT48 8AA  
T + 44 (0)287 1272200  
www.derryjournal.com

## **Donegal Democrat**

Larkin House, Oldtown Road  
Donegal PE27DS  
T + 353 (0)74 9128000  
www.donegaldemocrat.ie

## **Donegal News**

St. Anne's Court, High Road  
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal  
T + 353 (0) 74 9121014  
www.donegalnews.com

## **Donegal Peoples Press**

Larkin House, Oldtown Road  
Donegal PE27DS  
T + 353 (0)74 9128000  
www.donegaldemocrat.ie

## **Dundalk Democrat**

7 Crowe Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth  
T + 353 (0)42 9334058  
www.dundalkdemocrat.ie

## **Enniscorthy Guardian**

Channing House, Upper Row Street  
Co. Wexford  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.independent.ie

## **Gorey Guardian**

Channing House, Upper Row Street  
Co. Wexford  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.independent.ie

## **Kildare Nationalist**

Hanover House, Hanover, Carlow  
T + 353 (0)59 9170100  
www.kildare-nationalist.ie

## **Kilkenny People**

34 High Street, Kilkenny  
T + 353 (0)56 7721015  
www.kilkennypeople.ie

## **Laois Nationalist**

Hanover House, Hanover, Carlow  
T + 353 (0)59 9170100  
www.laois-nationalist.ie

## **Leinster Express**

Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois  
T + 353 (0)57 8621666  
www.leinsterexpress.ie

## **Leinster Leader**

19 South Main Street, Naas  
Co. Kildare  
T + 353 (0)45 897302  
www.leinsterleader.ie

## **Leitrim Observer**

3 Hartley Business Park  
Carrick-On-Shannon, Co. Leitrim  
T + 353 (0)78 20025  
www.leitrimobserver.ie

## **Limerick Chronicle**

54 O'Connell Street, Limerick  
T + 353 (0)61 214500  
www.limerickleader.ie

## **Limerick Leader**

54 O'Connell Street, Limerick  
T + 353 (0)61 214500  
www.limerickleader.ie

## **Longford Leader**

Leader House, Dublin Road, Longford  
T + 353 (0)43 45241  
www.longfordleader.ie

## **Mayo News**

The Fairgreen, Westport, Co. Mayo  
T + 353 (0)98 25311  
www.mayonews.ie

## **Meath Chronicle**

Market Square, Navan, Co. Meath  
T + 353 (0)46 9079600  
www.meathchronicle.ie

## **Munster Express**

37 The Quay, Waterford  
T + 353 (0)51 872141  
www.munster-express.ie

## **Nationalist & Leinster Times**

Hillcrest, Hanover, Co. Carlow  
T + 353 (0)59 9170100  
www.carlow-nationalist.ie

## **The Nationalist**

Queen Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary  
T + 353 (0)52 72500  
www.Nationalist.ie

## **Nenagh Guardian**

13 Summerhill, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary  
T + 353 (0)67 31214  
www.nenagh-guardian.ie

## **New Ross Standard**

Channing House, Upper Row Street  
Co. Wexford  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.independent.ie

## **Northern Standard**

The Diamond, Monaghan  
Co. Monaghan  
T + 353 (0)47 32188  
www.northernstandard.ie

## **Offaly Express**

Bridge Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
T + 353 (0)57 9321744  
www.offalyexpress.ie

## **Offaly Independent**

The Mall, William Street  
Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
T + 353 (0)57 9321403  
www.offalyindependent.ie

## **Roscommon Herald**

St. Patricks Street, Boyle  
Co. Roscommon  
T + 353 (0)71 9662004  
www.roscommonherald.ie

## **Sligo Champion**

Connacht House  
Markievicz Road, Sligo  
T + 353 (0)71 9169222  
www.sligochampion.ie

## **Southern Star**

Ilen Street, Skibereen, Cork  
T + 353 (0)28 21200  
www.southernstar.ie

## **The Argus**

Partnership Court, Park Street  
Dundalk, Co. Louth  
T + 353 (0)42 9334632  
www.independent.ie

## **The Corkman**

The Spa, Mallow, Co. Cork  
T + 353 (0)22 42394  
www.independent.ie

## **The Drogheda Independent**

9 Shop Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth  
T + 353 (0)41 9838658  
www.independent.ie

## **The Fingal Independent**

Main Street, Swords, Co. Dublin  
T + 353 (0)1 8407107  
www.independent.ie

## **The Kerryman**

Clash, Tralee, Co. Kerry  
T + 353 (0)66 7145560  
www.independent.ie

## **The Kingdom**

65 New Street, Killarney, Co. Kerry  
T + 353 (0)64 6631392  
www.the-kingdom.ie

## **Tipperary Star**

Friar Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary  
T + 353 (0)504 21122  
www.tipperarystar.ie

## **Tuam Herald**

Dublin Road, Tuam, Co. Galway  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.tuamherald.ie

## **Waterford News & Star**

25 Michael Street, Waterford  
T + 353 (0)51 874951  
www.waterford-news.com

## **Western People**

Kevin Barry Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo  
T + 353 (0)96 60999  
www.westernpeople.ie

## **Westmeath Examiner**

Blackhall Place, Mullingar  
Co. Westmeath  
T + 353 (0)44 9346700  
www.westmeathexaminer.ie

## **Westmeath Independent**

Ballymahon Road, Athlone  
Co. Westmeath  
T + 353 (0)90 6472003  
www.westmeathindependent.ie

## **Wexford People**

Channing House  
Upper Row Street, Co. Wexford  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.independent.ie

## **Wicklow People**

Channing House  
Upper Row Street, Co. Wexford  
T + 353 (0)53 9140100  
www.independent.ie

# Member Publications – Magazines and Periodicals

## Accountancy Ireland

Burlington House, Burlington Road  
Dublin 4  
T + 353 (0)1 637 7392  
www.accountancyireland.ie

## Architecture Ireland

Nova Publishing  
19 Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2  
T + 353 (0)1 295 8115  
www.architectureireland.ie

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