

PRESS COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

From the Chairman

Gary Streeter Esq MP
House of Commons
London
SW1 0AA

24th May 2007

Jean Gary,

I have seen from our parliamentary monitoring service that, in the debate on your bill about media transparency and disclosure, you made very ill-informed comments about the Press Complaints Commission.

May I then invite you to pay a visit to us here at Halton House and see at first hand what we do on a day-to-day basis? You would be entirely free to talk to our complaints officers and look at cases without me hovering about - though I would be pleased to discuss matters with you if you found that useful.

Meanwhile, as background, allow me to point out that last year the PCC resolved a record number of complaints (over 400) to the express satisfaction of the complainants. It is also the case that, of the people who returned our anonymous complaints survey in 2006 (including those whose complaints did not raise a breach of the Code), 81% thought their complaints had been dealt with thoroughly or very thoroughly and 75% thought that their complaints had been handled satisfactorily or very satisfactorily.

The PCC does far more than handle complaints, of course. We operate a 24-hour anti-harassment service that is specifically designed to offer assistance to those who need us at any time. Our experience is that ordinary people, who find themselves at the centre of a news story through no fault of their own, are grateful that someone is available around the clock to offer help and advice about dealing with the media.

I am sorry if you find statements of fact self-congratulatory. There is, of course, more to be done to improve the service we provide to "ordinary" members of the public who comprise over 90% of our customers. But the time really has come to retire the toothless tiger cliché, as I hope you will see for yourself.

With kind regards.

Yours ever



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Sir Christopher Meyer

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