

PCC rejects Ken Livingstone complaint against Daily Mail

The Press Complaints Commission has turned down a complaint from Ken Livingstone, after concluding that the Daily Mail did not breach the Code of Practice when it reported that he had 'dodged' a rail fare and subsequently avoided a fine.

Articles published by the newspaper in March concerned an allegation that, despite not having a ticket for a train journey between London and Slough, Mr Livingstone was not asked to pay a penalty fare. This, said the newspaper, contrasted with his 'zero tolerance' policy when Mayor of London. Mr Livingstone did not dispute the central facts of the story but said he had been unable to buy a ticket extension for his journey in advance because of earlier delays on London Underground. He had approached station staff at Slough and purchased a ticket at the end of his journey, as had several other people. None of the passengers had received a fine and it was, therefore, wrong to suggest that he had received preferential treatment or was a hypocrite. Mr Livingstone argued that the newspaper should have contacted him in advance of publishing its first story - had it done so, he could have provided this information and given a fuller picture of what had happened.

However, the Commission did not agree that the newspaper should have obtained Mr Livingstone's comments because it was clear that the thrust of the story was true (and had been witnessed by the freelance reporter responsible for writing it). The Commission did not consider that the newspaper's coverage was misleading or that the "failure to mention that ten other individuals had avoided the fine...would have altered the general understanding of the situation...in breach of Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Code". As a result, the complaint was not upheld.

To see the adjudication in full [click here](#).

ENDS

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