

PCC Director: job description and person specification

The Director is responsible to the Chairman and Members of the PCC for the administration of the Commission's activities - principally the handling of complaints from members of the public, and the PCC's own proactive programme of public information. Full details of the Commission's activities can be found elsewhere on the PCC's website.

Specifically, the Director - who is also the Company Secretary of the PCC and reports directly to the Chairman - is responsible for running a full time staff of 13 people, a Board of 17 members and managing a budget of £1.9 million. He or she is therefore, in conjunction with the Chairman and Board, responsible for all personnel and employment issues, as well as business and building administration, and the preparation of management accounts.

He or she must have an overview of all the Commission's complaints work, and have specific responsibility for high profile or complex disputes, and those where there are legal issues involved. The Director must ensure compliance with the PCC's *Complainants' Charter*. The Director attends up to 10 Commission meetings a year, where he or she is responsible, through colleagues, for the provision of draft adjudications and other papers.

The Director is responsible for the Commission's external relations programme, agreed by the PCC on an annual basis - specifically establishing and implementing an ongoing programme of public information, undertaking up to 50 speaking engagements a year, and liaising with various international organisations where these impact on the work of the Commission. This includes the handling of press office and other inquiries. The Director will, from time to time, be required to undertake interviews on radio and television.

The Director must liaise with the Commission's professional advisers - and in particular its lawyers. An understanding of the legal issues surrounding the media and self regulation - particularly both judicial review and the application of the Human Rights Act 1998 - is essential.

The Director must maintain links with editors and publishers to ensure continuing compliance with the work of the Commission, and to understand ongoing editorial developments.

The Director is responsible for overseeing the Commission's links with stakeholders - specifically Parliament, Whitehall, Select Committee, the judiciary, the European Commission, and other regulators. A knowledge of all these processes, including the passage of legislation, is essential. Similarly, understanding of the needs of vulnerable people in their own handling of the media is an advantage.

The Director oversees - and from time to time takes part in - the Commission's work in the training of journalists

While the Commission has no pre-publication powers, the Director must be available to give swift advice both to newspapers and magazines, and to complainants, on the background to a variety of Code issues where necessary.

The Director sits in an ex officio capacity on the editors' Code Committee, and must maintain links with the Chairman and Secretary of that Committee. The Director must also liaise regularly with the Chairman and Secretary of the Press Standards Board of Finance. The Director must attend a weekly meeting of the PCC's Complaints Department, chaired by the Chairman or a Senior Member of the Commission.

The Director of the PCC is also Secretary of the PCC's Appointments Commission, and is responsible for the administration of that body, which meets up to three times a year.

The Director acts as Secretary of a number of PCC Sub-Committees on finance, the Code of Practice and complaints.

The Director will chair regular internal staff meetings on a number of matters including external relations and public information, and EU issues.

The Director answers on a day to day basis to the Chairman of the Commission, and will need from time to time to join her on regional visits and tours, assist with colleagues in the preparation of briefing material and speech drafts, and report regularly on every aspect of the Commission's administration.

Apart from those qualities mentioned specifically above, the successful candidate must be able to exhibit first class writing skills, an ability to present with authority and credibility, experience of public presentation, an aptitude for public relations and information, an understanding of the legal and parliamentary processes, and a track record of both achievement and leadership.

Because of the importance of the Commission's independence, applicants should not have been recently employed in the newspaper or magazine industry at management or editorial level.

ENDS

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