

Guy Black to step down as Director of the PCC

Guy Black, Director of the PCC since the summer of 1996, will step down in the New Year to become Press Secretary to the Rt Hon Michael Howard, MP, Leader of the Conservative Party.

Sir Christopher Meyer said:

"Guy Black's contribution to the cause of self regulation and a free press has been immense. Today members of the public use the PCC in unprecedented numbers. This is eloquent testimony to Guy's leadership as Director of the Commission, which has been a model of integrity, expertise and rigour. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with him over the last eight months and have learned much in the process. I wish him well in a job where the challenges will be different but just as testing."

Guy Black said:

"The last seven and a half years have been immensely challenging and fulfilling. It has been an enormous privilege to serve as the Commission's Director, and I am proud to have helped chart it through some fascinating and stimulating times. I leave the PCC in excellent shape and I know that it will continue under the dynamic leadership of Sir Christopher Meyer to provide a first class service to members of the public. I would like to pay tribute to all those I have worked with at Salisbury Square since 1996. No Director could have been better served by a more loyal and hardworking staff than I have been. The success of the PCC - which is absolutely crucial to press freedom - is in safe hands."

Tim Toulmin, the Commission's Deputy Director, will become Acting Director after Guy Black's departure while consideration is given to a permanent appointment.

For the remainder of his time as Director, Guy Black will not be dealing with, or advising on, any complaints of a political nature or which involve politicians of any party.

ENDS

20 October 2003