

EMBARGO: IMMEDIATE
29.11.06

**STATEMENT BY SIR CHRISTOPHER MEYER, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESS COMPLAINTS COMMISSION,
ON THE CLIVE GOODMAN CASE**

The PCC and the editors' Code of Practice are absolutely clear on the issue of phone message tapping: it is a totally unacceptable practice unless there is a compelling public interest reason for carrying it out. In this case, a crime has been committed as well – something which I deplore. The editor has now apologised to the parties concerned and made clear that steps will be taken to ensure that there will be no repeat. He has also already written to reassure me of his newspaper's strong commitment to the Code of Practice, and to outline the measures that the paper takes – including continuous professional training and writing compliance with the Code into its journalists' contracts of employment – to ensure that this commitment is reinforced. This reassurance is something that I welcome. The board of the Press Complaints Commission will now examine any material relevant to the industry's Code of Practice that has come to light as a result of the prosecution, and will discuss the matter fully when it meets in December.

ENDS

Notes

1. The PCC is an independently-run self-regulatory body which administers a 16 clause Code of Practice on editorial standards and newsgathering methods for print journalists. More information – including details of its rulings and complaints that breach the Code of Practice – can be found at www.pcc.org.uk
2. Since 2004, Clause 10 (i) of the Editors' Code of Practice has said that 'the press must not seek to obtain or publish material acquired by using hidden cameras or clandestine listening devices; or by intercepting private or mobile telephone calls, messages or emails; or by the unauthorised removal of documents or photographs'.
3. For more information, contact Stephen Abell on 020 7831 0022.

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