

Independent Press Standards Organisation: Why is no one talking about it?



On Monday Trinity Mirror's Paul Vickers announced the press industry's intention to establish an Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) to replace the PCC. This marks a major development in the post-Leveson wrangling and press reform in the UK. Perhaps the astonishingly good weather or the post Wimbledon win high is still affecting the British media and media watchers, because this story does not seem to be getting much attention.

Despite Roy Greenslade's **suggestion** that the announcement enabled the publishers to pull off a PR coup, the papers themselves do not seem to be making a big deal of it. Looking at the online versions of the major national newspapers does not reveal a great deal of coverage. I searched for "press standards" and "IPSO" and found nothing in *The Telegraph*, *The Sun*, or *the Mirror*. *The Times*, *The Independent*, and *The FT* all had one story filed under media news or UK news, rather than leading articles. *The Guardian* gave it the most coverage with two articles on the story as well as coverage in Greenslade's regular blog. According to Greenslade, *The Guardian* is still holding its cards on the intended new regulator; however there are indications that the earlier Guardian/FT/Independent alliance that had distanced itself from the PressBof may have broken down as *The Independent's* Chris Blackhurst **praised** the IPSO plan.

The Twitter world is hardly ablaze with debate about the merits of this intended new self-regulatory for the press. By 12:00 on 9 July the hashtag #IPSO and a search for "IPSO" revealed only 18 Tweets, six of which shared **Greenslade's piece** and another six the **response to the announcement** by Hacked Off's Brian Cathcart. Searching for "press standards" and #presstandards only came up with 11 Tweets related to the story.

So why is no one talking about this? Could it be that despite Culture Secretary Maria Miller's **promise** last week that the Privy Council would consider the cross-party Royal Charter, this recent move was somewhat expected and activists have given up hope of a solution not devised by the PressBof? In June it **was revealed** that the name of the organisation had been trademarked by the PressBof, which already gave a hint that perhaps its Royal Charter proposal had just been a red herring. Could it be that the press are avoiding putting the story high on the agenda because of **the evidence** of strong public support for a strict implementation of Leveson's recommendations? It was a shame that that the press charter deal among political leaders kept a real debate about implementing the Leveson recommendations from happening in Parliament. I hope that apathy, agenda setting by the press, or the sunshine do not keep a real debate about this latest development from happening in public as well.

The post gives the views of the author, and does not represent the position of the LSE Media Policy Project blog, nor of the London School of Economics.

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