

Statistics

Principles of the Code of Practice for Newspapers and Magazines cited by complainants

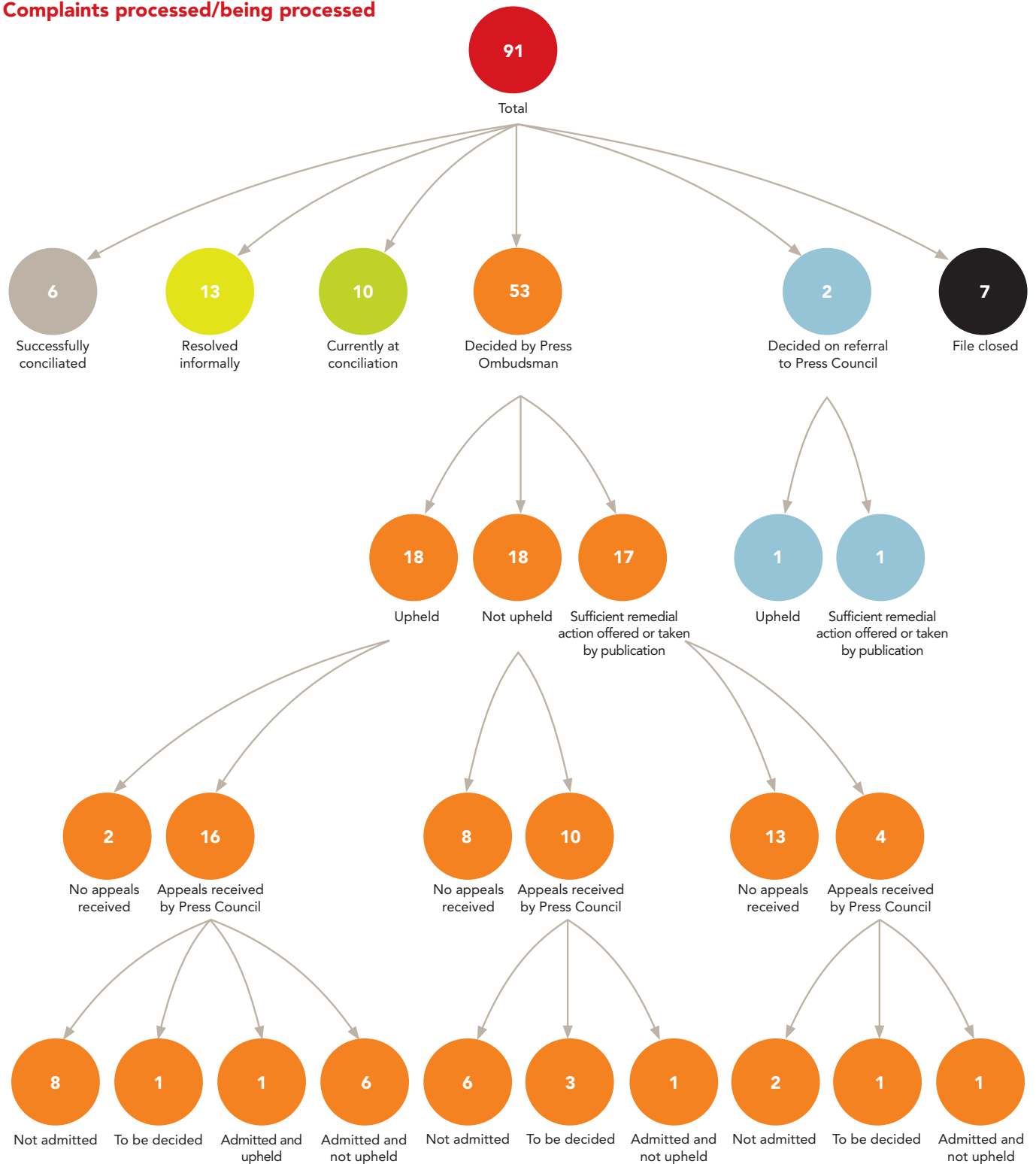


Complainants often cite more than one Principle of the Code of Practice when making their complaint, which is why the number of Principles cited is higher than the number of complaints received.

As in previous years, the largest number of complaints were submitted under Principle 1 of the Code in relation to truth and accuracy, followed closely by complaints under Principle 5 about privacy.

The full text of the Code of Practice is printed on page 19.

Complaints processed/being processed



Resolved informally

Complaints resolved informally are those complaints where, on the advice and with the assistance of the Office, the complainant contacted the editor of the publication directly and the complaint was resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant without the necessity for the Office to become formally involved.

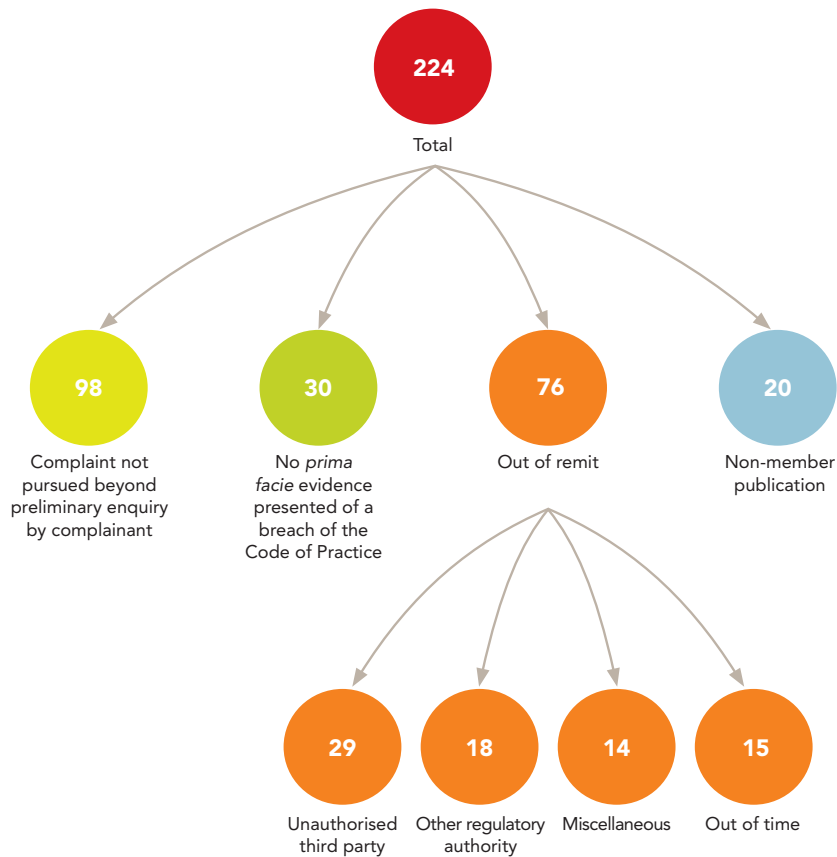
File closed

During the year, two files were closed as legal proceedings had been initiated about the subject-matter of the complaint, and five files were closed as the complainant decided, after the Office had contacted the editor of the publication, not to pursue the matter any further.

Appeals received

Three complaints were appealed by both the complainant and the publication. Two of these were in respect of complaints upheld by the Press Ombudsman, and one in respect of a complaint that was not upheld.

Complaints not processed



Complaint not pursued beyond preliminary enquiry by complainant

While 98 complainants who received advice and assistance from the Office of the Press Ombudsman did not pursue their complaint beyond a preliminary enquiry, it is not possible to establish the exact number of these complaints that would have been satisfactorily resolved, as all complainants are advised to contact the editor directly in the first instance, and there is evidence that a number of complaints have been resolved satisfactorily through such contact (see figure for complaints resolved informally in the chart on page 16).

No *prima facie* evidence of a breach of the Code of Practice

When submitting their complaint, complainants must indicate how and why they believe the article under complaint breached the Code of Practice. If the complaint does not present sufficient evidence that the Code may have been breached, the complaint will not be considered.

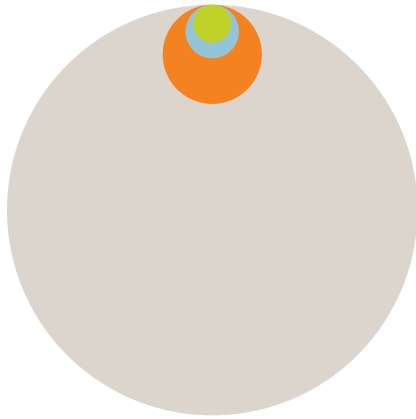
Unauthorised third party

Unauthorised third party complaints were mainly from people who complained about an article where another person or persons were named, but who did not have the required consent of that person or persons to make a complaint.

Miscellaneous complaints

Miscellaneous complaints included complaints about the non-publication of letters to the editor, the non-publication of an article submitted to a newspaper, a complaint that a newspaper might publish certain material and the non-reporting of a local court case.

Publications



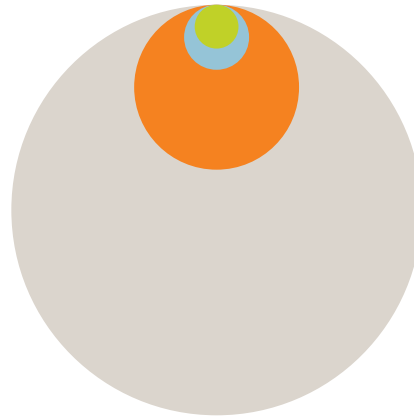
Publications

National newspaper	(215)	68.3%
Not indicated by complainant	(52)	16.5%
Regional newspaper	(28)	8.9%
Non-member publication	(20)	6.3%

While the highest proportion of complaints were made about national newspapers, this is not surprising, as it reflects their frequency of publication and their substantial circulation figures.

All member publications are listed on pages 21 to 25. The Press Council is continuing its strong campaign to encourage all newspapers and magazines published on a regular basis to become members.

Type of complaint



Type of complaint

Breach of Code	(189)	60.0%
Outside remit	(76)	24.1%
Ruled out on first reading	(30)	9.5%
Non-member publication	(20)	6.4%

The majority of complaints received claimed a breach of the Code of Practice.

Complaints that fell outside the remit of the Office are outlined on page 17.

When submitting a complaint, complainants are asked to outline how and why they believe the Code of Practice was breached. Where a complainant cannot provide adequate *prima facie* evidence of a possible breach of the Code of Practice, the complaint will not be considered by the Office. This could be the case, for example, where somebody complains about the views expressed in an article which is published as an opinion piece and the views are quite obviously expressed as those of the writer, or where somebody complains about a court report but there is no evidence that the material complained about is unfair or inaccurate.