



PRESS COUNCIL  
OF IRELAND



OFFICE OF  
THE PRESS  
OMBUDSMAN

ANNUAL REPORT

2015

THE PRESS COUNCIL OF  
IRELAND AND THE OFFICE  
OF THE PRESS OMBUDSMAN  
EXIST TO SAFEGUARD AND  
PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL AND  
ETHICAL STANDARDS IN IRISH  
NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES AND  
ONLINE NEWS PUBLICATIONS.

#### **BIRDS EYE VIEW**

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*cover image by Ramsey Cady /Sportsfile*

*Supporters watching on during the game.*

*All photographs used in this Report were taken by members of the Press Photographers Association of Ireland and featured in their 2016 Awards. Photographs were previously published in our member publications. We are grateful for permission to reproduce these images in our Annual Report.*

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# INTRODUCTION

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## PRESS COUNCIL OF IRELAND

The Press Council of Ireland is responsible for the oversight of the professional principles embodied in the Code of Practice, and with upholding the freedom of the press. It operates with the support and cooperation of member publications and journalists. It decides on appeals from decisions of the Press Ombudsman and on complaints referred to it directly by the Press Ombudsman. It is independent of both government and media.

## OFFICE OF THE PRESS OMBUDSMAN

The Office of the Press Ombudsman receives complaints from members of the public and seeks to resolve them by conciliation or mediation to the satisfaction of everyone concerned. Where conciliation or mediation is not possible, the Press Ombudsman will make a decision on the complaint based on the Code of Practice.





**THE RISING**

*by Mark Condren / Independent Newspapers*

*Tour guides from the "1916 Freedom Tour"  
passing Government Buildings during  
programme launch in 2015*

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

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The Press Council and the Office of the Press Ombudsman have now been in existence for nine years. During this time these institutions have acquired significant status and recognition operating as they do within the private sector but in the public interest.

Having served two terms as Chair of the Press Council the time has come for me to hand over to someone else. The number and calibre of applicants for the recently advertised post of Chair show that our system is here to stay and has assumed a valued role in Irish society. This is reinforced by the number of applicants responding to a similar advertisement for new members of the Council which amounted to over one hundred.

Key ingredients of the success of the system have been the involvement from the beginning of the National Union of Journalists and the continuing support of member publications, at arm's length from our independent operations and decisions.

It is now more important than ever, given the multiplicity of internet and social media sources, that the core characteristics of the newspapers and web-based publications which have signed up to the Code of Practice - authenticity, verifiability, and accountability - are maintained and reinforced so they can maintain a vital service to democracy and to the public.

Accepting as we do that voluntary regulation is the best guarantee of the maintenance and defence of best professional practice, it is nonetheless clear that there are still important areas of publishing that are effectively unregulated.

I am referring principally to the web-based publishing activities of the broadcasting operations. Their broadcasting operations are regulated by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, their publishing operations are not regulated by anyone. This means that if a member of the public wishes to complain about something published online by a broadcaster there is no independent complaints handling process available.

This is a matter which could usefully be considered by the government in the context of the current review of the 2009 Defamation Act, which established the mechanism for public recognition of the Press Council and Press Ombudsman. The relevant Oireachtas Committee could perhaps also usefully be involved. The Press Council and the Press Ombudsman, for their part,



**FROZEN DAWN**

*by Daragh McSweeney / The Irish Times*

*Early morning frost and snow-covered fields at  
Inchigaggin Lane, Cork City.*

would of course be more than willing to meet the relevant Oireachtas Committee to contribute to a discussion on the freedom and responsibility of the press in Ireland today.

That review could also encompass an examination of the structure of defamation legislation. This is because - while I yield to no-one in my support of the Press Ombudsman and Press Council structure - citizens' access to the law is a vital part of our democracy, but the present defamation law can too readily have a chilling effect on the freedom of the press. Is it not time, for instance, to consider whether a decision on whether or not anything is defamatory should be left to juries, but the amount of any damages should be a matter for judicial assessment?

And, of course, recourse to the Press Ombudsman and the Press Council of Ireland is still, and will remain, fast, fair and free, thereby providing for many the most appropriate response to any situation in which members of the public believe that something has been published which breaches the Code of Practice of the Press Council of Ireland.



**DÁITHÍ O'CEALLAIGH**

*Chairman*

# STATISTICS

**IN 2015, A TOTAL OF 278 COMPLAINTS WERE RECEIVED. THEY WERE PROCESSED AS FOLLOWS:**



**34** **DECIDED BY THE PRESS OMBUDSMAN**  
(SEE PAGE 7 FOR BREAKDOWN)

**1** **INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE OF A POSSIBLE BREACH OF THE CODE**

**18** **RESOLVED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COMPLAINANT**

**79** **COMPLAINT NOT PURSUED BY COMPLAINANT**

**3** **LIVE AT END 2015**

*These were cases where the complainant was given the contact details for the publisher, together with advice on the Code of Practice and how to make a complaint, but decided not to pursue the matter further with the Office after the initial contact. Some of these complaints may subsequently have been satisfactorily resolved following the submission of the complaint directly to the editor of the publication concerned.*

**7** **CONSIDERATION POSTPONED DUE TO LEGAL PROCEEDINGS**

**3** **CLOSED/ WITHDRAWN**

**133** **OUTSIDE REMIT**  
(SEE PAGE 8 FOR BREAKDOWN)



## PUBLICATIONS

*leading to complaint*

- 153** NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS (PRINT AND ONLINE)
- 29** LOCAL NEWSPAPERS (PRINT AND ONLINE)
- 11** ONLINE-ONLY NEWS PUBLICATIONS
- 4** MAGAZINES
- 19** NON-MEMBER PUBLICATIONS
- 62** NOT INDICATED BY COMPLAINANT



## COMPLAINTS

*decided by Press Ombudsman*

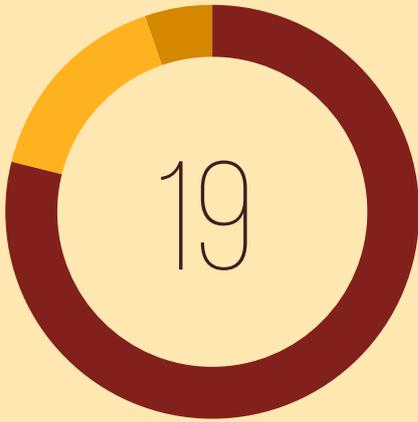
- 10** UPHELD
- 15** NOT UPHELD
- 5** SUFFICIENT REMEDIAL ACTION OFFERED OR TAKEN BY PUBLICATION
- 4** INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO MAKE A DECISION



## COMPLAINTS

*referred directly to the Press Council of Ireland by the Press Ombudsman*

- 2** NOT UPHELD



## APPEALS

*considered by the Press Council*

**15** NOT ALLOWED

**3** ALLOWED

**1** OTHER



## COMPLAINTS

*outside the remit of the Office*

**42** MISCELLANEOUS

**36** UNAUTHORISED THIRD PARTY

*These were complaints from a person who was not personally affected by an article, or from a person who complained about an article written about another person, but without that person's permission to make a complaint.*

**21** OUT OF TIME

*All information in relation to a complaint must be submitted within three months of publication of the article under complaint.*

**19** PUBLICATION NOT A MEMBER OF THE PRESS COUNCIL

*All national newspapers, most local newspapers, many magazines and some online-only news publication are members.*

**11** OTHER REGULATORY AUTHORITY

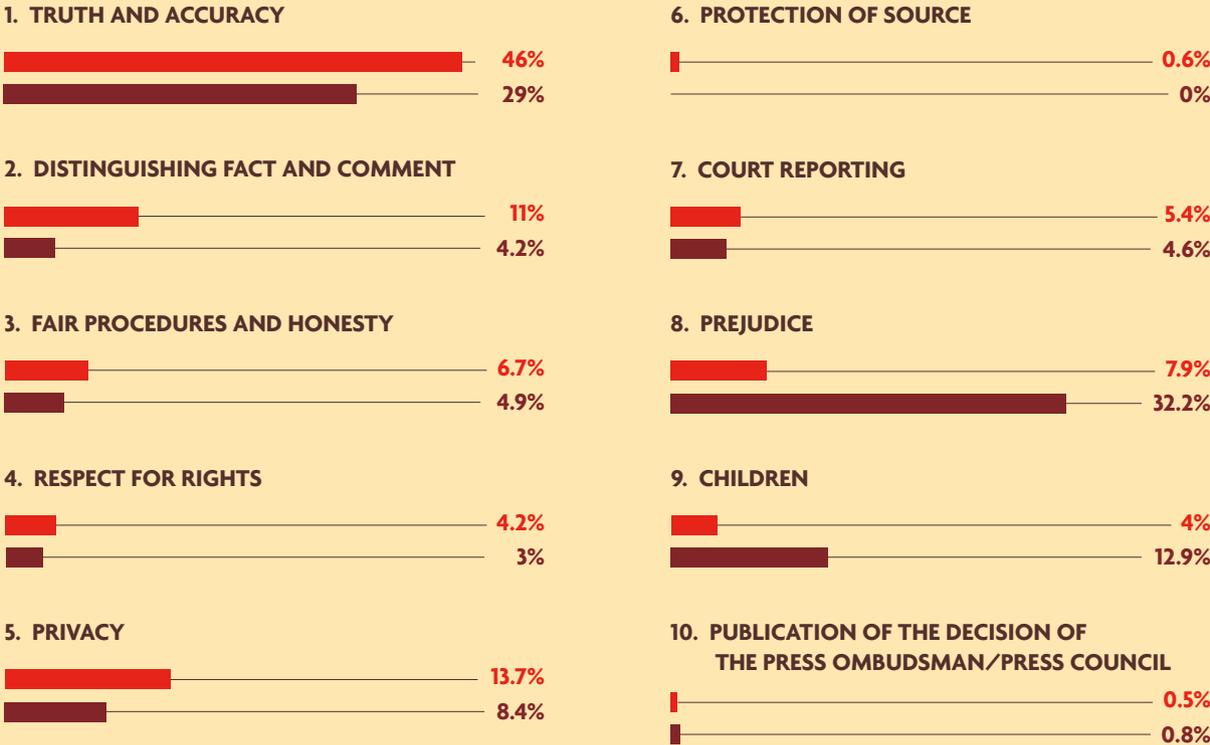
*These were for the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland or the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland.*

**4** USER GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)

*These are comments posted online by readers, usually at the bottom of articles.*

# PRINCIPLES OF CODE OF PRACTICE CITED BY COMPLAINANTS

■ 2015  
■ 2014



Complainants often cite a breach of more than one Principle of the Code of Practice in their complaints.

The full text of the Code is published on pages 28 and 29.

# PRESS OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT

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Every year the most commonly cited Principle in complaints is Principle 1 (Truth and Accuracy). In 2015 almost half of all complainants (46%) referred to Principle 1. Principle 5 (Privacy) was the second largest cause for complaint (13.7%). Principle 3 (Distinguishing Fact and Comment) was the third largest cause of complaint (11%).

On a number of occasions I had to decide on complaints about opinion pieces or commentary published in newspapers. Some of those who complain about this kind of journalism do so on the basis of their disagreement with the opinions found in the articles. However, disagreement with the views of commentators is not, in itself, sufficient grounds for a complaint to be upheld. A complaint can only be upheld when the opinion piece or commentary presents evidence of a possible breach of one or more of the Principles of the Code of Practice of the Press Council of Ireland.

## Opinion pieces play an important role in the press.

They provide readers with an opportunity to find a range of analyses, contexts, opinions and viewpoints on topics of current debate. These contribute to the quality of public discourse as they inform and, hopefully, entertain readers.

Commentators have the right to express their strongly held and at times provocative opinions. Complainants can cite any of the Principles of the Code of Practice in their complaints, but in complaints about opinion pieces it is Principle 8 that is most often cited. This Principle states that the press cannot publish material intended or likely to cause grave offence or stir up hatred against an individual or group on the basis of a number of defined criteria. If the press cannot publish strongly held opinions there is a likelihood that those seeking to be informed, entertained and provoked by opinion pieces will move to new media where there is the perception that there is less control of what is published. The threshold for upholding a complaint that something has caused “grave offence” is deliberately set high in order to encourage robust debate.

## There is always a balance to be struck between the right to express strongly held views and causing grave offence.

It has to be recognised that provocative articles stimulate debate and provide insight. As Press Ombudsman I have to balance a number of considerations found in the Code of Practice when dealing with a complaint that something published has caused grave offence or stirred up hatred:

- The freedom to publish is vital to the right of the people to be informed. This freedom includes the right of the press to publish what it considers to be news, without fear or favour, and the right to comment on it (Preamble)
- The press is entitled to advocate strongly its own views on topics (Principle 2.1)
- The press shall not publish material intended or likely to cause grave offence or stir up hatred against an individual or a group (Principle 8)

A complaint will only be upheld if the article is judged to have caused grave offence or to have stirred up hatred. Principle 8 does not define “grave offence” but, in my opinion, the offence must be considerable and it must be editorially unjustifiable. Principle 8 does state that the stirring up of hatred must not be directed against an individual or a group (which is widely defined). Last year no complaint was upheld that Principle 8 had been breached.

Three complaints were upheld that something published had breached Principle 5 (Privacy). This Principle recognises that privacy is a human right and that it must be respected. Any breach of privacy must be justified by reference to the fact that the information is already on the public record or that its publication is in the public interest. What this means is that an editor must determine before something private is published that the public good is better served by making that information available to readers. This cannot simply be a test of what interests readers, it must be that society benefits by knowing something that in many circumstances might only be known by individuals and their close families and friends.

On two of the three occasions when complaints were upheld that Principle 5 (Privacy) had been breached children were involved. It is very important that editors are conscious of the particular concerns about privacy in regard to children.

## It can only be in really exceptional circumstances that anything private about children can be published

(for example, where a parent or guardian acting in the child’s best interest and is fully informed of the context of the piece of journalism gives consent). It is very easy on occasion to damage a child’s privacy by reporting something about a child’s parents that might lead to the identification of the child. This should be a major consideration for editors who should be mindful that there may be occasions when reporting accidentally impinges on children’s privacy.

For the first time last year the Press Ombudsman's Office accepted a complaint about a columnist's blog that had been published on a newspaper's website. This office accepts complaints about blogs published by member publications of the Press Council. This recognises that the platforms available to journalists are fluid and are expanding.

The Press Ombudsman's Office does not receive many complaints claiming breaches of requirements in regard to court reporting. This may be due to the fact that reporters assigned to this task by their newspapers are familiar with the requirements for accuracy and the protocols that exist around this delicate area of reporting. However there were 2 decisions where I upheld complaints about court reporting which are illustrative of the need for care. In the complaint Sean McGlynn and the Donegal News I decided that the newspaper failed to respond in a timely fashion after it had been informed that something that it had reported accurately as having been said in court was subsequently found to be inaccurate. The newspaper delayed in correcting the record when the inaccuracy was pointed out to them.

In the complaint A Parent and the Sligo Weekender I found that the newspaper in a court report of a case involving a breach of a safety order was found to have effectively identified children by giving their parents' names and the ages of the children. Both these upheld complaints illustrate the need for care in court reporting.

There was another complaint upheld that involved children and privacy - Parents of a Child and Independent.ie. An online report on a school

opening by a government minister included video of school activities. One of these activities was a debate taking place in which two teams argued the merits for and against water charges. Independent.ie published a video of a child giving his speech.

Although the school had given permission for the journalist to be present and record the opening, I felt that the sensitive nature of what the child was engaged in required the editor to seek confirmation that his parents, and the school authorities, were happy that his debate contribution could be published on its website before doing so.

Incidentally, as soon as his parents contacted Independent.ie the video was taken down, but by this time it had been shared and appeared on other online sites and remained widely available after it was taken down by Independent.ie. This decision highlights the need for greater awareness of the privacy of minors and the loss of control of material posted online with such easy means of material being posted on other websites.

Finally, I feel it would be remiss of me in reviewing the past year not to refer to the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris in which 9 contributors to the magazine, 2 policemen and a maintenance worker were killed by Islamic extremists opposed to satirical references to the prophet Muhammed.

The killings in Paris were a chilling reminder for all journalists and those who believe in the value and importance of freedom of expression. In many countries journalists find their livelihoods are taken away from them if they report conscientiously. In extreme cases journalists' lives are threatened.

We must all remember that democratic society is weakened if the press does not fulfil its function of holding to account those who participate in public life.

With the growth of ideologies opposed to democratic values and in particular opposed to the principles of free expression that task is not likely to get easier.



**PETER FEENEY**

*Press Ombudsman*



## DELUGE

by Brenda Fitzsimons / *The Irish Times*

*Stranded along the banks of the Shannon River  
after two storms hit the country.*



# HOW COMPLAINTS ARE HANDLED

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We strive to ensure that our complaints procedures are as simple and straightforward as possible. Our Case Officer is always available to give advice and assistance to members of the public who wish to make a complaint.

She will also give informal advice and assistance to anyone who, while not wishing to make a formal complaint, may seek guidance on how to proceed with an issue relating to the press. For instance, there are occasions when people find themselves in circumstances where they have suddenly and unexpectedly become the subject of intense media interest, often at times of great tragedy and distress. On occasions like this she can give advice and, if the particular circumstances of a case merits special attention, the Press Ombudsman can contact editors to let them know, on a confidential basis, the wishes of the person or family in relation to contact from the media. Such contact can also be used to facilitate appropriate and necessary coverage of particularly distressing events.

The Case Officer can also act as facilitator at meetings between editors and complainants if both feel that a complaint might be resolved through mediation. Mediation involves the voluntary agreement of both the complainant and the editor to attend a meeting to discuss the complaint on a confidential basis, with the aim of working towards an agreed resolution.

When a formal complaint is received the Case Officer will immediately forward a copy of the complaint to the editor of the publication concerned. She will usually follow this up with a telephone call to tease out the key elements of the complaint and discuss the possibility of the complaint being resolved speedily and effectively through the Office's conciliation process. The editor will then submit a formal response to the complaint, and this will be forwarded to the complainant for consideration. The editor's response will often include an offer to resolve the complaint.

There is no limit to the range and type of offer that can be made by an editor to resolve a complaint. The following are some examples of offers made by editors and accepted by complainants as a resolution to their complaints.

### **CORRECTION AND APOLOGY**

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A man complained about an article which stated that he was set to fight a multi million-dollar legal battle, which he said was inaccurate. The complaint was resolved following the Office's intervention when the newspaper published a correction and apology in its print edition, and re-wrote the online article to inform readers that there was no court case scheduled.

### **CLARIFICATION**

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A woman complained about an article about her resignation from a major international company, which reported on the contents of a letter of resignation that she had sent to her employers. She complained that the article revealed details of a confidential letter that she had written which was not intended for circulation beyond a small group of people, and expressed her concern that the article could give the false impression that she had spoken directly to journalists, or provided them with copies of her letter of resignation.

Following the intervention of the Office the complaint was resolved when the newspaper published a clarification which stated that the complainant was not responsible for passing on the letter to the newspaper, and that she had not communicated with the newspaper about the matter.

### **RIGHT OF REPLY AND INVITATION TO MEET COMPLAINANT**

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An Ambassador complained about the accuracy of an article that was critical of his country. The complaint was resolved following the Office's intervention when the editor invited the Ambassador to submit a letter for publication, in which he could set out his views on the subject matter of the article. He also offered to meet the Ambassador to discuss all matters of concern to him.

## **LETTER OF APOLOGY AND UNDERTAKING ABOUT FUTURE COVERAGE**

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A mother complained about an article that reported on the arrest of a man in connection with the disappearance of her daughter. The article named the woman's daughter, which the mother said had caused great distress to her daughter and the family. Following the Office's intervention the complaint was resolved when the editor wrote a letter directly to the mother apologising for the distress caused to her and her daughter, and assured her that it was not his intention to cause distress. The editor also undertook not to publish any further articles about the matter, and not to name the woman's daughter if the newspaper decided to report on any future court proceedings relating to the case.

## **APOLOGY AND DELETION OF PHOTOGRAPH FROM ARCHIVES**

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A man complained about the publication of a picture of him which was taken as he pushed his car during heavy flooding, which he said was taken and published without his consent. He was particularly concerned about the publication of his face and the registration number of his car. Following the intervention of the Office the editor apologised for the distress caused to the complainant, which he said was not his intention, and explained that he had used the photograph only to highlight the appalling weather conditions of the day. He undertook to remove the photograph from the newspaper's archives and not to use it again.

## **CURTAILMENT OF JOURNALISTIC INTRUSION FOLLOWING FAMILY TRAGEDY**

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Following the murder of a family member, a family complained that a journalist was continuing to make contact with them despite their request for privacy. Following the intervention of the Office the matter was resolved when the editor apologised to the family for the further intrusion and gave an undertaking to immediately circulate the family's wishes to all relevant executives to ensure that there would be no further intrusion into their grief.

## **PUBLICATION OF A LETTER IN THE "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR" PAGE**

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A man complained about an article reporting on the findings of an EU Commission Report that he considered was unfair and biased as it did not, in his view, accurately reflect the Report's findings. Following the intervention of the Office the complaint was resolved when the newspaper published, in its "letters to the editor" page, a letter from the complainant setting out his views on the article under complaint, which included his interpretation of the findings of the EU Report.

The purpose of the conciliation process is to reach a swift and satisfactory resolution to complaints that is acceptable to complainants and editors. If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the conciliation process the complaint is referred to the Press Ombudsman for his consideration and decision as to whether or not the matter complained about breached the Code of Practice of the Press Council of Ireland.



*Miriam Laffan, PA/Administration  
Peter Feeney, Press Ombudsman  
Bernie Grogan, Case Officer*



## THE ROYAL BURREN

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*by Steve Humphreys / Irish Independent*

*The Prince of Wales chats with Brigid Barry, Burren  
Beo Trust Coordinator at the Burren, Co Clare.*



# THE PRESS COUNCIL OF IRELAND

The Press Council of Ireland has 13 members who are appointed by an Independent Appointments Committee. The members of the Appointments Committee are Mr Dáithí O’Ceallaigh (Chairman of the Press Council), Dr Maurice Manning, Mr David Begg and Ms Miriam Hederman-O’Brien.

Seven members of the Press Council, including the Chairman, are Independent members who are appointed following a process of public advertisement, short-listing and interview. The remaining six members are drawn from the press industry. In 2015 Mr Kevan Furbank was appointed to the Press Council following the death of Mr Paul Drury.

The members of the Press Council, who ex officio constitute the Board of Directors of The Press Council of Ireland Limited, were, on 31 December 2015, as follows:

### INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

- Mr Dáithí O’Ceallaigh (Chairman)
- Professor Áine Hyland
- Ms Patricia Sisk Taormina
- Ms Ann Carroll
- Mr Denis Doherty
- Mr Brendan Butler
- Ms Denise Charlton

### MEMBERS DRAWN FROM THE PRESS INDUSTRY

- Ms Norah Casey
- Mr Michael Brophy
- Mr Kevan Furbank
- Mr Deaglán de Breadún
- Mr Patrick Smyth
- Mr Dave O’Connell

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Press Council held its Annual General Meeting on Friday, 22 May 2015. The meeting approved the company accounts and re-appointed Messrs. Grant Thornton as the company’s auditors.

### APPEALS

Either party to a complaint which is the subject of a decision of the Press Ombudsman can appeal that decision to the Press Council if they feel that there has been an error in procedure, or if significant new information is available that could not have been or was not make available to the Press Ombudsman before he made his decision, or if they feel that there was an error in the Press Ombudsman’s application of the Code of Practice.

During 2015 the Press Council considered 19 appeals. Fourteen of these were submitted by complainants and five by publications.

The Press Council allowed three of the appeals submitted, affirmed the decision of the Press Ombudsman in 15 cases, and in one other case decided that a clarification already published should be republished on a different day.

### REFERRALS

The Press Ombudsman referred two complaints to the Press Council at the end of 2014, and these were considered by the Press Council at the beginning of 2015. Neither complaint was upheld.



**MEMBERS**

*photograph provided courtesy of The Irish Times*

*Back row:*

*Mr Denis Doherty  
Mr Deaglán de Breadún  
Mr Dave O'Connell  
Ms Denise Charlton  
Mr Patrick Smyth  
Mr Brendan Butler*

*Front row:*

*Ms Ann Carroll  
Professor Áine Hyland  
Mr Dáithí O'Ceallaigh (Chairman),  
Ms Patricia Sisk Taormina  
Ms Norah Casey*

*Missing from photograph:*

*Mr Michael Brophy  
Mr Kevan Furbank*



**POLLUTED WATERS**

*by Joe O’Shaughnessy / Connacht Tribune*

*Swans swim by polluted water at the Claddagh in Galway City.*

**CODE COMMITTEE**

The Code Committee is responsible for keeping the Code of Practice under review, and updating it when necessary, in consultation with the Press Council.

The Code of Practice was amended in 2015 to include a reference to the reporting of suicide, following the consideration of evidence from international studies that reporting of excessive detail of the means of suicide can contribute to “copycat” suicides.

The new Principle 5.4 of the Code reads:

*In the reporting of suicide, excessive detail of the means of suicide should be avoided.*

**MEMBERS OF THE CODE COMMITTEE**

- Mr Brendan Keenan (Chairman)
- Mr Kieran McDaid (Star Newspapers)
- Mr Colm MacGinty (Sunday World)
- Mr Cormac Burke (INM)
- Mr Colin Kerr (Euro Times)
- Mr Chris Dooley (The Irish Times)
- Mr David Burke (Tuam Herald)
- Mr Ian McGuinness (NUJ)
- Mr Peter Feeney (Press Ombudsman) (ex officio)

# FINANCE REPORT

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The finances of the Press Council of Ireland are provided, under the terms of its Articles of Association, by the Administrative Committee of the Press Council, which was chaired in 2015 by Professor Áine Hyland, an independent member of the Council.

The Press Council and the Office of the Press Ombudsman are fully funded by member publications and each member title of the Council is levied in accordance with formulae determined by the Administrative Committee.

The Administrative Committee is charged with making full provision for the administrative needs of the Press Council and of the Office of the Press Ombudsman including funding, premises and staffing. It meets approximately eight times a year to approve funding arrangements, and receives reports on all expenditure. The Committee also agrees annual budgets with the Council.

The costs for 2015 of the Press Council and the Office of the Press Ombudsman, together with comparative figures for the previous year, are as follows:

	2015	2014
Personnel costs	€309,397	€315,041
Premises and establishment	€81,657	€89,858
General expenses	€65,758	€80,910
Financial costs	€227	€338
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€457,039</b>	<b>€486,147</b>

The Administrative Committee includes representatives of Newsbrands Ireland, Local Ireland, Magazines Ireland and the National Union of Journalists. It determines its own membership, with the exception of the Chairman, who is appointed by the Press Council.

## IN 2015 THE MEMBERS WERE

Professor Áine Hyland (Chairman)

Mr Adrian Acosta

Ms Grace Aungier

Mr Vincent Crowley

Mr Seamus Dooley

Mr Oliver Keenaghan

Mr David McDonagh

Ms Dara McMahan

Mr Eoin McVey

Mr Johnny O'Hanlon

# MEMBER PUBLICATIONS

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## NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS

### Herald

Independent House,  
27-32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1.  
01 705 5333  
[www.independent.ie](http://www.independent.ie)

### Irish Daily Mail

DMG Media (Ireland), 3rd Floor,  
Embassy House, Herbert Park Lane,  
Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.  
01 637 5800  
[www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk)

### Irish Daily Mirror

Park House, 4th Floor,  
191 - 197 North Circular Road, Dublin 7.  
01 868 8600  
[www.irishmirror.ie](http://www.irishmirror.ie)

### Irish Daily Star

Independent Star Ltd, Independent  
House, 27 - 32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1.  
01 499 3400  
[www.thestar.ie](http://www.thestar.ie)

### Irish Examiner

Irish Examiner, Linn Dubh,  
Assumption Road, Blackpool, Cork.  
021 427 2722  
[www.irishexaminer.com](http://www.irishexaminer.com)

### Irish Farmers Journal

Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12.  
01 419 9599  
[www.farmersjournal.ie](http://www.farmersjournal.ie)

### Irish Independent

Independent House, 27-32 Talbot  
Street, Dublin 1.  
01 705 5333  
[www.independent.ie](http://www.independent.ie)

### Irish Mail on Sunday

DMG Media (Ireland),  
3rd Floor, Embassy House, Herbert  
Park Lane, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.  
01 637 5800  
[www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk)

### Irish Sun

4th Floor, Bishop's Square,  
Redmond's Hill, Dublin 2.  
01 479 2579  
[www.thesun.ie](http://www.thesun.ie)

### Irish Sunday Mirror

Park House, 4th Floor,  
191 - 197 North Circular Road, Dublin 7.  
01 868 8600  
[www.irishmirror.ie](http://www.irishmirror.ie)

### Sunday Business Post

Hambleden House,  
19/26 Pembroke Street Lower,  
Dublin 2.  
01 602 6000  
[www.businesspost.ie](http://www.businesspost.ie)

### Sunday Independent

Independent House, 27-32 Talbot  
Street, Dublin 1.  
01 705 5333  
[www.independent.ie](http://www.independent.ie)

### Sunday Times

4th Floor, Bishop's Square,  
Redmond's Hill, Dublin 2.  
01 479 2400  
[www.Sunday-times.ie](http://www.Sunday-times.ie)

### Sunday World

5th Floor, Independent House,  
27 - 32 Talbot Street, Dublin 1.  
01 884 8973  
[www.sundayworld.com](http://www.sundayworld.com)

### The Irish Times

The Irish Times Building,  
PO Box 74, 24-28 Tara Street, Dublin 2.  
01 675 8000  
[www.irishtimes.com](http://www.irishtimes.com)

## LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

### Anglo Celt

Anglo Celt, Station House,  
Cavan, Co. Cavan.  
049 433 1100  
[www.anglocelt.ie](http://www.anglocelt.ie)

### Bray People

Channing House,  
Upper Rowe Street, Wexford.  
053 914 0100  
[www.independent.ie](http://www.independent.ie)

### Carlow Nationalist

Hanover House, Hanover, Carlow.  
059 917 0100  
[www.carlow-nationalist.ie](http://www.carlow-nationalist.ie)

### Carlow People

Channing House,  
Upper Rowe Street, Wexford.  
053 914 0100  
[www.independent.ie](http://www.independent.ie)

### Clare Champion

Barrack Street, Ennis, Co. Clare.  
065 682 8105  
[www.clarechampion.ie](http://www.clarechampion.ie)

### Connacht Tribune

15 Market Street, Galway.  
091 536 222  
[www.galwaynews.ie](http://www.galwaynews.ie)

### Connaught Telegraph

Cavendish Lane, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.  
094 902 1711  
[www.con-telegraph.ie](http://www.con-telegraph.ie)

### Derry Journal

113 - 118 Duncreggan Road,  
Derry, BT480AA.  
00 44 287 127 2200  
[www.derryjournal.com](http://www.derryjournal.com)

### Derry News

26 Balliniska Rd, Springtown  
Industrial Est, Derry, BT480NA.  
00 44 603 437 7000  
[www.derrynews.net](http://www.derrynews.net)

### Donegal Democrat

Larkin House, Oldtown Road,  
Donegal PE27DS.  
074 912 8000  
[www.donegaldemocrat.ie](http://www.donegaldemocrat.ie)

**Donegal News**

St. Anne's Court, High Road,  
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.  
074 912 1014  
www.donegalnews.com

**Donegal Peoples Press**

Larkin House, Oldtown Road,  
Donegal PE27DS.  
074 912 8000  
www.donegaldemocrat.ie

**Dundalk Democrat**

7 Crowe Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth.  
042 933 4058  
www.dundalkdemocrat.ie

**Enniscorthy Echo**

Slaney Place, Enniscorthy,  
Co Wexford.  
053 925 9900  
www.theecho.ie

**Enniscorthy Guardian**

Channing House,  
Upper Rowe Street, Wexford.  
053 914 0100  
www.independent.ie

**Evening Echo**

Evening Echo, Linn Dubh,  
Assumption Road, Blackpool, Cork.  
021 427 2722  
www.eecho.ie

**Gorey Echo**

Main Street, Gorey, Co Wexford.  
053 942 2565  
www.goreyecho.ie

**Gorey Guardian**

Channing House,  
Upper Rowe Street, Wexford.  
053 914 0100  
www.independent.ie

**Kildare Nationalist**

Hanover House, Hanover, Carlow.  
045 432 147  
www.kildare-nationalist.ie

**Kilkenny People**

34 High Street, Kilkenny .  
056 772 1015  
www.kilkennypeople.ie

**Laois Nationalist**

Coliseum Lane, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.  
057 869 9987  
www.laois-nationalist.ie

**Leinster Express**

Dublin Road, Portlaoise,  
Co. Laois.  
057 862 1666  
www.leinsterexpress.ie

**Leinster Leader**

19 South Main Street,  
Naas, Co. Kildare.  
045 897 302  
www.leinsterleader.ie

**Leitrim Observer**

3 Hartley Business Park,  
Carrick-On-Shannon, Co. Leitrim.  
071 962 0025  
www.leitrimobserver.ie

**Limerick Chronicle**

54 O'Connell Street, Limerick.  
061 214 500  
www.limerickleader.ie

**Limerick Leader**

54 O'Connell Street, Limerick.  
061 214 500  
www.limerickleader.ie

**Longford Leader**

Leader House, Dublin Road, Longford.  
043 334 5241  
www.longfordleader.ie

**Mayo News**

The Fairgreen, Westport, Co. Mayo.  
098 253 11  
www.mayonews.ie

**Meath Chronicle**

Market Square, Navan, Co. Meath.  
046 907 9600  
www.meathchronicle.ie

**Munster Express**

37 The Quay, Waterford.  
051 872 141  
www.munster-express.ie

**Nationalist/Clonmel**

Queen Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.  
052 617 2500  
www.Nationalist.ie

**Nenagh Guardian**

13 Summerhill, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.  
067 312 14  
www.nenagh-guardian.ie

**New Ross Echo**

4 Mary Street, New Ross, Wexford.  
051 445 062  
www.newrossecho.ie

**New Ross Standard**

Channing House,  
Upper Rowe Street, Wexford.  
053 914 0100  
www.independent.ie

**Northern Standard**

The Diamond, Monaghan,  
Co. Monaghan.  
047 821 88  
www.northernstandard.ie

**Roscommon Herald**

St. Patricks Street, Boyle,  
Co. Roscommon.  
071 966 2004  
www.roscommonherald.ie

**Sligo Champion**

Connacht House,  
Markievicz Road, Sligo.  
071 916 9222  
www.sligochampion.ie

**Sligo Weekender**

4 Teeling Street, Sligo.  
071 917 4900  
www.sligoweekender.ie

**Southern Star**

Ilen Street, Skibereen, Cork.  
028 212 00  
www.southernstar.ie

**The Argus**

Partnership Court, Park Street,  
Dundalk, Co. Louth.  
042 933 4632  
www.independent.ie

**The Avondhu**

Avondhu Press, 18 Lower Cork Street,  
Mitchelstown, Co. Cork.  
025 24451  
www.avondhupress.ie

**The Corkman**

The Spa, Mallow, Co. Cork.  
022 423 94  
www.independent.ie

**The Drogheda Independent**

9 Shop Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth.  
041 983 8658  
www.independent.ie

**The Fingal Independent**

9 Shop Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth.  
041 983 8658  
www.independent.ie

**The Kerryman**

Clash, Tralee, Co. Kerry.  
066 714 5560  
www.independent.ie

**Tipperary Star**

Friar Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.  
0504 291 00  
www.tipperarystar.ie

**Tuam Herald**

Dublin Road, Tuam, Co. Galway.  
093 241 83  
www.tuamherald.ie

**Waterford News & Star**

Gladstone House, Gladstone Street,  
Waterford.  
051 874 951  
www.waterford-news.com

**Western People**

Tone Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo.  
096 60 999  
www.westernpeople.ie

**Westmeath Examiner**

Blackhall Place, Mullingar,  
Co. Westmeath.  
044 934 6700  
www.westmeathexaminer.ie

**Westmeath Independent**

11 Sean Costello Street,  
Athlone, Co. Westmeath.  
090 643 4300  
www.westmeathindependent.ie

**Wexford Echo**

17 Selskar Street, Wexford,  
Co Wexford.  
053 914 2948  
www.wexfordecho.ie

**Wexford People**

Channing House,  
Upper Rowe Street, Wexford.  
053 914 0100  
www.independent.ie

**Wicklow People**

Channing House,  
Upper Rowe Street, Wexford.  
053 914 0100  
www.independent.ie

**MAGAZINES****Accountancy Ireland**

Chartered Accountants House,  
47 - 49 Pearse Street, Dublin 2.  
01 637 7241  
www.accountancyireland.ie

**Auto Trade Journal**

Glencree House, Lanesborough Road,  
Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.  
090 662 5676  
www.autotrade.ie

**Business Plus**

Business Plus, 30 Morehampton Road,  
Dublin 4.  
01 660 8400  
www.bizplus.ie

**Euro Times**

ESCRS, Temple House, Temple Road,  
Blackrock, Co. Dublin.  
01 209 1100  
www.eurotimes.org

**Food & Wine Magazine**

Harmonia Ltd, Rosemount House,  
Dundrum Road, Dundrum, Dublin 14.  
01 240 5300  
www.foodandwinemagazine.ie

**Hotpress**

13 Trinity Street, Dublin 2.  
01 241 1500  
www.hotpress.ie

**Ireland of the Welcomes**

Harmonia Ltd, Rosemount House,  
Dundrum Road, Dundrum, Dublin 14.  
01 240 5300  
www.irelandofthewelcomes.com

**Irish Auto Trade Yearbook & Diary**

Glencree House, Lanesborough Road,  
Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.  
090 662 5676  
www.autotrade.ie

**Irish Bodyshop Journal**

Glencree House, Lanesborough Road,  
Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.  
090 662 5676  
www.bodyshop.ie

**Irish Country Magazine**

Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12.  
01 419 9500  
www.irishcountrymagazine.ie

**Irish Medical Times**

Merchants Hall, 25 Merchants' Quay,  
Dublin 8.  
01 817 6347  
www.imt.ie

**Irish Tatler Magazine**

Harmonia Ltd, Rosemount House,  
Dundrum Road, Dundrum, Dublin 14.  
01 240 5300  
www.irishtatler.ie

**ITIA Yearbook & Diary**

Glencree House, Lanesborough Road,  
Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.  
090 662 5676  
www.tyretrade.ie

**Law Society Gazette**

Blackhall Place, Dublin 7.  
01 672 4828  
www.lawsocietygazette.ie

**Motley**

UCC Students Union, Communications  
Officer, 54 College Road, Cork.  
021 490 3218  
www.uccsu.ie

**Motorshow - Annual Car Buyers Guide**

Glencree House, Lanesborough Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.  
090 662 5676  
www.motorshow.ie

**RTE Guide**

RTE, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.  
01 208 2920  
www.rteguide.ie

**SIN**

Sin Magazine, C/o Students Union, Aras na Mac Leinn, NUI Galway.  
091 493 262  
www.sin.ie

**Síocháin**

Garda Síochána Retired Members Association, 8 Harrington Street, Dublin 8.  
01 478 1525  
www.gardaretired.com

**Stubbs Gazette**

The Priory, Stillorgan Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.  
01 672 5939  
www.stubbsgazette.ie

**The Gloss**

Gloss Publications Ltd., The Courtyard, 40 Main Street, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.  
01 275 5130  
www.thegloss.ie

**The Irish Field**

Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12.  
01 405 1100  
www.irishfield.ie

**The Irish Journalist**

NUJ, 2nd floor, Spencer House, Spencer Row, Off Store Street, Dublin 1.  
01 817 0340  
www.nuj.org.uk

**Trinity News**

6 Trinity College, Dublin 2.  
01 896 2335  
www.trinitynews.ie

**TYRE Trade Journal**

Glencree House, Lanesborough Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.  
090 662 5676  
www.tyretrade.ie

**U Magazine**

Harmonia Ltd, Rosemount House, Dundrum Road, Dundrum, Dublin 14.  
01 240 5300  
www.umagazine.ie

**UCC Express**

UCC Students Union, Communications Officer, 54 College Road, Cork.  
021 490 3218  
www.uccsu.ie

**Village**

Ormond Quay Publishing, 6 Ormond Quay, Dublin 7.  
01 873 5824  
www.villagemagazine.ie

**WMB**

2nd Floor, Paradigm House, Dundrum Office Park, Dundrum, Dublin 14.  
01 296 4025  
www.womenmeanbusiness.com

**Woman's Way**

Harmonia Ltd, Rosemount House, Dundrum Road, Dundrum, Dublin 14.  
01 240 5300  
www.womansway.ie

**Work & Life Magazine**

IMPACT Trade Union, Nerneys Court, Dublin 1.  
01 817 1500  
www.impact.ie

**ONLINE ONLY NEWS PUBLICATIONS**

**Evoke.ie**

DMG Media (Ireland), 3rd Floor, Embassy House, Herbert Park Lane, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.  
01 256 0800  
www.evoke.ie

**Offaly Express**

Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.  
057 862 1666  
www.offalyexpress.ie

**Thejournal.ie**

Journal Media Ltd, 3rd Floor, Lattin Hall, Golden Lane, Dublin 8.  
01 902 2487  
www.thejournal.ie

# CODE OF PRACTICE

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## PREAMBLE

The freedom to publish is vital to the right of the people to be informed. This freedom includes the right of the press to publish what it considers to be news, without fear or favour, and the right to comment upon it.

Freedom of the press carries responsibilities. Members of the press have a duty to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards.

This Code sets the benchmark for those standards. It is the duty of the Press Ombudsman and Press Council of Ireland to ensure that it is honoured in the spirit as well as in the letter, and it is the duty of Press Council print and online media members (the press) to assist them in that task.

In dealing with complaints, the Ombudsman and Press Council will give consideration to what they perceive to be the public interest. It is for them to define the public interest in each case, but the general principle is that the public interest is invoked in relation to a matter capable of affecting the people at large so that they may legitimately be interested in receiving and the print and online news media legitimately interested in providing information about it.

## PRINCIPLE 1 **TRUTH AND ACCURACY**

**1.1** In reporting news and information, the press shall strive at all times for truth and accuracy.

**1.2** When a significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distorted report or picture has been published, it shall be corrected promptly and with due prominence.

**1.3** When appropriate, a retraction, apology, clarification, explanation or response shall be published promptly and with due prominence.

## PRINCIPLE 2 **DISTINGUISHING FACT AND COMMENT**

**2.1** The press is entitled to advocate strongly its own views on topics.

**2.2** Comment, conjecture, rumour and unconfirmed reports shall not be reported as if they were fact.

**2.3** Readers are entitled to expect that the content of the press reflects the best judgment of editors and writers and has not been inappropriately influenced by undisclosed interests. Wherever relevant, any significant financial interest of an organization should be disclosed. Writers should disclose significant potential conflicts of interest to their editors.

## PRINCIPLE 3 **FAIR PROCEDURES AND HONESTY**

**3.1** The press shall strive at all times for fair procedures and honesty in the procuring and publishing of news and information.

**3.2** The press shall not obtain information, photographs or other material through misrepresentation or subterfuge, unless justified by the public interest.

**3.3** Journalists and photographers must not obtain, or seek to obtain, information and photographs through harassment, unless their actions are justified in the public interest.

## PRINCIPLE 4 **RESPECT FOR RIGHTS**

Everyone has constitutional protection for his or her good name. The press shall not knowingly publish matter based on malicious misrepresentation or unfounded accusations, and must take reasonable care in checking facts before publication.

## PRINCIPLE 5 **PRIVACY**

**5.1** Privacy is a human right, protected as a personal right in the Irish Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights, which is incorporated into Irish law. The private and family life, home and correspondence of everyone must be respected.

**5.2** Readers are entitled to have news and comment presented with respect for the privacy and sensibilities of individuals. However, the right to privacy should not prevent publication of matters of public record or in the public interest.

**5.3** Sympathy and discretion must be shown at all times in seeking information in situations of personal grief or shock. In publishing such information, the feelings of grieving families should be taken into account. This should not be interpreted as restricting the right to report judicial proceedings.

**5.4** In the reporting of suicide, excessive detail of the means of suicide should be avoided.

**5.5** Public persons are entitled to privacy. However, where people hold public office, deal with public affairs, follow a public career, or have sought or obtained publicity for their activities, publication of relevant details of their private life and circumstances may be justifiable where the information revealed relates to the validity of their conduct, the credibility of their public statements, the value of their publicly expressed views or is otherwise in the public interest.

## PRINCIPLE 6 **PROTECTION OF SOURCES**

Journalists shall protect confidential sources of information.

## PRINCIPLE 7 **COURT REPORTING**

The press shall strive to ensure that court reports (including the use of images) are fair and accurate, are not prejudicial to the right to a fair trial and that the presumption of innocence is respected.

## PRINCIPLE 8 **PREJUDICE**

The press shall not publish material intended or likely to cause grave offence or stir up hatred against an individual or group on the basis of their race, religion, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, membership of the travelling community, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, illness or age.

## PRINCIPLE 9 **CHILDREN**

**9.1** The press shall take particular care in seeking and presenting information or comment about a child under the age of 16.

**9.2** Journalists and editors should have regard for the vulnerability of children, and in all dealings with children should bear in mind the age of the child, whether parental or other adult consent has been obtained for such dealings, the sensitivity of the subject-matter, and what circumstances if any make the story one of public interest. Young people should be free to complete their time at school without unnecessary intrusion. The fame, notoriety or position of a parent or guardian must not be used as sole justification for publishing details of a child's private life.

## PRINCIPLE 10 **PUBLICATION OF THE DECISION OF THE PRESS OMBUDSMAN / PRESS COUNCIL**

**10.1** When requested or required by the Press Ombudsman and/or the Press Council to do so, the press shall publish the decision in relation to a complaint with due prominence.

**10.2** The content of this Code will be reviewed at regular intervals.



PRESS COUNCIL  
OF IRELAND



OFFICE OF  
THE PRESS  
OMBUDSMAN

3 Westland Square, Pearse Street, Dublin 2, DO2 N567

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