

TransActual UK

I write to you as a representative of TransActual UK, an organisation which advocates for the trans community in the UK.

In the past three years, transphobic press coverage has shown a dramatic increase. Just this week alone, there have been more than 15 newspaper articles which either perpetuated misinformation about trans people or contained transphobic content. This increase has coincided with an increase in transphobic hate crime. Transphobia in the press has a real impact in how trans people are treated in their day to day lives. A lot of trans people are afraid and this escalation in transphobic rhetoric has had a real impact on many trans people's lives.

Amnesty International state that "in certain circumstances free speech and freedom of expression can be restricted. Governments have an obligation to prohibit hate speech and incitement."

(<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/free-speech-freedom-expression-human-right>)

However, because these articles - which often contain incorrect information, portray trans people as a danger to society, misrepresent the law or misrepresent statistical information - do not target a specific person or organisation and instead target a whole section of the community, advocates for the trans community are unable to have their complaints heard by IPSO.

The coverage of trans issues and trans rights in the press has had the effect of inciting transphobia. Under Amnesty International's guidance, it would be right and proper for IPSO to act to restrict transphobic reporting.

The IPSO code of practice needs to be amended to state that it is unacceptable to spread misleading and/or hateful information about sections of society - be they the trans community, the Muslim community, or any other minority group . It should also be amended to allow advocates from those sections of society or minority group to make complaints.

I hope that you will take this contribution into consideration when you review the code of practice.

Yours sincerely,

Chay Brown

Co-founder TransActual UK