

We have considered this from the perspective of victims of terror attacks and their families, and, in our view, there is need for a freestanding Clause in the Code relating to "Reporting on terror attacks" (like there is already for "Reporting suicide").

We have considered some possible wording for this Clause, which I set out below.

Reporting on terror attacks

i) When reporting on terror attacks, particular regard should be had to the vulnerable position of victims of terror attacks and their family members, including the bereaved and the seriously injured. Such individuals may be in a state of severe distress, shock and grief, as well as physical pain, and regard should be had to the potential for both newsgathering techniques and reporting to cause further emotional distress.

ii) Save in exceptional cases, or where the media have been pro-actively contacted by victims or their families, the media should not seek to directly contact victims or their immediate family members for a period of at least 48 hours following an attack. Contact should instead be made via authorised routes, such as the police or victim support organisations.

iii) While taking into account the media's right to report legal proceedings, care should be taken in the publication of images of the perpetrators of a terror attack, or their manifestos, noting the potential of this information to glorify an attack in the eyes of some and lead to an increased risk of further terror attacks being committed in future,

The suggestion regarding the 48 hour window is one which we feel very strongly about, and has arisen as a result of feedback which we have received from numerous victims and their families, including as part of the report prepared by us titled

"A Second Trauma" (see: <https://survivorsagainststerror.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Media-Report-Oct-2021-A-Second-Trauma-5.pdf>). In particular we think that an appropriate balance is struck in ii) above in that it recognises that some individuals may choose to proactively contact the media themselves, and that in other cases contact can be made via the police/victim support organisations. We think that observance of this by the media would go a long way to redressing some of the serious intrusions into grief, suffering and pain which have occurred following previous terror attacks.

There is also, in our view, a need to recognise the potential for media reporting to glorify terror attacks in the eyes of some. We know that the media would wish to avoid doing this but we think that it would help to highlight this potential in the Code itself so that it is firmly in the mind of Editors/the media in general when reporting on atrocities. In this regard, we understand that the Samaritans' guidance on reporting suicide has been helpful in educating the media on the potential for adverse consequences to arise from well-meaning reporting, and this has led to the specific Clause in the Code mentioned above.