

Chartered Institute of Public Relations response to review of intellectual property and growth

1. The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) is the representative body of the UK public relations industry. Established in 1948, and with over 9,500 individual members, the CIPR is Europe's largest professional body for public relations practitioners, and includes in its membership a large number of communications professionals who specialise in public affairs. The CIPR is responsible for promoting the standards of excellence expected of its members and by their clients in their professional relationships and business dealings.
2. The CIPR was granted its Royal Charter in 2005, after an exhaustive process of examination by the Privy Council. In the course of that process, the Government accepted the CIPR to be fully representative of the public relations industry, and acknowledged that we operate in the public benefit, with a full education and training structure underpinning membership. Crucially, we also operate a rigorous Code of Conduct, to which all members must adhere.
3. The CIPR welcomes the opportunity to respond to the review of intellectual property and growth. In preparing our response, we have consulted with our membership.

General Comments

4. We readily accept that intellectual property rights are valuable and justifiable. Indeed, both our Members as individuals, and ourselves as a corporate body, exert those rights.
5. At present, the intellectual property rights of newspapers are exerted via the Newspaper Licensing Agency (NLA). It has been a long standing view of the CIPR that the regulatory regime governing copyright is at the very least unsatisfactory. We have in the past raised our concerns to previous governments relating to the NLA acting as provider of cuttings through their eClips service and de facto regulator at the expense of the PR profession.
6. We believe that through its chosen method of protecting the rights of its owners (newspaper publishers), it is driven by commercial considerations rather than other legitimate concerns, for example, the free flow of information and acts in an anti-competitive, profiteering manner, directly at odds with the economic interest of the UK.

Response to Question 7

7. The CIPR would support the introduction of standard terms and guidance on what actions are permitted in copyright especially due to the growth of sharing information digitally.
8. As users of copyright material we believe that media outlets have the right to protect copyright but we cannot see how accessing links to source material infringes that copyright and requires a licence. Better guidance produced by the NLA or a separate third party that gives users information on copyright regulation and licence societies would be welcomed. Transparent information on how tariffs are set and why copyright rules are being applied selectively to certain aggregation firms such as Meltwater and not Google would improve people's knowledge and understanding of copyright and improve overall outcomes.
9. The CIPR believes that there are areas where agreed default permission could be introduced and we would be happy to speak further with the review on this.

Conclusion

10. The CIPR would be happy to discuss any points raised in this paper in more detail.

Prepared by
Chartered Institute of Public Relations
52-53 Russell Square
London
WC 1B 4HP



Contact details
Elizabeth Bowen
CIPR Public Affairs Officer
elizabethb@cipr.co.uk