

Schillings Recommend Key Changes To Privacy And Reputation Protection



Released on: April 20, 2010, 12:09 am

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Industry: [Law](#)

Schillings, the leading law firm protecting the privacy and reputations of businesses and high-profile individuals, has released the findings of its recent research entitled - 'A private life in the public eye'. The research report sets out a 'Blueprint for change' to help people protect their privacy and reputation without compromising the vital principle of freedom of expression. The launch of the report coincides with the Government's DCMS Select Committee's comprehensive report into Press Standards, Privacy and Libel.

The overarching aim of the research was to discover what it means to be in the public eye today and where the line should be drawn to separate the part of a person's life that should remain private. The key areas of interest included: Attitudes towards privacy; Importance of legal measures; Due prominence of apologies; The effectiveness of the Press Complaints Commission; Dissatisfaction with press reporting; Prior notification and the future challenges facing [reputation protection](#).

The research provides evidence that people are dissatisfied with the current position regarding reputation and privacy. The opinions of the audience presented in the report do not necessarily represent those of Schillings. An area of common ground is the view showing that whilst it is important to permit publication of matters that are genuinely in the public interest, too often reputations are damaged, and privacy invaded, by the publication of stories that are untrue, or where the

main aim is to satisfy salacious curiosity about the lives of the rich and famous irrespective of the distress caused to them, their families and their friends.

Gideon Benaim, Partner at Schillings, who led the research project commented: "Schillings has been at the forefront of developing [privacy law](#) in this country and has set legal precedent providing everyone the right of protection in respect of their home life, their children and medical information, as well as other areas considered private. This means their private life should not be reported by the press unless it is truly a matter in the public interest. However, in some areas we find the media don't make the correct distinction between 'public interest' and 'of interest to the public' which are quite different concepts."

Schillings concluded that the aims of existing laws are sound. But in practice, they frequently fail to achieve a satisfactory balance between the public interest, the truth and privacy. The report recommends three key reforms to reputation laws under the proposal called the 'Blueprint for change'; each of which are supported by the recommendations in the DCMS report.

- The press should have to notify people before publishing stories that will seriously invade their privacy.
- It should be easier to obtain injunctions preventing the publication of untrue allegations.
- Introduce a pre-publication system to resolve disputes.

Senior Partner Keith Schilling commented: "There is currently widespread discussion in the media and within Parliament regarding privacy and libel reform, however this discussion has been heavily weighted in the media's interest. With the DCMS's report and our own research we are able to put forward the view that there needs to be an improvement in press standards. More importantly, the right we all have to a private life, as set out by our Supreme Court needs to be respected."

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Notes to Editors

About

Schillings is one of Britain's top law firms dedicated to the reputation protection of international corporations, brands, celebrities and high-profile business people. The firm's track-record in [defamation](#), privacy

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and copyright cases, [image protection](#), [sports law](#), as well as commercial dispute resolution is second to none.

Defamation privacy and copyright are at the heart of the firm's work, prompting The Independent newspaper to call Schillings a "spectacularly efficient media law firm."

Schillings clients include the recording artist Madonna, supermodel Naomi Campbell, seven times Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong, Harry Potter author JK Rowling, pharmaceuticals maker GlaxoSmithKline, steel maker Arcelor Mittal, the Harrods Group and the London Stock Exchange.

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