About MMA

- **Vision:** A responsible media that enables an informed and engaged citizenry in Africa and across the world;
- Promoting **Human Rights** and Democracy through the media since 1993, 18 years of experience;
- **Programme areas:** media’s coverage children, democracy & governance, HIV/AIDS, gender, media freedom & performance, race & xenophobia & ethnicity, media policy, and other special projects.
About MMA

– Core focus of work is monitoring print media coverage on a daily basis.
– Conducted over 120 Special Media Monitoring Projects:
  – Race & Xenophobia (SAHRC, CSVR),
  – Elections (since 1994);
  – Gender (GMBS, GMMP);
  – Children (ECM & MADOAT);
  – HIV (WITS, MAP), and more!
Why are we here?
Why are we here?

• Gutter journalism;
• Purchase paper for R2.80. Easily accessible to children;
• Purely for titillation and has no educational and informational value – amounts to soft porn.
Presentation Agenda

1. MMA’s Position on the Regulation of Print Media;
2. Amendments to the Press Code;
3. Awareness of the Press Code & Press Council;
5. The Independence of the Press Council;
6. Complainants Procedure;
7. Financial Arrangements;
8. Conclusion.
MMA’s Position on the Regulation of Print Media

• Media Appeals Tribunal

• President Zuma closing NGC 2010:
  “the independent MMA has strongly criticised the quality of reporting in the media, while stating that they disagree with the ANC position”

• The position held by the ANC is that –equating poor quality coverage can only be rectified by limiting media freedom i.e. to deal with poor quality there should be clampdown media freedom.
MMA’s Position Regulation of Print Media

MMA disagrees with this position: There is a need to deal with the issue of poor quality/unethical reporting. HOW?:

- Regulation must improve journalistic ethics, practices and responsible, accountable reporting NOT hinder or suppress media freedom & the free flow of information;
- The aim of the review and amendments must be to improve reporting not pander to government or political influence;
- If the quality of reporting is improved, the need to limit freedom of expression is no longer necessary.
What Role can the Press Council play…

• Raise Awareness of the Press Council and Code;

• Amendments to the Complaints Procedure, Constitution and Press Code;

• MMA’s State of the Media Report.
Awareness of Press Council and Code

• **Currently**: lack of knowledge and awareness by the General Public & Media of the Press Code and Council. Example Daily Sun.

• **Best Practice**: Press Council needs to ensure:
  1) Press Council Members and Media at large must be informed of Press Council and Code obligations. If publication fails to carry advert on Codes and Complaint Procedure – stringent penalties.
  2) General Public must know about the Press Code and Council. Use of plain language when publicizing Code, references to the Code and the Complaints Procedure. Learn from the BCCSA: good awareness of Codes and Processes.
  3) Multifaceted Awareness Campaign: using different platforms and ensure buy-in from media houses, media NGO’s etc.
Example of Awareness Campaign: MMA contribution

• MMA facilitates online complaints process (print, broadcast & advertising);
• Actively marketing & encouraging adults and children to participate in “complimenting” & “complaining” about the media, & “tips for complaining”.
• Sent to Press Council/BCCSA/ASA and MMA;
Media Matters Monday Bulletin

Happy Monday Media Matters Enthusiasts!
Here’s what’s in store today:

• Three’s company - SABC, ICASA and Ipi
• Lessons in communication - how Mabida’s Health was handled
• Joburg’s Billing Mess – who’s asking why?

Read more | Posted: 31 January 2011 | News - Newsletter | Categories: Democracy and Governance, Media Freedom and Performance

Daily Sun newspaper under fire from media monitoring organisation

Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) had hoped that the South African media would start 2011 with good intentions, and perhaps adopt the New Year’s resolution of ensuring children’s rights are upheld and protected in the press.

Daily Sun is South Africa’s biggest selling National newspaper and last year it came third in MMA’s ratings for best practice reporting on children. However rather than putting its best foot forward for 2011, Daily Sun has gotten off to an abysmal start.

Read more | Posted: 27 January 2011 | News - MMA in the Media | Categories: Children, Media Freedom and Performance

SABC reporters vs Govin Reddy: heated debate rages on

The criticism levelled against SABC reporter and newsreaders by board shortlist nominee Govin Reddy last week in Cape Town continues to generate a heated debate as several voices of reason enter the fray, which they believe is critical for the survival of the public broadcaster.

Read more | Posted: 27 January 2011 | News - MMA in the Media | Categories: Media Freedom and Performance

Media Monday Bulletin

What’s hot and what’s not this Media Monday?

Media tramples all over children’s rights
The multi-billion rand mis-spending story – and how it’s been treated in the press
Solly’s SABC settlement – it fell to the Minister to lift the veil of secrecy
And meet a self-confessed “media freak” – our newest MMC


Media Monday Bulletin

It’s an SABC special this Media Monday
SABC sackings, hearings and possible deals
The mystery of the shortlist for the SABC board
# Media Complaint Guide

This guide has been put together to help you complain to about media (print, broadcast and advertising) in a way that your concerns are addressed. It will show you:

- Who to complain to
- How to complain to get action

And even provide an online form to complain through.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT FORM OF MEDIA DO YOU WANT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT?</th>
<th>ADVERTISING</th>
<th>BROADCAST MEDIA (RADIO &amp; TELEVISION)</th>
<th>PRINT MEDIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complaints can be sent to the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa (ASA)</td>
<td>Advertisements are media expressions, intended to promote the sale of products or services. These may be televised commercials, newspaper advertisements and advertorials.</td>
<td>Content and programming that is not advertising, e.g. news, entertainment, information services, social &amp; religious programmes produced or purchased for distribution by the media.</td>
<td>Complaints can be sent to the Press Council of South Africa or a letter to the editor of the publication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **An SABC station/channel**
  - SABC1
  - 5FM
  - C00 FM
  - Good Hope FM
  - Ikwezi FM
  - Lesedi FM
  - Ligezala FM
  - Lotus FM
  - Metro FM
  - Motswedisa
  - Mufungana Lonene
  - Radio 2050
  - Radio Sonder Grense
  - SATH
  - Shibelo FM
  - Tru FM
  - Ukhuza FM
  - Umhlobo Wenene
  - X-K FM
  - SABC1

- **Another station/channel**
  - 693 1222

- **The paper itself**
  - Details of complaints procedures can be found inside most newspapers. Some newspapers have ombudsmen, which would be the person to contact. Others don’t and you’ll have to complain to the editor.
Press Council Complaint

Please note that this complaints mechanism does not deal with service complaints or complaints about reception, only content.

Are you complaining on your own behalf or for an organisation or company?
If it's just me

Title
Ms

Name **

Surname **

Organisation / company name (if applicable)

Address

Postal Code

Telephone (landline)

Fax No. (if applicable)

Email Address **

Where did the article appear?
Media Compliment Guide

Sure, you can vote with your feet, but that doesn’t brighten someone’s day. Let your favourite journalist know how much you appreciate her. Send a compliment, either directly or through the regulatory body.

**WHAT FORM OF MEDIA DO YOU WANT TO COMPLIMENT?**

- **ADVERTISING**
  - Compliments can be sent to the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa (ASA) [http://www.asasa.org.za](http://www.asasa.org.za)

- **BROADCAST MEDIA (RADIO & TELEVISION)**
  - Compliments can be sent directly to the station/channel or the editor for news as well as the Broadcast Complaints Commission of South Africa. [Click here to compliment BCCSA](http://www.bccsa.org.za)

- **PRINT MEDIA**
  - A letter to the editor is often the best way to compliment the publication but you should also send a copy to the Press Council. [Click here to compliment Press Council](http://www.presscouncil.org.za)

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Press Code Amendments

**Current Absence of Overriding Principles in the Press Code.** The Press Code needs to be amended generally to reflect and encourage best practice & ethical journalism.

**Best Practice Amendments:**
1) **Overall Framing of the Code.** Preamble to include Founding Values of SA Constitution. Ethics to help in interpreting Code:
   - Seek Truth and Report as fully as possible;
   - Act Independently;
   - Minimizing harm:
   - Accountability
2) **Children:** Media guilty serious violations. MMA website;
3) **Public interest:** “legitimate public interest” - what is of interest to the public is not necessarily in the public interest;
4) **Discouraging “brown envelope” journalism:** prohibits payment feature articles criminals and connections.
Crime & Punishment of Media

• The media has the power to shape the public’s mind and perception even when they are wrong;

• Need accountability at both Press Council level and publication level. Foster a culture of accountability & responsible journalism;
Example 1: The Sowetan (07/01/2011, p.1):

- Grossly disrespectful and patronising,
- No apology to Minister but published edited letter from Ministry;
- In Sowetan this letter appeared on page 4 but originally appeared as front page splash;
Wrong

Angie

Now repeat after Sowetan

279 033 ÷ 643 546 = 43% fail

∴ The real pass rate is 57%

The real pass rate is 57%

TSAKANE NOTCHES SEVEN DISTINCTIONS

PREGGIES HIGH BOUNCES BACK

REPORTS: PAGES 2, 4, 5, 6 COMMENT: PAGE 8
Crime & Punishment of Media

Example 2: Sunday World (23/05/2010, p. 4):

- Generalised, normalised, trivialised & treated very insensitively a case of gender based violence by celebrity boxer.

- Editor issued apology in letter section but not given due prominence in relation original (06/06/2010, p. 13).
‘Hands of Stone’ socks baby mama

NGWAKO MALATJI
FORMER boxing world champ Lehlohonolo Ledwaba still keeps himself in shape—allegedly by using the mother of his child as a punching bag.

Actually, it only happened once. That was last week, when he suspected that she was sparring with another man.

Our source says Ledwaba called Dineo Bokala, who works in Jozi, but her gadget rang constantly and remained unanswered.

This incensed the former IBF super-bantamweight champ, who went to wait for her at the spot at which she usually arrived by taxi.

It is alleged that when she arrived, Ledwaba asked her why she’d been and why she’d ignored his calls. When she tried to explain, it is said, he unleashed a barrage of “take-fives” and fists on her in front of bemused onlookers. She suffered bruises to her face.

Bokala, who has been with Ledwaba for more than 15 years, says: “I was coming from town and my phone rang a couple of times but I could not hear it.

“When I got out of the taxi, I found him waiting for me and while I was trying to explain, he lashed out at me with his fists in front of my neighbours.”

But Ledwaba denies the assault.

“I regret that this happened in the street. I didn’t beat her, it was a minor tiff between people in love,” he says.

malatji@sundayworld.co.za
Media must condemn abuse

MEDIA Monitoring Africa notes with concern the sensationalising and trivialising (apparently for purely entertainment purposes) of gender-based violence in your May 23 article 'Hands of stone' socks baby mama.

Gender-based violence is a very serious and sensitive issue in South Africa, and the media has a responsibility to report on it as such and not in a manner that condones and normalises violence against women.

Even though the rights of women are enshrined in South Africa’s constitution and in a number of laws, violence against women remains a continuing challenge.

It is therefore deeply worrying that this article reports such a serious issue as a “tussle” and reports it so insensitively (through the use of boxing metaphors), and does not highlight the seriousness of the issue. I refer here to the headline as well as the opening lines of the article.

Ethical reporting is critical to highlighting and curbing gender-based violence.

Prinola Govenden
Media Monitoring Africa

Sunday World views the abuse of women and children in a serious light. We concede that our approach to the story could have created the impression that we do not. It definitely was not our intention to trivialise the issue, and we sincerely regret it if such an impression was created. – Editor
Crime & Punishment of media

• Currently Press Code Penalties not good enough: caution, reprimand, correction, retraction, explanation, “hidden apologies”; 

• The ANC Discussion Document 2010 states: “A balance has to be found which is fair and just, and which is in the interest of all and not just the media”. 

• Current ANC Proposal: The Media Appeals Tribunal – not answer because it is a vindictive and limited way to deal poor quality reporting. Cannot clampdown media freedom to punish violations.
Crime & Punishment of media

**Overarching Principles:**

- A system of punishment in line with Constitution;
- Entrench principles of Restorative justice and proportionality;
- Express guiding principles (e.g. correction, retraction etc) needed to guide Ombud. Allow for more tailored & specific ways addressing harm caused.
- Obligation on employers in the Press Constitution to include contractual requirements on journalists to abide by Press Code.
- Punishment must be proportional to harm caused & level of irresponsible journalism;
- Implementation of Fines = a zero sum gain. Do not constructively contribute to the development of responsible reporting. If adopted make system more onerous & bureaucratic.
Crime & Punishment of media

MMA Best Practice Model:

1) Proportionality:
- Criteria based: proportionality + nature infringement + past violations;

2) Restorative Justice:
- *Restorative justice* is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused or revealed by unjust behaviour. Restoration is best accomplished through inclusive and cooperative processes.”
  [www.rjcity.org/the-city/.../definition-of-restorative-justice/]
- E.g. If child’s rights are violated, media can contribute to child’s education or protection or immediate needs.
The Independence of the Press Council

• The ANC has cast doubt as to the independence of the Press Council, Ombudsman and the Appeals Panel.
• The Constitution must be amended to:
  - ensure skills, gender and transformation criteria for Press Council and Appeals Panel appointment;
  - ensure Public Members have suitable and relevant media experience;
  - include procedures for appointment that are transparent and open and include public hearings/ participation particularly when electing Public Members.
  - ensure the independence of the chosen structure to protect against undue government and industry influence;
  - ensure that the Press Council is representative of all who have interest in media not solely of media.
Complaints Procedure

Currently: overly legal, drawn out and disadvantageous to less resourced organisations.

MMA Proposed Areas of Reform:
1) Definition of Complainant too limited;
2) Legal Representation should be limited to Appeals;
3) Complaint Procedure needs to be informal, speedy, cost-effective, open & transparent;
4) Implementation of measures to ensure basis of complaints are clearly set out and understandable;
5) Restorative Justice Principles;
6) Where the Ombudsman rejects a complaint, the procedure should allow for reversal of the waiver against seeking civil relief.
Financial Arrangements Unclear

• Lack of clarity in relation financial arrangements (budget of the Press Council, awareness campaigns etc);

• Press Council: sound financial footing necessary to protect against undue external interference;

• A need for mechanisms to ensure greater transparency and arms-length financial relationship with the industry.
Conclusion

• The effectiveness of print media & its regulation in realizing each citizen’s Constitutional right to receive and impart information is critical;
• Media Appeals Tribunal is not a solution improve quality reporting and better journalism. Potential clampdown media freedom is too great;
• We believe solution is strengthening current self-regulatory system and the Press Code – through amendments to the governing framework.
• Implementation of a system that promotes good journalism.
Thank You

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