

Editorial Complaints to the BBC: October – December 2006

The BBC handled over 23,000 editorial complaints between October and December 2006. These ranged from a small number of complaints about potentially serious breaches of editorial guidelines through to a much larger collection of views about programme content and scheduling.

The key themes which emerged are detailed below:

Offence : There were complaints (most before transmission) that Kelvin MacKenzie was an unsuitable choice of presenter for Radio Five Live's **News Review of The Year**. Complainants referred to comments made in the Sun Newspaper about the Hillsborough disaster in 1989 when Mr MacKenzie was its editor.

There were complaints that some aspects of the television news coverage of Saddam Hussein's execution were in bad taste.

News : A wide range of views were expressed about coverage of the deaths in Suffolk and the language used to describe the victims, particularly references to 'prostitutes' and 'sex workers'.

Bias : There were complaints that the **File On Four / Newsnight** investigation into the radicalisation of British Muslim youth made politically motivated and unfounded allegations against members of Hizb ut-Tahir when the film was shown on Newsnight.

Viewers complained that **Panorama : Sex Crimes and The Vatican** was biased against the Roman Catholic Church.

Sensitivity and Portrayal : A number of viewers were concerned by the negative portrayal of a health visitor in **EastEnders** on 3 October.

Insufficient Coverage : Complaints were received when **Daily Politics Conference Special** switched away from live coverage of William Hague's speech in favour of a studio interview with Michael Howard. The editor of the programme agreed that a poor editorial decision had been made and apologised.

Other Complaints : There were complaints about changes to Radio Five Live's 606 message boards, particularly the Fans Forums.

The BBC's responses to some recent issues can be read at www.bbc.co.uk/complaints.