

Independent Press Standards Organisation
Gate House
1 Farringdon Street
London EC4M 7LG

28 July 2015

Dear Sir,

I am writing in complaint of an article published in the Mail on Sunday on 26 July 2015, '*Welcome to Shadwell: Muslim gang sabotages immigration-raid vans*' (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3174610/Welcome-East-London-Muslim-gang-slashes-tyres-immigration-raid-van-officers-showered-eggs-high-rise.html>)

It is my view that the article is in breach of Clause 1 of the Editors' Code of Practice which requires publications to "take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures".

In the case of this particular article the headline clearly denotes that a "Muslim gang" is responsible for "sabotag[ing] immigration-raid vans".

The article relies upon the testimony of a witness who said "I think they were local Muslim hoodies just doing a prank..."

This degree of speculation is hardly indicative of firm evidence on which to base a headline. There is no corroborating evidence provided to justify the claim. In fact, the article clearly states that "inquiries are ongoing" by Scotland Yard.

The article further refers to various tweets posted about the incident which mock the affair. The tweets emanating from individuals bearing Muslim names is used to justify the headline but none of the tweets substantiate the claims that a "Muslim gang" is responsible for the incident. Indeed, the tweets merely poke fun at what happened.

Moreover, the article refers to the population breakdown of Shadwell noting that "More than half of the population is Muslim according to the 2011 census", as if the demographic profile of the area had a bearing on the identity of those suspected of sabotaging the immigration vans. By this logic, we would be reduced to rehearsing prejudicial arguments, making claims as to the racialisation of criminal profiles based on the ethnic diversity of parts of the UK.

I would welcome the regulator's assessment of my complaint that a breach of Clause 1 has occurred. Newspapers ought to be wary of publishing explicit allegations of guilt or culpability when no evidence can be cited in support of the claims. The impact of such reporting on anti-Muslim prejudice in the UK is palpable.

Yours sincerely,

Sufyan G Ismail.
CEO