

# Do journalists know their own guidelines?

ONO Congress 2024  
Cape Town

Kerstin Dolde

***Frankenpost***

Nordbayrischer  
**KURIER**

***Neue Presse***

***Freies Wort***

***Südthüringer Zeitung***

***Meininger Tageblatt***



# Press law and Federalism

Federalism in Germany has its peculiarities:

- Press law is a state matter
- Every land like Bavaria, Baden-Wuerttemberg or Niedersachsen has it's own press law
- But essentially the basics are the same
- Most state press laws contain regulation on the press's duty of care

For the most part the rule is:

*„The press must check all news with the care required by the circumstances for truth, content and origine before dissemination.“*

And the Bavarian Press Law has the passage:

*„The Press serves the democratic idea.“*

# The German Press Code

- Is drawn up by the Deutscher Presserat (German Press Council) in 1973
- A lot of newspapers are committed to the Press Code – some aren't.
- It is a voluntary commitment
- Reprimand is the most severe form of punishment: it has to be published

# The German Press Code

## Section 2 CARE - is very important

Research is an indispensable instrument of journalistic due diligence. The publication of specific information in word, picture and graphics must be carefully checked in respect of accuracy in the light of existing circumstances. Its sense must not be distorted or falsified by editing, title or picture captions.

Unconfirmed reports, rumours or assumptions must be quoted as such. Symbolic photos must be clearly marked as such.

## GUIDELINE 2.1

### OPINION POLL FINDINGS

When publishing the results of opinion polls, the Press shall give the number of respondents, the date of the poll, the identity of the person or organisation that commissioned it, and the questions asked. At the same time, it must also state whether the results are representative. If the institute was not commissioned to carry out the poll, it should be pointed out that it was implemented at the initiative of the institute itself.

- The German Press Code is an important point by journalists training
- Every journalist knows that the Press Code exist.

-> Unfortunately in daily work a lot of journalists do not know their own rules.

Therefore we have to discuss a lot and sometimes we need the help of lawyers.

Thanks for the  
attention

***Frankenpost***

Nordbayrischer  
**KURIER**

***Neue Presse***

**Freies Wort**

**Südthüringer Zeitung**

**Meininger Tageblatt**