



Newspaper Libel and Registration Act 1881

1881 CHAPTER 60 44 and 45 Vict

An Act to amend the Law of Newspaper Libel, and to provide for the Registration of Newspaper Proprietors. [27th August 1881]

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1 Functions of Board of Trade now exercisable concurrently by Secretary of State: [S.I. 1970/1537, art. 2](#)
- C2 Preamble omitted under authority of [Statute Law Revision Act 1894 \(c. 56\)](#)
- C3 This Act is not necessarily in the form in which it has effect in Northern Ireland
- C4 Act modified (E.W.) (3.1.1995) by [1994 c. 40, ss. 76, 82\(2\), Sch. 16 para. 1\(2\)](#)

1 Interpretation.

In the construction of this Act, unless there is anything in the subject or context repugnant thereto, the several words and phrases herein-after mentioned shall have and include the meanings following: (that is to say,)

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The word “newspaper” shall mean any paper containing public news, intelligence, or occurrences, or any remarks or observations therein printed for sale, and published in England or Ireland periodically, or in parts or numbers at intervals not exceeding twenty-six days between the publication of any two such papers, parts, or numbers.

Also any paper printed in order to be dispersed, and made public weekly or oftener, or at intervals not exceeding twenty-six days, containing only or principally advertisements.

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Status: Point in time view as at 26/05/2015.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act 1881. (See end of Document for details)

The word “proprietor” shall mean and include as well the sole proprietor of any newspaper, as also in the case of a divided proprietorship the persons who, as partners or otherwise, represent and are responsible for any share or interest in the newspaper as between themselves and the persons in like manner representing or responsible for the other shares or interests therein, and no other person.

Textual Amendments

- F1 Words in s. 1 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 3](#)
- F2 Words in s. 1 omitted (1.10.2009) by virtue of [The Companies Act 2006 \(Consequential Amendments, Transitional Provisions and Savings\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1941\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 1 para. 1\(2\)\(b\)](#) (with art. 10)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C5 References to Ireland to be construed as exclusive of Republic of Ireland: S.R. & O. 1923/405 (Rev. X, p. 298: 1923, p. 400), art. 2

2 F3

Textual Amendments

- F3 [S. 2](#) repealed by [Law of Libel Amendment Act 1888 \(c. 64\)](#), [s. 2](#)

3 F4

Textual Amendments

- F4 [S. 3](#) repealed by [Law of Libel Amendment Act 1888 \(c. 64\)](#), [s. 8](#)

4 Inquiry by court of summary jurisdiction as to libel being for public benefit or being true.

A court of summary jurisdiction^[F5]in Northern Ireland], upon the hearing of a charge against a proprietor, publisher, or editor, or any person responsible for the publication of a newspaper, for a^[F6]blasphemous] libel published therein, may receive evidence^{F7}... as to any matter which under this or any other Act, or otherwise, might be given in evidence by way of defence by the person charged on his trial on indictment, and the court, if of opinion after hearing such evidence that there is a strong or probable presumption that the jury on the trial would acquit the person charged, may dismiss the case.

Textual Amendments

- F5 Words in s. 4 inserted (12.1.2010) by [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(c. 25\)](#), s. 182(2)(c), [Sch. 21 para. 67\(a\)](#) (with s. 180)

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- F6** Word in s. 4 inserted (12.1.2010) by Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (c. 25), s. 182(2)(c), **Sch. 21 para. 67(b)** (with s. 180)
- F7** Words in s. 4 repealed (12.1.2010) by Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (c. 25), s. 182(2)(c), (e)(i), (e)(iii), (e)(ix), (e)(v), (e)(vi), (e)(vii), (e)(viii), (e)(x), (e)(xi), (5), Sch. 21 para. 67(c) **Sch. 23 Pt. 2** (with s. 180)

5 **F8**

Textual Amendments

- F8** S. 5 repealed by Criminal Law Act 1977 (c. 45), **Sch. 13**

6 **F9**

Textual Amendments

- F9** S. 6 repealed by Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1933 (c. 36), **Sch. 3**

F107 **Board of Trade may authorise registration of the names of only a portion of the proprietors of a newspaper.**

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Textual Amendments

- F10** Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of Deregulation Act 2015 (c. 20), s. 115(3)(r), **Sch. 23 para. 2**

F108 **Register of newspaper proprietors to be established.**

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Textual Amendments

- F10** Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of Deregulation Act 2015 (c. 20), s. 115(3)(r), **Sch. 23 para. 2**

F109 **Annual returns to be made.**

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Textual Amendments

- F10** Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of Deregulation Act 2015 (c. 20), s. 115(3)(r), **Sch. 23 para. 2**

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F10¹⁰ Penalty for omission to make annual returns.

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Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

F10¹¹ Power to party to make return.

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Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

F10¹² Penalty for wilful mis-representation in or omission from return.

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Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

F10¹³ Registrar to enter returns in register.

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Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

F11¹⁴ Fees payable for registrar's services.

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Textual Amendments

F11 S. 14 omitted (1.10.2009) by virtue of [The Companies Act 2006 \(Consequential Amendments, Transitional Provisions and Savings\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1941\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 1 para. 1\(5\)](#) (with art. 10)

F10¹⁵ Certified copy of material on register to be admissible in evidence

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Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

^{F10}16 Recovery of penalties and enforcement of orders.

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Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

17 **^{F12}**

Textual Amendments

F12 [S. 17](#) repealed by [Statute Law Revision Act 1894 \(c. 56\)](#)

^{F10}18 Provisions as to registration of newspaper proprietors not to apply to newspaper belonging to joint stock company.

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Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 7-18 omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

19 Act not to extend to Scotland.

This Act shall not extend to Scotland.

20 Short title.

This Act may for all purposes be cited as the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act 1881.

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THE SCHEDULES TO WHICH THIS ACT REFERS

^{F13}SCHEDULE A

Section 9.

RETURN MADE PURSUANT TO THE NEWSPAPER LIBEL AND REGISTRATION ACT 1881

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Textual Amendments

F13 [Sch. A](#) omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

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^{F14}SCHEDULE B

Section 11.

RETURN MADE PURSUANT TO THE NEWSPAPER LIBEL AND REGISTRATION ACT 1881

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Textual Amendments

F14 [Sch. B](#) omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 115(3)(r), [Sch. 23 para. 2](#)

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Status:

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Changes to legislation:

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