

Press Freedom Commission, ANC and the little guy



By [Dr. Julie Reid](#)

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Against the backdrop of a shameful fall in South Africa's media freedom rating worldwide, the report of the Press Freedom Commission - the second media freedom review process following the ANC's calls for a media appeals tribunal - was published last week.

Anyone interested in press regulation in South Africa and media freedom in general, will be aware of the main recommendations contained in the Press Freedom Commission report released last week. However, the reality is, while news of the fairly substantial recommendations made by the Press Freedom Commission on how to best reform the South African Press Council garners acute interest from print editors and print media bodies like the SA National Editors' Forum, this news will not and does not interest all that many "people on the ground".

Impressive public consultation

During the first review of South Africa's press regulatory system, the Press Council received a total of 58 submissions from the public, and the second review collected nearly 230 submissions. That kind of public consultation is impressive when you consider that most laws are drafted and adopted in this country without ever reaching the same levels of public input or consultation.

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ABOUT DR JULIE REID

Dr Julie Reid is an academic and media analyst at the department of communication science at Unisa. She tweets about media issues regularly at [@bjreid](#).

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