

# NUJPhoto *Update*

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Welcome to the first **NUJPhoto Update** of 2006 where we review issues debated on the NUJPhoto list in December and talk with **Pamela Morton** the NUJ's new Assistant Freelance Organiser.

## **DECEMBER ISSUES**

**Copyright: Who needs it ?** was the provocative headline in the NUJ's own magazine the *Journalist* which landed on members doormats on the eve of the New Year. Arguing the NUJ should stop fighting to protect the interests of "a handful" of authors and photographers with re-saleable work - whom he labelled "aspiring mini-capitalists and junior globalisation greed merchants" - freelance magazine editor Chris Wheal brought universal criticism on himself by photographers unable to recognise themselves.

A hastily prepared reply was printed below Mr Wheal's piece reminding readers - if they needed to be - that the NUJ should continue to focus on copyright and authors' rights as "the legal foundation for independent free expression".

NUJ policy is to replace copyright with authors' rights which recognises the difference between individual creators and corporations. Individuals hold these rights inalienably, corporations do not and can only negotiate limited licences to use individual creators material.

Do we want a **Photographers Industrial Council** ? If so we need the experience, the ability and the plain common sense of people on NUJPhoto if it is going to work, said Freelance Organiser John Toner.

Photographers encounter a huge range of issues - many more than writers or subs. The Freelance Industrial Council cannot concentrate solely on photographers issues so a Photographers Industrial Council is needed. Stressing that a PIC would require NUJPhoto members willing to sit on the council, John said he expected it to take two years before a first PIC meeting - as motions to ADM 2007 and rule changes would be required.

The great **Photographers' Organiser** debate was revived when it emerged the West of Scotland Freelance Branch had tabled a PO motion for ADM 2006 (Liverpool, 23 - 26 March). The threat to photographers rights evident since 7/7 was cited.

At last year's ADM in Scarborough both full timers and NEC were against the idea of a Photographers' Organiser. There was also a feeling among sectors without an organiser that photographers were not a special case.

But ever increasing capital expenditure set against static rates, competition from citizen journalists and lightening the burden on the Freelance Office are all sound arguments in favour. As is the obligation of the NUJ to protect it's member's interests in a rapidly changing world. A world - it must be stressed - where photographers interests are often more complex, costly, and rapidly changing than in any other sector.

This union only gives to those who show an interest, said one list member. A second NUJPhoto meeting was called for, with the issue of Photographers' Organiser being the only topic !

Not unexpectedly **citizen journalism** continued as a major topic following unprecedented amateur coverage of the Buncefield Oil Disaster of 11 December. It was asked if media organisations should pay for CJ material bearing in mind citizens are merely submitting eye witness accounts of what they saw. The answer was yes, and yes - because, as soon as newspapers see reader's photographs as free material the incentive is there for them to use that instead of paid for professional imagery. With payment comes a level playing field where quality can win. Without payment there is no competition, and the free image gets published.

Despite continuing budget cuts for freelance material by the Nationals, money will always be available for the most

desirable pictures. ALL creators, it was stressed, must stake a claim in their own work, not hand it over for media companies to exploit with distribution technology at their own convenience.

Newspapers are commercial organisations and should be treated as such. Freelance photographers are commercial operations too. Copyright must remain sacrosanct.

In an interview with the *Press Gazette* Freelance Organiser John Toner pointed out that citizen journalists could find themselves liable for costs and damages incurred by the Telegraph Group after *The Daily Telegraph* asked readers to submit mobile phone and digital camera pictures of major news stories they might find themselves involved in.  
[http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/article/011205/telegraphs\\_snap\\_send\\_appeal\\_is\\_highway\\_robbery](http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/article/011205/telegraphs_snap_send_appeal_is_highway_robbery)

Back on NUJPhoto it was suggested the NUJ could begin a campaign to educate the public as to the true value of good CJ images, and to the physical and legal dangers of obtaining them and submitting them whilst assigning all rights to media organisations. Advertisements and letters in the photographic press were thought a good start, as was the submission of features to newspapers and magazines on the downsides of making witness contributions. The printing of information cards for professional photographers to hand out to CJs was also proposed.

It was also explained that NEC had agreed to work with all relevant parts of the union to formulate and circulate guidance for citizen journalists promoting health and safety issues and the NUJ Code of Conduct. The *Witness Contributor (draft) Code of Practice* is going back to the NEC this month

Anyone researching citizen journalism will find the subject is now listed on Wikipedia  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizen\\_journalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizen_journalism)

Following on from the NUJ's **Pay in the Media Summit** (and through no fault of it's own) *The British Journal of Photography* published a piece on low pay with incorrect figures. The correct figures (that should have been supplied

by the union) show an average photographer has to earn at least £21,000 a year - or £109 a day - just to cover costs, before earning a penny for themselves.

To earn the equivalent of £25,000 - the average UK salary in 2005 - the total day rate would need to be about £400.

Despite protests in both Manchester and London, it is believed Guardian Media **shut down** the Manchester entertainment and listings magazine *City Life* with a loss of 13 jobs. Guardian Media claimed the magazine was losing £50,000 a year. It was reported another 35 jobs were to go in Guardian Media's non-editorial departments.

Further break up of the newspaper industry is expected with job cuts at Trinity Mirror and selloffs of journalist's jobs and newspaper titles in the Northcliffe Group in the next few months.

It was also reported that the Press Association approached Trinity Mirror offering to provide photography services in place of some of their existing in-house picture desks.

Perhaps realising that royalty-free is not always the best way to market images the Adobe Corporation joined PLUS, the **Picture Licensing Universal System**. PLUS is a non-profit coalition of companies, associations and experts with a mandate to standardise image licensing by creating a new encodeable language defining image use.

On the PLUS web site Director of Adobe Stock Photos, James Alexander states "Adobe is interested in finding a solution to offer rights-managed imagery within Adobe Creative Suite. Unlike royalty-free images, rights-managed images offer designers more value through usage histories, model releases and the ability to license images for exclusive purposes. Automating this highly negotiated process, however, is complex. We believe PLUS is an important link for bringing key industry players together to deliver a rights-managed solution to market and we are supportive of their efforts."  
<http://www.useplus.com/home.asp>

"This is the NUJ working" were the words used when the **Stop the War Coalition** dropped a £25 charge for NUJ freelancers attending a 10 December press conference following the personal intervention of union General Secretary Jeremy Dear.

Press access should not be governed by financial considerations. However staffers and non-NUJ card holders still had to pay the charge. STW agreed to meet Jeremy and John Toner again to discuss improving media relations.

Following the deaths of 68 Iranian journalists, broadcasters and photographers in a military **plane crash in Tehran** on 6 December the London Freelance Branch unanimously voted for letters of condolence to be sent to Iran by the branch and by Jeremy Dear. NUJPhoto also sent condolences to the Iranian Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and the independent Association of Iranian Journalists.

The NUJ's submission for the **Government Inquiry into New Media and the Creative Industries** has reached the draft stage as we go on-line. The inquiry is to investigate the impact on the creative industries of developments in digital technology and steps that should be taken to provide statutory protection to creators, such as photographers.

The closing date for submissions to the inquiry is 19 January 2006.

## **WHO IS YOUR NEC REPRESENTATIVE ?**

President	TIM LEZARD
Vice President	CHRIS MORLEY
General Treasurer	ANITA HALPIN
Black members	ROTIMI SANKORE, ALEX PASCALL
Book	NICK BARDSLEY
Broadcasting	DIANA PEASEY
Freelance	JOYCE MCMILLAN
Magazines	MARTIN CLOAKE
Newspapers & Agencies	MICHELLE STANISTREET
Public Relations & Information	ANITA HALPIN
New Media	DONNACHA DELONG
Disabled Members	VALERIE SWEENEY, STEPHEN BROOKS
Continental Europe	MINDY RAN
East Anglia	JOHN BARSBY
London	NICK SERPELL, MOLLY COOPER, JIM CORRIGALL, TIM DAWSON, CHRIS MORLEY
Midlands of England	GERRY CARSON, KEVIN COOPER
Northern Ireland	ADAM MURRAY, GEORGE MACINTYRE
North East England	CHRIS FROST
North West England	CHRISTY LOFTUS, KEVIN MOORE, BARRY MCCALL
Republic of Ireland	JAMES DOHERTY, FRANK MORGAN, FORBES McFALL, PETER MURRAY
Scotland	JIM BOUMELHA, ADLI HAWWARI ANDY SMITH
South East England	TIM LEZARD
South West England	MEIC BIRTWISTLE, ANDY COLLINSON
Wales	

For contact details of NEC reps go to  
<http://www.nuj.org.uk/inner.php?docid=112>  
If you are not already logged in to the NUJ site you may need  
to log in at <http://www.nuj.org.uk/login.php> first.

## **WINTER DEADLINES**

**ADM 2006** : the deadline for confirming and amending  
motions is 23 January 2006.

Send all nominations and confirmations to Debbie Smith at  
[debbies@nuj.org.uk](mailto:debbies@nuj.org.uk), fax 020 7278 6617 or post to NUJ,  
Headland House, Gray's Inn Road, London. WC1X 8DP.

Registration of branch and council delegates to ADM  
deadline is also 23 January 2006.

Registration for ADM 2006 will primarily be online. Delegates  
will be responsible for booking, confirming their attendance via  
the web site <http://asp.artegis.com>, and making their own  
travel arrangements.

A password is needed to access the artegis site, possibly from  
Debbie Smith. The NUJ web site is not clear on this.

**Competitions** : the deadline for entries for the 49th World  
Press Photo contest is 12 January 2006. Entries for the  
second DAYS Japan competition are required by 16 January,  
and for the new Press Photographer's Year (organised by the  
BPPA) between 14 and 31 January.

## **WINTER TRAINING**

- Freedom of Information Act, £ 65 : 1 Feb 06
- Getting started as a Freelance, £ 55 : 10 Feb 06
- Adobe Photoshop, £ 205 : 11-12 Feb 06
- Pitch and Deal, £ 65 : 24 Feb 06
- Copyright for Journalists, £ 35 : 1 March 06

To book, and for a full list of NUJ training courses see  
[http://www.nujtraining.org.uk/show\\_courses.phtml?category=calendar](http://www.nujtraining.org.uk/show_courses.phtml?category=calendar). All courses are in London.

## **The NUJPhoto *Update* interview**

**This month NUJPhoto tracked down Pamela Morton, the Freelance Office's new Assistant Organiser. Already known to many members Pamela tells *Pete Jenkins* of hoped for extra support and an expanding role helping freelance journalists and photographers in 2006.**

**PJ:** Hi Pamela, Thanks for agreeing to be interviewed for the benefit of NUJPhoto subscribers.

Many of us know that you have recently been appointed as the Assistant Freelance Organiser of the National Union of Journalists. Some may not realise that you have worked in the Freelance Office for some years. Could you please tell us a little about your history, and how you came to be in the Freelance Office in the first place?

**PM:** After completing a degree and M.A. in History at university, I started working for the NUJ in 1990. I spent a couple of years in both the Finance and Membership departments and was then asked to work for Jacob Ecclestone, the Deputy General Secretary/Freelance Organiser at the time. After Jacob Ecclestone left in 1997, I worked for John Fray, the current DGS, but moved back permanently to the Freelance Office at the start of 2000 to work with Bernie Corbett and then John Toner. For the last nine years, I've also assisted the Minutes department with the NEC and NEC sub-committee meetings and with ADM.

**PJ:** The whole freelance sector has been waiting in anticipation for your appointment. Has the union given you any particular remit?

**PM:** John Toner and I haven't yet had a discussion with management about my remit, but I will be continuing with personal casework for the foreseeable future.

**PJ:** How do you see your new role as we go into 2006?

**PM:** As you know, I'm currently focusing on personal casework. Hopefully, we'll get increased administrative support soon and my role will expand over the next couple of years.

**PJ:** Photographers have been talking again about the possibility of a Photographers' Organiser, and indeed it is up for debate at ADM again this year. Have you any observations to make with regard to the position of photographers within the union and the forthcoming debate?

**PM:** The Motion last year on the Photographers' Organiser produced the most passionate debate at ADM I can remember and I'm sure Motion 90 will this year as well. There is a great deal of organisation amongst photographers, and an increasing numbers of issues that affect them. This will be reflected in the debate at ADM and discussions leading up to the debate. The Freelance Industrial Council has now established a photographers' sub-committee and I think photographers will continue to push for a stronger voice within the NUJ.

**PJ:** Chris Wheal's article in the *Journalist* has come in for a huge amount of criticism, specifically from photographers, many of whom in one way or another rely on copyright to make a living. Do photographers have anything to worry about, or are we making a fuss about nothing as has been suggested in certain quarters?

**PM:** I don't think photographers are making a fuss about nothing, as clearly many people were offended and angered by the article. However, that was one person's opinion. To call members aspiring mini-capitalists and junior globalisation greed merchants is offensive and wrong. Freelance members are simply trying to earn a living in an increasingly difficult working environment. Creators' rights are essential to freelancers. Copyright protection is a major issue for the NUJ and we will continue to support individual member's cases, and try to improve the law in favour of creators.

**PJ:** Thank you for taking the time to talk to us Pamela, and I am sure I speak for the entire list in congratulating you on your appointment. I for one look forward to working with you again in the future.

We hope you found the January 2006 edition of **NUJPhoto Update** a useful supplement to NUJPhoto, and that it will become a catalyst for further debate on list. NUJPhoto *Update* was produced by the moderators and list owner of NUJPhoto.

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