

# Press Release



**South African  
Institute of  
Race Relations**

*South Africa's Leading Research and Policy Organisation*

**For immediate release**

**22 September 2010**

Media Contact: Catherine Schulze  
Tel: 011 482 7221  
E-mail: Catherine@sairr.org.za

**The data below was cited by the Institute in its *Fast Facts* edition for September 2010. It suggests that complaints that the press ombudsman is ineffective and/or biased against the Government and the ANC are groundless.**

1. Between 1st August 2007 and 31st July 2010 the ombudsman received altogether 356 complaints.
2. Only 43 of these (12%) came from the ANC or the government or local authorities or government agencies. This averages out at not much more than one complaint a month. It is a small number for a party which claims to have been so hard done by in the Press that a tribunal has to be set up to regulate it. Some of the complaints were withdrawn or lapsed or could not reveal any contravention of the press code, while some had not yet been finalised when the figures were compiled.
3. Of the 20 cases that were decided upon, two thirds were decided in favour of the ANC or the government and one third against.

The Institute commented, "What these figures reveal is that neither the ANC nor the government has much of a case against the ombudsman. Accordingly there is no basis on which the ANC can argue that self-regulation of the Press does not work. In light of this data the only conclusion to draw on the envisaged media tribunal is that it is part of a wider agenda of extending political control over independent institutions in South Africa."