

Introductory Note by FB

The article below is a further addition to my writings on the use of plain language in legislation. Others are included within the Topic 'Plain language law'. The Topic can be found on this website at www.francisbennion.com/topic/plainlanguagelaw.htm.

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Rod Liddle (Imagine if all our laws were written in plain English, 17 June 2006) is too gullible regarding the Draft Coroners Bill. As a weasel-faced lawyer who has spent long years drafting pernickety (in other words scrupulously accurate) legislation, I can tell him that if he had looked up the Bill on the Government website he would have found out the truth.

In fact the Bill is not, as he alleges, written in two languages, lawyer-speak and a translation of that into plain English. It is written, with the usual clauses and schedules, in one language only. It is accompanied by what the heading calls 'explanatory notes'. The only difference from the normal is that these are rather fuller than usual.

Liddle should remember that a good journalist checks his sources. He certainly doesn't assume that what the Government says can be relied on without verification.

Note Unlike the *New Law Journal* (see 2006.025) *The Spectator*, like *The Times* (see 2006.026), did not do its duty and publish my correction of its misstatement.