



News Release

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COMPETITION COMMISSION PUBLISHES ANNUAL REPORT

The Competition Commission (CC) has published its Annual Report and Accounts for 2009/10.

The report details investigations completed by the CC during the 2009/10 reporting year, including six merger inquiries, as well as a number of the legal challenges faced by the CC during the year.

The report also reveals that the CC reduced staffing costs by 9 per cent during the last financial year and that the latest assessment of the benefits for consumers resulting from the CC's and Office of Fair Trading's work in merger and market inquiries amounts to an estimated benefit to consumers of £627 million a year.

Introducing the report, CC Chairman Peter Freeman acknowledges the increase in legal challenges the CC has faced during the past year:

This was always to be expected and follows naturally from the coincidence of several robust decisions in major cases. ...

Legal challenge is an inherent part of the competition enforcement system and we have absolutely no quarrel with the important role played by the CAT [Competition Appeal Tribunal] and the courts as a whole in making the competition system work effectively. We need, however, to try to keep three considerations in mind; one is that challenges should not be allowed on points that are so marginal or preliminary that it is difficult for us to fulfil our very tight timetables if they were to become routine. Second, and related, is that the level of scrutiny applied by the courts should still leave us the ability to make careful and often difficult assessments on the evidence before us and involving the exercise of our judgement; ... finally, that the overall time taken by the OFT and ourselves combined with the appeal process to the CAT and any subsequent remittal of tasks to us should not take so long that an unacceptable burden is placed on businesses and customers. Avoiding these risks, of course, does not lie in our hands alone.

Notes to editors

1. Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts 2009/10 may be obtained from the CC Information Centre (general inquiries: +44 (0)20 7271 0243). It is also available in PDF format for downloading from our website www.competition-commission.org.uk.
2. The CC is an independent public body which carries out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries.
3. Enquiries should be directed by email to [Siobhan Allen](mailto:Siobhan.Allen@cc.gov.uk) or by ringing on 020 7271 0242.