

GROCERIES MARKET INVESTIGATION

Selection of drive-time software to construct 10-minute drive-time isochrones

1. On 30 April 2010 the Competition Commission (CC) published the Groceries Market Investigation (Controlled Land) Order 2010. Schedule 4 of the Order described a test to be applied by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to Restrictive Covenants and Exclusive Arrangements in accordance with Articles 4 and 7 of the Order. The test requires a 10-minute drive-time isochrone to be constructed around sites subject to a restriction and relevant nearby stores.
2. In the Groceries market investigation [report](#) (the report) the inquiry group said that for consistency and clarity, a standard, readily-available package should be used to construct the isochrones. We investigated drive-time software packages and on 28 April 2009 made a provisional recommendation to the OFT about the software package to be used. We have since received further information from software suppliers about possible alternative solutions for calculating drive-time isochrones.
3. We recognize that the OFT will make the final decision as to which software should be used. That being the case, the OFT considers that it is necessary for it to ensure for itself, following its own procurement procedures, that all software packages on the market that are capable of meeting the criteria set out in the CC's report have the opportunity to be considered, so that it can come to a fully-informed decision. Its procedures for doing this will include drafting a specification, consultation with retailers, a tendering process, and an assessment of the competing software packages.
4. We are not required by the report or the Enterprise Act 2002 to make a recommendation about the drive-time software the OFT should use. Given the OFT's procedures we have decided not make a final recommendation.