

**REFERENCE RELATING TO THE ANTICIPATED ACQUISITION
BY ARRIVA PLC OF THE BUSINESS OF SOVEREIGN BUS & COACH
COMPANY LTD**

**Notice of provisional findings made under Rule 10.3
of the Competition Commission Rules of Procedure**

1. On 3 August 2004, the Office of Fair Trading, in exercise of its duty under section 33(1) of the Enterprise Act 2002 (the Act) referred to the Competition Commission (CC) the anticipated acquisition by Arriva plc of the business of Sovereign Bus & Coach Company Ltd.

Provisional findings

2. The CC inquiry group (the Group) appointed to consider this reference has made the following provisional findings on the statutory questions it has to decide pursuant to section 36(1) of the Act:
 - (a) arrangements are in progress or in contemplation which, if carried into effect, will result in the creation of a relevant merger situation; and
 - (b) the creation of that situation may not be expected to result in a substantial lessening of competition within any market in the United Kingdom for goods or services.
3. The Group's reasons are set out in full in the provisional findings report, a summary of which is attached to this notice (see note below).

The next steps

4. Arriva plc and Sovereign Bus & Coach Company Ltd are now invited to provide the Group with their reasons in writing as to why these provisional findings should not become final (or, as the case may be, should be varied).
5. These reasons should be received by the Group no later than Thursday 23 December 2004
6. The Group will have regard to any such reasons in making its final decisions on the statutory questions and actions.

Diana Guy
Group Chairman
3 December 2004

Note: A copy of this notice and the summary of the provisional findings report will be placed on the CC web site on Friday 3 December 2004. The CC proposes to publish the provisional findings report on its web site by Friday 10 December 2004. The published version of the provisional findings report will not contain any information which the Group considers should be excluded from the report, having regard to the three considerations set out in section 244 of the Act.