

APPENDIX 1.1  
(referred to in paragraphs 1.1, 2.1, 2.10 and 3.2)

## **The reference and background**

1. On 10 July 1997 the Department of Trade and Industry sent to the MMC the following reference:

Whereas the Secretary of State received on 4 July 1997 an application for her consent under section 58 of the Fair trading Act 1973 ('the Act') to the transfer to Mirror Group plc ('Mirror Group'), a newspaper proprietor, of the newspapers specified in the Schedule hereto, of the assets necessary for the continuation of those newspapers as separate newspapers and of plant and premises used in their publication.

Whereas the average circulation per day of publication (calculated in accordance with section 57(3) of the Act) of the newspapers specified in the Schedule hereto together with that of the newspapers of which Mirror Group is already a newspaper proprietor amounts to 500,000 or more copies;

Now, therefore, the Secretary of State, in exercise of her powers under section 59 of the Act, hereby refers the matter of the proposed transfers to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission ('the Commission') for investigation and report on whether any of the transfers in question may be expected to operate against the public interest.

The Commission shall report on this reference within a period ending on 24 September 1997.

10 July 1997

(signed) ANN EGGINGTON  
An official at the Department  
of Trade and Industry

## **SCHEDULE**

### **List of titles to be transferred**

#### **Paid-for Titles**

##### ***Morning Titles***

*The Birmingham Post*

##### ***Evening Titles***

*Birmingham Evening Mail*

*Coventry Evening Telegraph*

##### ***Weekly Titles***

*Sunday Mercury*

*Long Eaton Advertiser/Sandiacre & Stapleford News*

*Nu News*

*Hinckley Times*

*Bedworth Echo*

#### **Free Titles**

##### ***Weekly Titles***

*Birmingham Metronews*

*Sutton Coldfield News*

*Solihull News*

*Solihull Times*

*Walsall Observer*

*Burton Trader*  
*Tamworth & North Warwickshire Times*  
*Cannock Chase Post (including Burntwood Post)*  
*The Lichfield Post (including Rugeley Post)*  
*Stafford Post*  
*The News of Wolverhampton*  
*The News of Willenhall, Wednesbury and Darlaston*  
*Derby Trader*  
*Ilkeston & Ripley Trader*  
*Long Eaton Trader*  
*Loughborough Trader*  
*Loughborough Echo Series (Loughborough Echo, Shepshed Echo)*  
*Loughborough Echo Extra*  
*Coalville and Ashby Echo*  
*Coventry Citizen*  
*Hinckley Herald & Journal*  
*Nuneaton Weekly Tribune*  
*Peterborough Herald & Post (including Oundle Herald & Post)*  
*Stamford Herald & Post*  
*Northampton Herald & Post*  
*Wellingborough & Rushden Herald & Post*  
*Kettering Herald & Post*  
*Corby Herald & Post*  
*Brackley & Towcester Post*  
*Market Harborough Herald & Post*

**Monthly Titles**

*Wot's wot*

2. It came to our notice in the course of the inquiry that details of the titles currently published by MIN differ from those in the Schedule in three respects:

- (a) the *Loughborough Echo* Series are paid-for weekly newspapers rather than free weekly newspapers;
- (b) the free weekly newspapers *Loughborough Trader* and *Loughborough Echo Extra* have been merged and are published, still as a free weekly newspaper, under the title *Loughborough Echo Trader Xtra*; and
- (c) MIN publishes two paid-for titles, the *Sports Argus* and *The Pink*, each Saturday evening, which MIN and Mirror Group regard as editions of the *Birmingham Evening Mail* and the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* respectively.

The implications of these differences for our inquiry are addressed in paragraph 2.10.

3. The composition of the Group of members responsible for the present investigation and report is indicated in the list of members in the preface.

4. Notices inviting interested parties to submit evidence to the MMC were placed in:

<i>Birmingham Evening Mail</i>	<i>Sunday Mercury</i>
<i>The Birmingham Post</i>	<i>Press Gazette</i>
<i>Coventry Evening Telegraph</i>	<i>Campaign</i>

5. In addition, we sought evidence from newspaper publishers, trade and consumer associations, trade unions, local and district councils, chambers of commerce, major advertisers and other interested parties.

6. We received written submissions from Mirror Group and MIN and held hearings with each of them. We also held hearings with the NUJ including The Birmingham Post & Mail Chapel and the

Coventry Evening Telegraph Chapel, the NFRN and MNA.

7. Members of the Group, accompanied by staff, visited Mirror Group's operations at Watford and Canary Wharf and MIN's operations in Birmingham.

8. Some of the evidence obtained in the course of our inquiry was of a commercially confidential nature. Our report contains only such information as we consider necessary for a proper understanding of our conclusions.

9. We should like to thank all those who helped us in our inquiry, particularly Mirror Group and MIN.