



News Release

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CC CONFIRMS CLEARANCE OF TAMINCO ACQUISITION OF AIR PRODUCTS' EUROPEAN METHYLAMINES AND DERIVATIVES BUSINESSES

The Competition Commission (CC) has cleared the proposed acquisition of Air Products' European methylamines and methylamine derivatives business by Taminco NV (Taminco). Following an investigation into the likely effects of the merger the CC has concluded that it will not lead to a substantial lessening of competition in the market for methylamines or their derivatives. This confirms the conclusion of the provisional findings report published on 22 October 2004.

The proposed acquisition was referred to the CC by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) on 16 July 2004.

Christopher Clarke, Chairman of the inquiry group and Deputy Chairman of the CC, commented on the findings:

Having considered the response to our provisional findings report, we see no reason to depart from our initial findings. We therefore conclude that we do not expect the acquisition by Taminco of Air Products' European business in methylamines and derivatives to lead to any substantial lessening of competition.

Our inquiry followed a strategic decision by Air Products in the Spring of 2003 to withdraw from the markets in methylamines and their derivatives in Europe. This led to the closure of its manufacturing plant at Billingham and to the proposed sale of the remaining parts of its business to Taminco. We are satisfied that Air Products will withdraw from these markets come what may, and that their customers, who have not expressed any serious concerns, will not be adversely affected.

The CC's findings are set out in the final report which is published on its web site:

www.competition-commission.org.uk/rep_pub/reports/2004/index.htm

Notes for editors

1. The Enterprise Act 2002 (the Act) empowers the OFT to refer to the CC completed or proposed mergers, either where the merger creates or enhances a 25 per cent share of supply in the UK (or a substantial part thereof) or where the UK turnover associated with the enterprise being acquired is over £70 million.
2. The Taminco/Air Products inquiry group consisted of: Christopher Clarke (Chairman); Robert Bertram; Richard Holroyd; and Professor David Parker. They were supported by the CC's staff.
3. Enquiries should be directed to Francis Royle, Chief Press Officer, on 020 7271 0242 (email: francis.royle@competition-commission.gsi.gov.uk or Rory Taylor on 020 7271 0398 (email: rory.taylor@competition-commission.gsi.gov.uk).