



News Release

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CC FORMALLY CLEARS FOOTBALL POOLS MERGER

The Competition Commission (CC) has formally cleared the anticipated acquisition by Sportech plc (Sportech) of the Vernons football pools business of Ladbrokes plc. Sportech already operates two football pools, Littlewoods and Zetters.

In its final report published today at www.competition-commission.org.uk, the CC has concluded that the acquisition by Sportech of the Vernons football pools business of Ladbrokes plc may not be expected to result in a substantial lessening of competition within any market or markets in the UK for goods or services.

This confirms the CC's provisional findings, which were published in August. See the news release dated 31 August 2007: http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/press_rel/2007/aug/pdf/52-07.pdf.

The merger was referred by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) on 3 May 2007.

Notes for editors

1. The CC is an independent public body, which carries out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries.
2. The members of the Sportech/Vernons inquiry group are: Peter Davis (Group Chairman), Roger Davis, Peter Stoddart and Jonathan Whitarcar.
3. The Enterprise Act 2002 empowers the OFT to refer to the CC completed or proposed mergers for investigation and report which create or enhance 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.
4. The CC has a 24-week period in which it is required to publish its report, which may be extended by no more than eight weeks if it considers that there are special reasons why the report cannot be published within that period. It is required to report by 17 October 2007.
5. Enquiries should be directed to Siobhan Allen on 020 7271 0242 (email siobhan.allen@cc.gsi.gov.uk).