



News Release

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CC CLEARS HEINZ/HP MERGER

The Competition Commission (CC) has formally cleared the completed acquisition by HJ Heinz Company (Heinz) of the HP Foods Group (HP).

In its final report published today, the CC has concluded that the acquisition may not be expected to result in a substantial lessening of competition within the markets for the supply of tomato ketchup, brown sauce, barbecue sauce, tinned baked beans and tinned pasta products in the UK.

This confirms the conclusions of the provisional findings report, which was published on 22 February 2006.

The final report is published on the CC website at www.competition-commission.org.uk/inquiries/ref2005/heinz/index.htm

Both Heinz and HP produce ketchup, brown sauce and barbecue sauce. Heinz also produces baked beans and tinned pasta products, whilst HP-branded baked beans and pasta products are currently produced by Premier Foods plc, under a licence from HP.

Notes to editors

1. The merger was referred by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) on 26 October 2005 and the CC is required to publish its final report by 11 April 2006.
2. 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.
3. The Heinz/HP Foods inquiry group consists of four members: Robert Turgoose (Group Chairman), Chris Goodall, Cosmo Graham and Rob Murray.
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.

5. Further information on the CC and its procedures, including its policy on the provision of information and the disclosure of evidence, can be obtained from its website at: www.competition-commission.org.uk.
6. Media enquiries should be directed to Rory Taylor on 020 7271 0242 (email: rory.taylor@cc.gsi.gov.uk).