



News Release

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CC CONFIRMS CLEARANCE OF ARRIVA/SOVEREIGN MERGER

The Competition Commission (CC) has formally cleared the anticipated acquisition by Arriva plc (Arriva) of the business of Hertfordshire bus operator Sovereign Bus & Coach Company Ltd (Sovereign).

In its final report published today, the inquiry group (by a majority of three to two) has concluded that the merger will not lead to a substantial lessening of competition within any markets for bus services in Hertfordshire.

This confirms the conclusion of the provisional findings report, which was published in December.

The CC's findings are set out in its final report which is published on its web site www.competition-commission.org.uk/inquiries/current/arriva/index.htm.

Notes for editors

1. For more details please see news release dated 3 December 2004 available on the CC web site at: www.competition-commission.org.uk/press_rel/latest/2004/dec/index.htm.
2. The inquiry was referred to the CC by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) on 3 August 2004.
3. The Arriva/Sovereign Group consists of five members—Diana Guy (Chairman), Robert Bertram, Richard Holroyd, David Stark and Robert Turgoose—supported by the CC's staff.
4. The Enterprise Act 2002 empowers the OFT to refer to the CC anticipated or completed 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.
5. To rule that a merger is anti-competitive, there must be a two-thirds majority in favour of this verdict among the CC inquiry group—in this case, a majority of four to one.
6. Enquiries should be directed to Francis Royle, Press Officer, 020 7271 0242, or Rory Taylor on 020 7271 0488/rory.taylor@competition-commission.gsi.gov.uk.