

[News story: CMA proposes market investigation changes](#)

Market investigations are powerful tools that can bring in major changes to make markets work better for consumers and businesses.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) committed, in its Annual Plan, to review the way it conducts them. It took account of experience since they were introduced in the Enterprise Act 2002, and in particular of the CMA's major investigations into energy and banking, as well as legislative changes that came into force in 2014, reducing their time limit from 2 years to 18 months.

The CMA is proposing the following changes to streamline its existing processes and ensure it meets the shorter statutory timescale:

- Increasing interaction with stakeholders at an early stage in the investigation, including holding formal hearings sooner in the process.
- Assessing potential remedies to improve the market at an earlier stage in the investigation.
- Reducing the number of formal publication and consultation stages – removing the Updated Issues Statement, and combining provisional findings and provisional remedies into a single Provisional Decision Report.
- Allowing market studies (a shorter look at the market which can precede market investigations) to carry out preparatory work when they are likely to lead to a full investigation.
- Introducing the option for the CMA board to give an advisory steer on the scope of the market investigation, which is run by an independent group of CMA panel members.

The CMA considers that these proposed changes will enable it to carry out its market investigations more quickly, without reducing their effectiveness. It also believes they will preserve a fair and robust process and independence of decision-making throughout, which is central to the regime. And it thinks that earlier discussion of possible remedies to any competition problems uncovered should ensure a fuller discussion with all parties involved, ensuring the most effective remedies possible.

The document outlining the proposed changes and the resulting changes in the CMA's published guidance, is available on the [consultation page](#).

Interested parties are encouraged to respond to the consultation, which will run until 2 May 2017. Responses should be submitted by email to marketinvestigations-review@cma.gsi.gov.uk or by post to:

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