

# News story: CMA to introduce 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 market investigations were introduced in the Enterprise Act 2002, as well as legislative changes that came into force in 2014, reducing their time limit from 2 years to 18 months.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Acting Chief Executive, said:

We believe these changes will enable us to carry out our market investigations more quickly, without reducing their effectiveness. They will preserve a fair and robust process and independence of decision-making throughout, which is central to the regime.

Having considered comments received, we remain convinced that earlier discussion of potential remedies will allow a fuller discussion with all parties involved and bring real benefits in ensuring the most effective measures possible to make markets work better for consumers and businesses.

[Having consulted on these proposals during March to May](#), the CMA is making the following changes to streamline its existing processes and ensure it meets the shorter statutory timescale:

- Assessing potential remedies to improve the market at an earlier stage in the investigation – following consultation it has clarified various aspects, in particular that updated thinking on potential remedies could be included in working papers (as suggested by some respondents) and that in most cases the CMA is unlikely to start detailed work designing potential remedies at an early stage, but our approach will be tailored depending on the specifics of the case.
- 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.
- Earlier interaction with stakeholders during the investigation, including holding hearings sooner in the process.
- 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 document responding to the comments received and the resulting changes in the CMA's published guidance, are available on the [consultation page](#).