

Written Ministerial Statement by the Secretary of State

On 22 January 2020, DCMS informed the House that my predecessor had issued a Public Interest Intervention Notice (PIIN) in respect of the acquisition by Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT) of JPI Media Publications Ltd, and thus the i newspaper.

The PIIN triggered the requirement for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to report to me on jurisdictional and competition matters, and for Ofcom to report on the following media public interest consideration:

the need for, to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable, a sufficient plurality of views in newspapers in each market for newspapers in the United Kingdom or a part of the United Kingdom.

I received the CMA and Ofcom reports on by the deadline of 13 March and have today published these on the gov.uk website.

I accept the CMA's findings that whilst it is, or may be, the case that a relevant merger situation has been created, the merger does not give rise to a realistic prospect of a substantial lessening of competition in any market.

I have also agreed with Ofcom that the merger does not raise concerns in relation to plurality of views in newspapers.

In light of this, and having considered representations submitted by interested parties in response to the PIIN, DCMS has written to the parties today confirming my decision not to refer the merger for a Phase 2 investigation.

The role of the Secretary of State in this process is quasi-judicial and procedures are in place to ensure that I act independently and have followed a process which is fair and impartial.