



# THE COMPETITION BUREAU

[www.competitionbureau.gc.ca](http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca)



## □ THE COMPETITION BUREAU

The Competition Bureau, as an independent law enforcement agency, ensures that Canadian businesses and consumers prosper in a competitive and innovative marketplace.

Competition is good for both business and consumers. We investigate anti-competitive activities and review other matters to ensure they will not substantially lessen competition.

## □ BENEFITS OF COMPETITION

- Provides consumers with competitive prices and product choices;
- Strengthens businesses' ability to adapt and compete in global markets;
- Makes the economy work more efficiently;
- Gives small and medium-sized businesses a better chance to compete and participate in the economy; and
- Balances the interests of consumers and producers, wholesalers and retailers, dominant players and minor players, the public interest and the private interest.

## □ WHAT WE DO

### • Investigate cartels

A cartel is a group of otherwise independent businesses whose concerted goal is to lessen or prevent competition among its participants. Typically, cartel members enter into an agreement or arrangement to engage in one or more anti-competitive activities, such as rigging bids, fixing prices, allocating markets or customers, or limiting production or supply.

### • Review mergers

Under the *Competition Act*, mergers and proposed mergers of all sizes and in all sectors of the economy are subject to review by the Commissioner of Competition to determine whether they have resulted, or will likely result, in a substantial lessening or prevention of competition. The Commissioner of Competition must be notified of all proposed transactions that exceed certain monetary thresholds. Failure to notify is a criminal offence.

### • Prevent abuse of market power

The size of a business, even one that dominates a particular market, is not, in and of itself, contrary to the *Competition Act*. Businesses may seek to become large to achieve lower production costs or to compete against foreign and domestic competitors. However, when a dominant company exploits its market power in a way that interferes with competition in the marketplace, the *Competition Act* may apply.

### • Ensure truth in advertising

The Competition Bureau promotes truth in advertising in the marketplace by discouraging deceptive business practices and encouraging the provision of sufficient information to enable informed consumer choice.

## □ WE ADMINISTER FOUR LAWS

- The *Competition Act*, a law governing most business conduct in Canada. It contains both criminal and civil provisions aimed at preventing anti-competitive practices in the marketplace.
- The *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*, a law governing the packaging, labelling, sale, importation and advertising of prepackaged products.
- The *Textile Labelling Act*, a law governing the labelling, sale, importation and advertising of consumer textile articles.
- The *Precious Metals Marking Act*, a law governing the marking of articles containing precious metals.

## □ LEGAL ACTIONS

We have the ability to refer criminal and regulatory matters to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who then decides whether to prosecute before the courts. We also have the power to bring civil matters before the Competition Tribunal or the courts, depending on the conduct in question and applicable legal provisions.

## □ WRITTEN OPINIONS

We provide written opinions to businesses seeking to comply with the *Competition Act*. Company officials, lawyers and others may request written opinions on whether the Act could apply to proposed business plans and practices. These opinions are legally binding.

## □ QUESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS

If you believe any of the laws under the Bureau's jurisdiction have been breached, please fill out our online form, call, fax or write.

We are required by law to conduct our investigations in private. We keep the identity of the source and the information provided confidential, subject to certain exceptions.

### For more information:



[www.competitionbureau.gc.ca](http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca)



Toll-free: 1-800-348-5358  
National Capital Region: 819-997-4282  
TTY (for hearing impaired): 1-800-642-3844  
Fax: 819-997-0324



Information Centre  
Competition Bureau  
50 Victoria Street  
Gatineau, QC K1A 0C9

This publication is intended to provide basic information only. To learn more, please refer to the full text of the Acts or contact the Competition Bureau.