

Press release: CMA steps in to give people a better deal on comparison sites

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has published its final report following a market study into the use of price comparison sites and other apps.

The year-long examination found that these sites offer a range of benefits, including helping people shop around by making it easier to compare prices and forcing businesses to up their game.

But where sites are not working in people's best interests, the CMA is taking action. As part of this, it is opening a competition law investigation into how one site has set up its contracts with insurers, because it suspects this may result in higher home insurance prices.

The CMA has also laid down clear ground rules for all sites on issues such as communicating how they plan to use people's personal data and clearly displaying important information like price and product description.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Chief Executive, said:

Our study has found that most people in the UK have used a comparison site at least once so it is vital that everyone gets the benefits they deserve.

The good news is that more than 90% of the people we surveyed were very or fairly satisfied with the sites they used.

But we have also found that improvements are needed to help people get even better deals. We have set out ground rules for how sites should behave, as well as being clear on how regulators can ensure people have a better experience online.

We are also taking enforcement action where we suspect the law may have been broken.

The main recommendations from CMA's final report include:

- All sites should follow our ground rules. They should be Clear, Accurate, Responsible and Easy to use ([CARE](#)).
- All sites should be clear about how they make money; how many deals they're displaying and how they are ordering the results.
- Sites should be clear on how they protect personal information and how people can control its use.
- It should be made as easy as possible for people to make effective

comparisons or use different sites, for example through better information about products.

- All regulators with a stake in this area should work together to ensure people are well protected.

The report also reveals that nearly two-thirds of people using a price comparison site visited more than one when shopping around. This is something the CMA is advising everyone to do if they want to get the best deal.

The CMA will now continue to work with the sector, regulators, and other bodies to ensure its recommendations are understood and taken on board.

Following this report, it will also soon be announcing next steps on consumer protection work in car hire and hotels.

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For CMA updates, follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).
2. The CMA launched its market study into digital comparison tools (DCTs) in September 2016 and published an update on 28 March 2017.
3. The CMA's definition of a DCT is: digital intermediary services used by consumers to compare and potentially to switch or purchase products or services from a range of businesses.
4. For further information on this market study and to view the report, visit the [market study case page](#).
5. Market studies are carried out using powers under section 5 of the Enterprise Act 2002 (EA02) which allows the CMA to obtain information and conduct research. They allow a market-wide consideration of both competition and consumer issues. Market studies take an overview of regulatory and other economic drivers in the market and consumer and business behaviour.
6. For further information on the CMA's competition law investigation into one comparison site visit the [investigation case page](#).
7. The CMA's competition law investigation is being carried out under the CMA's powers under Part I of the Competition Act 1998.
8. Media queries should be directed to press@cma.gsi.gov.uk, on 020 3738 6337.

[Press release: 200 miles and countless tests: Porton Man three years on](#)

Three years after it arrived, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory's

(Dstl) Porton Man is proving its pioneering value by helping to shape the way the UK and the US develop the latest in suited protection against chemical and biological (CB) warfare.

The life-size robot mimics the movement of a serviceman in combat. Built using lightweight materials developed for Formula One racing cars, it can walk, march, run, sit, kneel and lift its arms to sight a weapon like an infantry soldier.

Based at Dstl's Porton Down site in Wiltshire, it is the only robot of its kind in the world that can carry out real-time tests. This enhanced capability allows scientists can assess chemical penetration through materials as it happens during exposure in a specially designed contained chamber.

Dstl scientists say this model of Porton Man is a step change in technology and while a number of similar systems exist around the world, they are unable to conduct live agent chemical warfare agent tests.

The model has initiated a close working relationship with US Department of Defence resulting in Porton Man now being used by the US to support Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) programmes.

Dr. Terrence G. D'Onofrio is a US Scientist who has been working with the Dstl team for the last two years, says: "The ability to measure cumulative and real-time breakthrough of actual chemical agent through a whole-system protective ensemble is a critical advancement for protecting our forces. Such a capability is an important opportunity to expand international collaboration, promote interoperability of equipment between the nations, and assist with burden sharing of research, testing, and evaluation".

Since its introduction Porton Man has run over 200 miles, carried out an extensive number of trials and has been exposed to various chemical warfare agents.

Chemical and biological warfare is very much still a world-wide threat; historically, older Porton Man models helped introduce the current UK in-service CBR suits (MK4a). This new Porton Man has now been involved in an extensive number of chemical warfare trials and is providing 'never seen before' results, which will inform design of the next generation of CBR protection.

[Porton Man video](#)

[Press release: Foreign Secretary](#)

statement on Kurdish referendum

Commenting on the referendum being held in the Kurdish Region of Iraq, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The UK does not support this referendum and continues to back the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. We believe that any referendum should be agreed with the Government of Iraq.

With our international allies, we proposed an alternative plan which would have seen negotiations take place between the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to address all issues of dispute. This alternative would have given the opportunity for the aspirations of the Kurdish people to be met. It is regrettable that a part of the Kurdish leadership rejected the proposal.

The long-term security and prosperity of Iraq and Iraqis can only be met through dialogue and cooperation. I urge all sides to refrain from provocative statements and actions in the aftermath of the referendum. The priority must remain the defeat of Daesh and returning stability to liberated areas.

Further information

News story: Apply to the Attorney General's Civil Panel Counsel

The competition to refresh the London C panel is now open.

Members of the C panel will be expected to have at least 2 years' experience in actual practice (from end of second 6 months' pupillage for barristers or date of commencement of advocacy for solicitors).

Appointments will be for 5 years. Those appointed to the C panel will often provide (but not exclusively) the A and B panel members of the future and so should have the potential to join the A panel.

There are vacancies on the panel in all areas of public and private law. The

Attorney General is particularly looking to deepen capacity in:

Application

For details about the eligibility requirements and the application process, read the [Junior Counsel to the Crown The Attorney General's London Panels Information for applicants 2017](#) (PDF, 79KB, 9 pages) .

To apply, you must first email PanelCounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk and register an interest. Please note that registering an interest does not commit you to making an application if you later decide not to do so.

Once you have registered, you will be given a link to access our online portal and download the application pack.

Completed applications must be submitted by midday on Tuesday 31 October 2017.

Further information and mentoring

If you have any queries, contact the Government Legal Department Panel Counsel team via email panelcounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk or on 020 7210 1506.

We encourage applications from a wide range of those eligible to apply. Therefore we will put advocates who want to discuss the application process for the C Panel in touch with an established Panel member as a mentor. The mentor will discuss the application process, the eligibility criteria and the presentation of relevant information on the application form either by telephone or in person.

If you are considering applying and want a mentor, please contact the Government Legal Department Panel Counsel team, via email anna.rickard@governmentlegal.gov.uk before 5pm on 6 October 2017.

[News story: David Davis' opening remarks at the start of the fourth round of EU exit negotiations](#)

Thank you Michel.

I'm pleased to be back in Brussels with you for the fourth round of negotiations.

We expect this to be a busy week. One that will set us on the important path

towards our future partnership. The Prime Minister's speech on Friday set out clearly the leadership and flexibility needed to make a success of these negotiations.

This round, for me, will be about building on the technical work done in previous rounds and the concrete proposals provided by the speech in Florence. It will be now for our teams to work through those details this week.

On Citizens' Rights we will incorporate the agreement fully into UK law and take steps to ensure consistent interpretation. We hope to make progress on issues like the onward movement of UK citizens in the EU, and voting rights in local elections. We both want to avoid changes to the way citizens enjoy their rights and our proposals will deliver that.

On Northern Ireland and Ireland we made good progress at the last round, as you said, with a common desire to maintain the Common Travel Area and protect the Good Friday Agreement. This week will now be about crunching through the technical detail of how we, together, make that happen.

On the financial settlement, as part of a smooth and orderly exit, we do not want our EU partners to worry that they will need to pay more or receive less over the remainder of the current budget plan as a result of our decision to leave. The UK will honour commitments we have made during the period of our membership.

But it's obvious that reaching a conclusion on this issue can only be done in the context of and in accordance with our new deep and special partnership with the EU.

So the UK is absolutely committed to work through the detail.

We are laying out concrete proposals and there are no excuses for standing in the way of progress.

It will take pragmatism on both sides to make headway, and I hope we can achieve that this week.

Thank you.