

Metallurgy firms abandon merger during CMA investigation

Press release

The CMA no longer intends to refer the merger of TTI and Tronox to an in-depth investigation, after Tronox's announcement to abandon the deal.



Tronox and TiZir Titanium and Iron (TTI) are involved in the supply of materials used in the production of titanium dioxide, a white powder used in every-day items such as paint, sunscreen, paper and plastics. TTI is one of the 2 main global suppliers of chloride slag, one of the most important minerals used to make titanium dioxide pigment, and Tronox is one of the main producers of titanium dioxide pigment.

In its initial Phase 1 investigation, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) found that Tronox intends to use all of TTI's chloride slag in its own production of titanium dioxide and halt future sales of chloride slag to third parties. This would leave Rio Tinto, TTI's main chloride slag competitor, with what is effectively a monopoly position.

The CMA found that the removal of TTI as a main competitor from the market could significantly limit customer supply and lead to higher prices for chloride slag globally, as well as for titanium dioxide in the UK and Europe. Although other minerals are available to make titanium dioxide, the CMA found that customers have limited substitutes for chloride slag.

The CMA subsequently announced it would proceed to refer the deal to an in-depth Phase 2 investigation as undertakings offered by Tronox were not a clear-cut solution to the competition concerns identified. The CMA will now not refer the deal for an in-depth Phase 2 investigation, subject to appropriate assurances from the parties that the transaction has been abandoned.

More information is available on the [Tronox Holdings / TiZir merger inquiry page](#).

For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.

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37th Universal Periodic Review: UK statement on Micronesia

World news story

The UK delivers statement on Micronesia at the 37th Session of Universal Periodic Review (UPR), sharing recommendations to improve their human rights record.



Universal Periodic Review takes place in Geneva.

Thank you, Madam President,

The United Kingdom appreciates the Federated States of Micronesia's continued participation in the UPR process. We commend [the Federated States of] Micronesia's efforts to implement the recommendations from its last review, despite capacity and resource constraints, and we welcome the ongoing consultation with civil society in this process.

The United Kingdom commends [the Federated States of] Micronesia on the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We further welcome the Government's preparation of a report into the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and encourage further action in this regard.

The United Kingdom acknowledges the challenges facing [the Federated States of] Micronesia in their efforts to address their human rights obligations, especially in the face of the growing impact of climate change, and we

encourage the Government to draw on available international technical assistance and expertise in this area.

We recommend the Federated States of Micronesia;

Thank you, Madam President.

Published 18 January 2021

New 'Nightingale Court' opens at University of Hull

- new temporary Nightingale court opens in Hull
- 36 additional court rooms are now open with more to come
- part of government's plan to ensure justice continues to be served throughout pandemic

The new site will be in the recently revamped, Victorian-era Canham Turner building. It will provide an extra courtroom that will hear civil and family cases – providing additional capacity at Hull Crown Court.

Temporary 'Nightingale' courts, have been set up across the country to enable more socially distanced trials to take place, ensuring justice continues to be served.

This is because more space is required than was previously the case due to the need to keep everyone distanced in the buildings – such as jurors, witnesses, court staff, legal professionals and judges.

Courts Minister, Chris Philp MP, said:

I am grateful to Hull University for joining the national effort to reduce delays and deliver speedier justice for victims in Humberside.

This is having a real impact and the number of crown court cases being heard across England and Wales is now back up to what it was before the pandemic struck last Spring. We are also cutting backlogs in the magistrates' courts where most cases are heard.

The move forms part of a £110 million investment to deliver 40 Nightingale court rooms and funds a range of measures to address the number of outstanding cases.

These efforts will be supported by an extra £337 million announced in the recent Spending Review to deliver swifter justice and support victims, while £76 million will further increase capacity in family courts and tribunals

Further sites in Staffordshire and Cirencester are expected to open later this month, bringing the total number of temporary court rooms set up nationwide to 40.

These form part of wider measures designed to keep the justice system moving and ensure the quickest possible recovery – including the recruitment of 1,600 more court staff, rolling out further technology, and installing temporary jury rooms across the country to enable more trials to be heard safely.

These measures are beginning to show positive results:

- Since August, we have been sitting additional magistrates' court sessions on a Saturday, amounting to around 100 extra sessions a month, and these courts have cleared over 3,000 cases. During this time, magistrates' courts have been consistently completing more cases than they have received, and the outstanding caseload is therefore reducing.
- More jury trial rooms open every week, with more than 290 courtrooms being assessed as capable and available to hold jury trials.
- Plexiglass screens have been installed in more than 400 court rooms and jury deliberation rooms, enabling more jury trials to be heard.

Meanwhile, a [major £153 million investment across the courts system](#) announced in July 2020 will speed up technological improvements and modernise court rooms.

Notes to editors

1. More than £110 million is being invested in a range of measures to tackle the impact of COVID-19, including the recruitment of 1,600 additional staff and opening more Nightingale courts
 2. We're also spending £153 million to improve court and tribunal buildings – the biggest single investment in court estate maintenance for more than 20 years
 3. This progress will be bolstered by an extra [£337 million the government is spending next year](#) to deliver swifter justice and support victims, while an additional £76 million will further increase capacity in family courts and tribunals
 4. [Details on measures to keep courts safe, secure and clean](#)
 5. More details on the [Nightingale court rooms in operation](#)
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[UK Government helps more than 90,000 businesses in Scotland](#)

- More than 86,000 loans worth more than £3.4 billion have been offered under the Bounce Back Loans Scheme
- More than 4,000 loans worth £982 million have been offered under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme
- 142,000 people in Scotland have benefitted from the self-employment income support scheme

Businesses in Scotland benefitted from more than £3.4 billion of UK Government-backed loans to protect and support jobs across the region, new data reveals today.

More than 86,000 loans have supported businesses across all sectors,

protecting jobs. But the retail and construction sectors have benefitted the most, demonstrating how UK Government support helped those businesses that were impacted hardest by the pandemic.

Similarly, the self-employment income support scheme has benefitted business people across all sectors, with 142,000 people in Scotland benefitting from SEISS, with an average claim of £2,500.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said:

Throughout this crisis, we have provided more than £280 billion of support to protect jobs and livelihoods up and down the country.

We are committed to continuing to ensure jobs are protected and opportunity is created.

Companies across Scotland have benefitted from support through government-backed loans, including engineering animation consultants, Cadherent, based in Aberdeen.

David Thomson, managing director of Cadherent said:

The availability of CBILS has been a huge help to our business during this crisis. The scheme has allowed us to take stock as the situation has evolved, without making knee-jerk decisions.

Without the loan, we'd certainly have been forced to take a far more cautious approach in the short term while the markets settle. This would have meant some employees losing their jobs and the business having to immediately stop any spending within its supply chain.

Scottish Secretary, Alister Jack said:

Throughout the pandemic, the UK Government has taken quick and unprecedented action to protect jobs and support businesses in Scotland.

Today's figures speak for themselves, over 90,000 businesses across Scotland have benefitted from £3.4 billion in UK-Government backed loans providing a vital lifeline and certainty to plan for the months ahead.

This is just part of a package of UK Government support for businesses which also includes the furlough scheme, now extended to April, self-employed income scheme and VAT cuts for our hospitality and tourism sectors.

We have also given the Scottish Government an additional £8.6

billion of upfront funding this year to help them respond to the pandemic with the good news last week that some of this money is now finding its way to businesses.

As we continue to see throughout this pandemic, the strength of the Union and support offered by the UK Treasury has never been more important.

At the start of Winter, the Chancellor announced that more than a million businesses who took out a Bounce Back Loan will now receive further protection from the Covid crisis through flexible repayments, under the new Pay as You Grow system, which gives businesses more time to repay. Since then, the UK Government has extended the loans schemes until March, and given businesses the ability to 'top-up' their loans if they need to.

The UK Government has invested more than £280 billion throughout the pandemic to protect millions of jobs and businesses, including extending the self-employed and furlough schemes through to April to give businesses the certainty they need to plan over the coming months.