

CMA launches investigation into recycling of cars and vans

Press release

The CMA has launched an investigation into suspected anti-competitive conduct in relation to the recycling of old or written-off vehicles.



The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has reason to suspect anti-competitive behaviour has taken place involving a number of vehicle manufacturers, and some industry bodies. This conduct relates to arrangements for recycling old or written-off vehicles, specifically cars and vans, which are known in the industry as ‘end-of-life vehicles’ or ELVs.

ELVs are vehicles that are categorised as waste, generally due to age-related failure or accident, and regulation requires these vehicles to be disposed of in a sustainable way. Vehicle manufacturers must offer their customers a free service for recycling ELVs, a service manufacturers often outsource to third parties.

The CMA is working closely with the European Commission, which has also launched an investigation into this matter today.

Following a period of investigation and information gathering, the CMA may issue a statement of objections if it comes to the provisional view that competition law has been infringed. At this stage, no assumptions should be made about whether competition law has been broken.

This investigation reflects the CMA’s commitment – outlined in its [draft Annual Plan 2022 to 2023](#) – to prioritise promoting environmental sustainability through effective competitive markets.

Further detail of the CMA’s [procedures in competition cases is available in its guidance](#), and any updates to this investigation will be made via the dedicated web page: [Suspected anti-competitive conduct in relation to the recycling of end-of-life vehicles](#).

1. The competition legislation relevant to the CMA's investigation is the Competition Act 1998. The Chapter I prohibition of the Competition Act 1998 prohibits agreements, concerted practices and decisions by associations of undertakings which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the UK or a part of it and which may affect trade within the UK or a part of it unless they are excluded or exempt.
2. The CMA will normally publish the names of the parties under investigation as soon as possible when a formal investigation is opened, other than in exceptional circumstances, such as where doing so could, in the CMA's view, prejudice a CMA investigation or an investigation of one of the CMA's enforcement partners. In this case, the CMA will not be naming the parties under investigation at this stage, but would usually do so at a later stage of the investigation, or if a statement of objections is issued.
3. There is no legal deadline to complete inquiries under the Competition Act 1998. As with all its work, the CMA will progress this investigation at pace whilst ensuring a robust and detailed review is conducted and parties' rights of defence are respected.
4. Under the CMA's leniency policy, a business that has been involved in certain types of anti-competitive conduct may be granted immunity from penalties or a significant reduction in penalty in return for reporting cartel activity and assisting the CMA with its investigation. Individuals involved in cartel activity may also be granted immunity from criminal prosecution for the cartel offence under the Enterprise Act 2002 and from director disqualification. The CMA also operates a rewards policy under which it may pay a financial reward of up to £100,000 in return for information which helps it to identify and take action against illegal cartels. For more information on the [CMA's leniency policy](#) and the [CMA's informant reward policy](#).
5. Anyone who has information about a cartel is encouraged to call the CMA cartels hotline on 020 3738 6888 or email cartelshotline@cma.gov.uk.
6. All enquiries from journalists should be directed to the CMA press office by email on press@cma.gov.uk or by phone on 020 3738 6460.
7. All enquiries from the general public should be directed to the CMA's General Enquiries team on general.enquiries@cma.gov.uk or 020 3738 6000.

British Embassy and local community combat climate change together

World news story

The British Embassy in Ashgabat worked with local volunteers to plant 80 trees.



British Embassy staff were delighted to join friends and volunteers from the local community to celebrate the arrival of spring together by planting over 80 trees outside the Embassy. Those helping with this climate change initiative included Ashgabat youth groups, members of the Support Centre for Persons with Disabilities, and Public Organisation Yenme. British Ambassador Lucia Wilde said:

It was a real pleasure to work side-by-side with the future generation of the country, all of us equally contributing to make a difference to the major challenge facing our planet. It was a pleasure and a privilege to meet such talented, friendly and dedicated young people and I look forward to meeting them again.

Climate change affects us all. We can all take steps to address the problem. Even planting and looking after a single tree will help in the fight against climate change.

A single tree can absorb as much as 22kg of carbon each year, potentially keeping it locked up in its wood and roots for decades or even centuries to come. On average, one tree produces almost 118kg of oxygen every year.

We hope that our small efforts will help supplement tree planting programmes and other national actions planned across Turkmenistan to tackle climate change.

Frankie Smith has prison sentence increased

News story

The mother of Star Hobson has had her sentence increased after the Attorney General referred her case to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.



The mother of Star Hobson has had her prison term increased after the Attorney General, the Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP referred her original sentence to the Court of Appeal as unduly lenient.

Frankie Smith was convicted of causing or allowing the death of her 16-month-old daughter, Star Hobson. Star Hobson was murdered by Frankie Smith's partner, Savannah Brockhill on 22 September 2020.

On 15 December 2021, Frankie Smith was sentenced at Bradford Crown Court to 8 years' detention. At the same hearing, Savannah Brockhill was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 25 years for the murder of Star Hobson.

The Attorney General referred Frankie Smith's sentence to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme. On 15 March the Court of Appeal found her original sentence to be unduly lenient and increased it to 12 years' detention.

Speaking after the judgment, the Attorney General said:

This is a tragic and extremely upsetting case and my thoughts are with all those who loved Star Hobson. This case involved prolonged cruelty and neglect, deliberate disregard, and a failure to take

any steps to protect or seek assistance for her before and after her murder. No sentence can reverse this tragedy, but I welcome the decision to reflect the gravity of this offending by increasing the sentence today.

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[Scottish Secretary responds to March Labour Market Statistics](#)

News story

As new ONS figures show Scotland's unemployment rate decreasing, Scottish Secretary Alister Jack says the UK Government is continuing to help people into work.



Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

“There are some encouraging signs in today’s employment figures, and while we should not be complacent, our economy is proving resilient.

“The UK Government is helping people right across the country get into work and progress. This is part of our vision to level up all parts of the UK, driving economic growth and creating opportunities for everyone.”

Background

Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that Scotland’s unemployment rate has decreased by 0.3 percentage points compared with the previous quarter. Scotland’s labour market has strengthened over the past 12 months, with the employment rate at 74.1 per cent.

[New measures to tackle corrupt elites and dirty money become law](#)

The new Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act received Royal Assent in the early hours of this morning (15 March), following an expedited passage through Parliament.

Introduced following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the new legislation will mean the government can move more quickly to impose sanctions against oligarchs already designated by our allies, as well as intensifying our sanctions enforcement. The Foreign Secretary will set out further sanctions made possible by our new powers later today.

A new Register of Overseas Entities, requiring those behind foreign companies which own UK property to reveal their identities, will also be created under the act. Entities who refuse to reveal their 'beneficial owner' will face tough restrictions on selling the property and those who break the rules could face a fine of up to £2,500 per day or up to 5 years in prison. This will be a valuable tool for law enforcement agencies in investigating suspicious wealth. Companies House will now begin work to implement the register as quickly as possible, working closely with the UK's 3 land registries. Any foreign company selling properties between 28 February and the full implementation of the register will also be required to submit their details at the point of sale.

Reforms to Unexplained Wealth Orders (UWOs) will remove key barriers to their use, increasing time available to law enforcement to review material provided in response to a UWO and protecting them from incurring substantial legal costs if they act reasonably in a case that is ultimately unsuccessful.

Furthermore, UWOs will be more effective against those who hold property in the UK via trusts and other complex ownership structures. The government has also committed to publishing an annual report on their use.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

This government has moved quickly to strengthen our response to Putin's cronies and ensure that corrupt elites have nowhere to hide their dirty money in the UK.

We will continue to work with our international partners to take the strongest possible action against those who enable this

unprovoked aggression towards Ukraine.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

There is absolutely no room for illicit finance in the UK, and by bringing forward this Economic Crime Act at unprecedented speed we've put Putin, and the corrupt elites propping him up, on notice.

Our new Register of Overseas Entities, the first of its kind in the world, will have an immediate dissuasive effect on oligarchs attempting to hide their ill-gotten gains, ensuring that the UK is a place for legitimate business only.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said:

Our Economic Crime Act will enable us to crack down harder and faster on dirty money and those who support Putin and his regime.

We are using all of our financial might to send a clear message to the Kremlin that this criminal venture will end in total failure.

These measures form part of a wider package of legislative proposals to tackle illicit finance which will be introduced in Parliament in the coming months, including reforming Companies House and introducing new powers to seize crypto assets more easily.

The Prime Minister also announced a new 'Kleptocracy Cell' based in the National Crime Agency, which has been created to target sanctions evasion and corrupt Russian assets hidden in the UK.

The Home Secretary will attend the inaugural ministerial Russian Elites Proxies and Oligarchs Task Force on Wednesday. This meeting will bring together finance and justice and home affairs ministers from the G7, EU and Australia responsible for the supervision of sanctions and enforcement work. The task force aims to ensure the effective implementation of financial sanctions on Russian elites and oligarchs to further drive collective efforts to tackle Kremlin-linked illicit finance.