

CMA investigates Google and Meta over ad tech concerns

- CMA and European Commission launch parallel probes into Google and Meta's "Jedi Blue" agreement.
- CMA Chief Executive says: "We will not shy away from scrutinising the behaviour of big tech firms while we await powers for the Digital Markets Unit."

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is focusing on whether the companies restricted or prevented the uptake of header bidding services and whether Google also affected the ability of other firms to compete with its products in this area.

Header bidding is a service which allows sellers, such as news publishers, to offer their online advertising space to multiple buyers at the same time, rather than receiving offers one by one. As a result, buyers – or advertisers – compete against each other for ad space and publishers can compare bids from multiple buyers simultaneously. This competition between buyers can make auctions more competitive.

As part of its investigation, the CMA will consider whether an agreement between Google and Meta (previously Facebook) – which Google internally codenamed "Jedi Blue" – broke the law. The CMA is also scrutinising Google's conduct in relation to header bidding services more widely to see if the firm abused a dominant position and gained an unfair advantage over competitors trying to provide a similar service.

The European Commission (EC) has launched its own probe into the agreement between Google and Meta and the agreement is also the subject of a complaint by the State of Texas (and other US States) currently in the US courts. The CMA will seek to work closely with the EC as the independent investigations develop.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Chief Executive, said:

We're concerned that Google may have teamed up with Meta to put obstacles in the way of competitors who provide important online display advertising services to publishers.

If one company has a stranglehold over a certain area, it can make it hard for start-ups and smaller businesses to break into the market – and may ultimately reduce customer choice.

We will not shy away from scrutinising the behaviour of big tech firms while we await powers for the Digital Markets Unit, working closely with global regulators to get the best outcomes possible.

As this is only the start of the CMA's investigation, no decision has been made on whether Google or Meta have broken the law.

This case follows on from the CMA's [market study into online platforms and digital advertising](#), which considered Google's position in relation to header bidding services and the wider "ad tech stack" – of which header bidding services is a part. The CMA has also received complaints in relation to Google's conduct in this area.

The government has recently proposed powers for the Digital Markets Unit which will sit within the CMA. This unit will ultimately be responsible for deciding which 'big tech' firms face legally enforceable codes of conduct to govern their behaviour.

In the meantime, the CMA is pressing ahead with its probes into [Apple's App Store](#), [Meta's use of data](#) and [Apple and Google's mobile ecosystems](#) over competition concerns. It [recently accepted commitments from Google](#) relating to its proposed removal of third-party cookies from the Chrome browser. The CMA has adopted a joined-up approach across all related cases to ensure the best outcomes for customers and other businesses.

Find out more about this investigation [on the case page](#).

Notes to Editors

1. The competition legislation relevant to the CMA's investigation is the Competition Act 1998. This case concerns both the Chapter I prohibition (which makes agreements illegal where they have the object or effect of restricting competition) and the Chapter II prohibition (which makes it illegal for a company that holds a dominant position from behaving to the detriment of competition): a) For Chapter I, the case includes both Google and Meta (previously Facebook), and the agreement between them; b) For Chapter II, the case concerns only Google's behaviour, including the agreement it entered into with Meta.
2. The CMA may launch an investigation under the Competition Act 1998 if it has reasonable grounds to suspect that there has been an infringement of competition law. If the CMA decides that Google or Meta breached competition law, it can impose a fine up to 10% of the company's worldwide turnover, as well as issue legally binding directions to bring the breach to an end.
3. "Google" refers to Google UK Limited, Google LLC and Alphabet Inc and "Meta" refers to Facebook UK Limited, Meta Platforms Ireland Limited and Meta Platforms, Inc.
4. Ad tech is used in the sale of online advertising. A series of tools have been developed and sold to help intermediate the sale of online

advertising between sellers (publishers, like newspapers and news websites) and buyers (advertisers). Header bidding is a service within the ad tech stack which emerged from around 2015 and was widely adopted. Google has a strong position at each part of the ad tech stack. More information can be found in the [CMA's final report for its market study into online platforms and digital advertising](#).

[Environment Agency 'minded to' issue Westbury incinerator permit](#)

Press release

A new consultation has launched as the Environment Agency is 'minded to' issue a permit to operate a new energy from waste incinerator in Westbury.



After reviewing more than 600 comments and all the evidence, the agency said it is 'minded to' issue an environmental permit to Northacre Renewable Energy Ltd to operate an incinerator and burn non-hazardous waste at Northacre Industrial Estate, Stephenson Road, Westbury.

'Minded to' means the agency is satisfied that the appropriate measures are in place to operate the incinerator without causing harm to the environment or human health and, after exploring the issues and concerns that have been raised, it cannot find any reason to refuse the application.

Two documents have been produced which can be commented on as part of the consultation: the draft decision document and the draft permit. The draft decision document explains the agency's thought process and how it has taken on board the comments received in the first consultation. The draft permit outlines the conditions the operator would have to meet.

The draft decision and draft permit, along with other previously available documents, are available on

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/ba13-4we-northacre-renewable-energy-limited-1/> Responses can be made via the website or by email to pscpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk quoting application number EPR/CP3803LV/A001 in any correspondence. Paper copies can be obtained by contacting the Environment Agency's Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506. A charge may be made to cover copying costs.

Comments must be received by 11.59pm on 22 April 2022.

Please note only issues covered by the environmental permit can be considered in this consultation.

All comments will be reviewed before a final decision is made on whether to grant a permit.

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[Foreign flagged ships detained in the UK during February 2022 under Paris MOU](#)

During February, there were five new detentions of a foreign flagged vessel in a UK port.

1. In response to one of the recommendations of Lord Donaldson's inquiry into the prevention of pollution from merchant shipping, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) publishes details of the foreign flagged vessels detained in UK ports each month.
2. The UK is part of a regional agreement on port state control known as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU) and information on all ships that are inspected is held centrally in an electronic database known as THETIS. This allows the ships with a high risk rating and poor detention records to be targeted for future inspection.
3. Inspections of foreign flagged ships in UK ports are undertaken by surveyors from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. When a ship is found to be not in compliance with applicable convention requirements, a deficiency may be raised. If any of their deficiencies are so serious, they have to be rectified before departure, then the ship will be detained.

4. All deficiencies should be rectified or in agreed class/ flag condition before departure.

Notes on the list of detentions:

- Full details of the ship: The accompanying detention list shows ship's International Maritime Organisation (IMO) number which does not change throughout the ship's life and uniquely identifies it. It also shows the ship's name and flag state at the time of its inspection.
- Company: The company shown in the vessel's Safety Management Certificate (SMC) or if there is no SMC, then the party otherwise believed to be responsible for the operation of the ship at the time of inspection.
- Classification society: The list shows the classification society responsible for classification of the ship only.
- Recognised organisation: Responsible for conducting the statutory surveys and issuing statutory certificates on behalf of the flag state.
- White (WL), grey (GL) and black lists (BL) are issued by the Paris MoU on 01 July each year and shows the performance of flag state.
- Deficiencies: The deficiencies listed are the ones which were detainable. Further details of other deficiencies can be provided on request.

SHIPS DETAINED IN FEBRUARY 2022

Vessel Name: GAS SPIRIT

GT: 3678

IMO: 9249697

Flag: Marshall Islands (white list)

Company: Stealth Maritime Corp SA

Classification society: Lloyd's Register

Recognised organisation: Lloyd's Register

Recognised organisation for ISM Doc: Lloyd's Register

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: Lloyd's Register

Date and place of detention: 3rd February 2022 at Teesport

Summary: Thirteen deficiencies with five grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Unsafe	Yes
02108 – Electrical installations in general	Unsafe	Yes
10109 – Lights, Shapes, Sounds signals	Missing	Yes

15150 – ISM Not as required Yes
18317 – Food personal hygiene Not hygienic Yes

This vessel was released 7th February 2022

Vessel Name: GLOBAL BRAVE

GT: 33226

IMO: 9434606

Flag: Panama (white list)

Company: KLC SM Co Ltd

Classification society: Korean Register

Recognised organisation: Korean Register/Lloyd's Register

Recognised organisation for ISM Doc: Korean Register

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: Korean Register

Date and place of detention: 9th February 2022 at Royal Portbury

Summary: Thirteen deficiencies with six grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
05110 – Facilities for reception of marine safety information	Not as required	Yes
07109 – Fixed fire extinguishing installation	Not as required	Yes
10113 – Automatic identification system (AIS)	Not as required	Yes
07125 – Evaluation of crew performance (fire drills)	Lack of training	Yes
11113 – Launching arrangements for rescue boats	Not as required	Yes
18313 – Cleanliness	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released 12th February 2022

Vessel Name: HOEGH SYDNEY

GT: 51713

IMO: 9368900

Flag: Panama (white list)

Company: Union Marine Mgmt Serv Pte Ltd

Classification society: NKK

Recognised organisation: NKK, DNV

Recognised organisation for ISM Doc: DNV

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: NKK

Date and place of detention: 10th February 2022 at Southampton

Summary: Twenty- one deficiencies with two grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
04114 – Emergency source of power –Emergency generator	Not as required	Yes
15150 – ISM	Not as Required	Yes

This vessel was released 15th February 2022

Vessel Name: LILY-B

GT: 2997

IMO: 9125097

Flag: Antigua & Barbuda (white list)

Company: Jeb Bereederungs GmbH

Classification society: RINA Services S.P.A

Recognised organisation: RINA Services S.P.A / DNV

Recognised organisation for ISM Doc: RINA Services S.P.A

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: RINA Services S.P.A

Date and place of detention: 11th February 2022 at Avonmouth

Summary: Ten deficiencies with six grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
11134 – Operation of Life Saving Appliances	Not as required	Yes
11112 – Launching arrangements for survival craft	Not as required	Yes
01306 – Shipboard working arrangements	Not as required	Yes
01213 – Evidence of Basic Training	Missing	Yes
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
01218 – Medical Certificate	Missing	Yes

This vessel was released 19th February 2022

Vessel Name: MURGASH

GT: 25312

IMO: 9188908

Flag: Malta (white list)

Company: Navigation Maritime Bulgare

Classification society: RINA Services S.P.A

Recognised organisation: RINA Services S.P.A

Recognised organisation for ISM Doc: RINA Services S.P.A

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: RINA Services S.P.A

Date and place of detention: 21st February 2022 at South Shields

Summary: Seven deficiencies with three grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
12107 – Fire protection cargo deck area	Inoperative	Yes
04114 – Emergency source of power – emergency generator	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released 26th February 2022

DETENTIONS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS MONTHS**Vessel Name: BREB COUNTESS**

GT: 5630

IMO: 9421166

Flag: Portugal (white list)

Company: Briese Dry Cargo GmbH & Co KG

Classification society: DNV

Recognised organisation: DNV

Recognised organisation for ISM Doc: DNV

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: DNV

Date and place of detention: 2nd January 2022 at Leith

Summary: Twenty deficiencies with one ground for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
13102 – Auxiliary engine	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released 28th February 2022.

Vessel Name: POSEIDON

GT: 1412

IMO: 7363217

Flag: Iceland (Not listed)

Company: Neptune EHF

Classification society: NA

Recognised organisation: NA

Recognised organisation for ISM Doc: DNV-GL

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: N/A (SMC issued by Flag)

Date and place of detention: 19th July 2018 at Hull

Summary: Ten deficiencies with two grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
02106 – Hull damage impairing seaworthiness	Holed	Yes
07113 – Fire Pumps	Insufficient Pressure	Yes

This vessel was still detained on 28th February 2022

Vessel Name: TECOIL POLARIS

GT: 1814

IMO No: 8883290

Flag: Russian Federation (White list)

Company: Tecoil Shipping Ltd

Classification society: RMRS

Recognised organisation: RMRS

Recognised organisation for ISM DOC: RMRS

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: RMRS

Date and place of detention: 6th June 2018 at Immingham

Summary: Twenty-seven deficiencies with six grounds for detentions

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
10104 – Gyro compass	Inoperative	Yes
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Not as required	Yes
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
11104 – Rescue boats	Not properly maintained	Yes
11101 – Lifeboats	Not ready for use	Yes
01117 – International Oil Pollution Prevention (IOPP)	Invalid	Yes

This vessel was still detained on 28th February 2022

Vessel Name: CIEN PORCIENTO

GT: 106.

IMO No: 8944446.

Flag: Sweden (White list)

Company: Open Window Inc.

Classification society: Unclassed.

Recognised organisation: Not applicable.

Recognised organisation for ISM DOC: Not applicable.

Recognised organisation for ISM SMC: Not applicable

Date and place of detention: 4 March 2010, Lowestoft

Summary: Thirty deficiencies including seven grounds for detention

This vessel was still detained on 28th February 2022

Notes to Editors

- The MCA is a partner in the Sea Vision UK campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the sea and maritime activities. Sea Vision promotes the importance and economic value of the sector and works to highlight the exciting range of activities and career opportunities available to young people within the UK growing maritime sector.

- Follow us on Twitter: @MCA_media

For further information please contact Maritime and Coastguard Agency Press Office, on: +44 (0) 2380 329 401 Press releases and further information about the agency is available [here](#).

Education Secretary promises to harness 'energy and expertise' of teachers

A new independent government body will be created to support teachers in delivering excellent curriculum content as part of world class lessons, the Education Secretary will confirm today (Friday 11 March) as he sets out plans to help every child in the country reach the true height of their potential.

Under its mission to level up standards across the school system, the government is targeting 90% of children leaving primary school having achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by 2030, up from 65% in 2019.

Speaking at the Association of School and College Leaders Conference the Education Secretary will set out how the upcoming launch of the first Schools White Paper since 2016 will deliver on this vision for excellent teaching, through:

- The conversion of Oak National Academy into an entirely new Arm's Length Body to the Department for Education – focused on supporting teachers to deliver excellent lessons and building on Oak's success;
- Strengthening the support system in place for teachers throughout their career – by re-endowing the Education Endowment Foundation to continue researching and developing best practice in teaching methods and re-committing to delivering 500,000 teacher training opportunities by 2024 for teachers from trainee to head level; and
- Delivering £30,000 starting salaries and offering retention payments for teachers in priority subjects in areas currently with lower attainment to attract and retain the best teachers.

Speaking about the evolution of Oak National Academy at the conference, the Secretary of State is expected to say:

The biggest asset we have in changing the lives of children for generations to come is the energy and expertise of our teachers and school leaders.

You can't have a great education if you don't have a great teacher. But of course, great teachers need great support.

Oak National Academy has certainly been one of our great achievements. It was created by teachers, for teachers, and showed brilliantly what the profession was capable of in the hour of need.

Building on the nearly 3,500 hours of video lesson content it provided during the pandemic, we will now establish Oak as a new arms-length curriculum body.

This is important because the data shows 46% of primary teachers plan lessons from scratch. This is a drain on teachers' time and we're going to fix it.

Curriculum design is complex and we want to share the very best practice so teachers can draw inspiration from evidence based, carefully sequenced examples.

Instead of each teacher reinventing the wheel, they will be able to access content, for free, that continuously evolves and gets better and better on the back of feedback from teachers across the country – saving time and improving lessons immeasurably.

At the heart of this body will be collaboration and partnership, and I am committed to building on the “by teachers, for teachers” approach that has been a key success factor for Oak National Academy.

Ed Vainker, CEO of the Reach Foundation, the organisation that established Oak National Academy, said:

The Reach Foundation is proud of the role it has played stewarding Oak National Academy and is grateful to partner organisations for their immense voluntary contribution.

We are pleased that the government has committed to sustaining Oak in perpetuity and have agreed to transfer it to the DfE, on the basis that it will be fully independent and will always remain free and in public ownership.

Under the framework already provided by the national curriculum, the new curriculum body will work with a diverse range of teachers and experts from across the sector to facilitate the creation of curriculum maps and thousands of downloadable lessons and resources, which will be made freely available to all teachers, parents and children.

Its use will be entirely optional for teachers, with the intention of supporting those who use it to cut down on the workload pressure caused by lesson planning and curriculum design.

The new body is expected to become fully operational from Autumn following a transition phase, with its final name to be confirmed, and its first new products available to teachers in September 2023.

It will work with the Education Endowment Foundation to ensure its activity is informed by the best available evidence and aligns with best practice.

The Schools White Paper is expected to be published later in March, and will set out a plan for every child to get a great education and the right support, in the right place, and at the right time.

Manchester and North West rail passengers to see more reliable journeys with £84 million investment

- £84 million package to increase reliability of trains in Greater Manchester and the North
- works will deliver trackside upgrades, platform extensions for longer trains and bigger depots across the region
- the funding begins a decade's worth of investment that will transform rail in the North

Passengers across the North West are set to benefit from an £84 million government investment to cut delays and improve the reliability of trains across the region.

At Manchester Victoria station today (11 March 2022), Rail Minister Wendy Morton MP, announced a package of infrastructure upgrades that will transform the day-to-day journeys of train passengers in the North West.

The work is part of the Secretary of State's Manchester Recovery Task Force's (MRTF) plans to boost service reliability and put the passenger at the heart of the journey.

Works are now underway with upgrades to track-side equipment between Manchester and Liverpool and platform extensions on the Cumbrian route. This will support the introduction of longer trains with extra seats and an upcoming timetable change across the region will increase reliability.

Further works next year will see additional platform extensions to some of the busiest routes across the North West and West Yorkshire, supporting the rollout of longer electric trains by Northern.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

This £84 million investment will make trains more reliable for the people of Manchester and beyond and kicks off a decade's worth of improvements across the region.

The Transpennine Route Upgrade, the Integrated Rail Plan and Northern Powerhouse Rail will transform the lives of passengers

across the region for generations to come.

As we level up the country, we're determined to use rail to boost local economies, create greener journeys and change lives for the better.

The funding will also allow vital development work to continue schemes across Greater Manchester that will benefit passengers across the North West, including:

- improved passenger facilities at Manchester Piccadilly, Victoria and Manchester International Airport stations
- resignalling along the Castlefield Corridor and remodelling of Manchester Oxford Road station
- work on the [Transpennine Route Upgrade \(TRU\)](#) also continues with the electrification and resignalling of the line and track renewals to deliver faster, more frequent and reliable trains for passengers

TRU will pave the way for [Northern Powerhouse Rail](#), transforming rail journeys across the North including between Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and York, delivering on the government's levelling up agenda to improve connectivity, support economic growth and deliver real benefits for passengers and communities in the North.

The next stage of work on the TRU continues with further track and signalling upgrades, following on from works over Christmas and New Year.

All of these improvements are in addition to the [Integrated Rail Plan](#), which is investing £96 billion investment across the North and Midlands to transform rail services, boost economic growth and prosperity, level up the region and create thousands of jobs up to 10 years quicker than under previous plans.

Dave Penney, passenger strategy director for Network Rail's North West and Central region, said:

Improving passenger journeys has been at the heart of the rail industry's hard work to tackle congestion through Central Manchester and this major government investment will mean fewer delays and add 20% more peak-time seats from December 2022.

Network Rail has worked with the whole industry as part of the Manchester Recovery Task Force on how to maximise this £84 million investment that promises to boost capacity and improve connectivity across the North of England as part of Britain's rail recovery.

Matthew Golton, Managing Director at TransPennine Express, said:

We're committed to delivering real change for our customers across

the North and into Scotland. This multimillion-pound package that enables the development of needed infrastructure capacity will work hand-in-hand with our own investments in new journey opportunities, new trains and station improvements to give customers the modern, reliable and efficient rail service they deserve.

Nick Donovan, Managing Director at Northern Trains, said:

This investment will improve the infrastructure that will allow trains with more carriages to run through Manchester, benefiting the wider network and the thriving leisure economy of the North.

Our customers returning to rail will have already noticed many improvements we have made in the last 2 years. These include better stations and new trains, and this project will further add to that improved experience.