

Issue: Alleged abuse of dominance by USIT in relation to Canadian working visas

Relevant provision: Section 5, Competition Act 2002 and Article 82, EC Treaty

Outcome of investigation: Case closed in November 2004 when USIT offered undertakings to revise its terms and conditions regarding the insurance requirements.

Outline of case

The Competition Authority's investigation followed a number of complaints concerning the insurance requirements specified in the terms and conditions of USIT's Canadian Working Holiday Visa Programme. USIT required applicants to purchase its travel insurance, even where cheaper alternative insurance was available.

Following discussions with the Competition Authority, USIT offered to revise its terms and conditions to clarify the insurance requirements (whereby alternative insurance meeting particular criteria could be substituted by visa applicants) and submitted procedures for staff to follow, in informing visa applicants about the insurance requirements of the programme.

On the basis of these undertakings, the Competition Authority decided to discontinue its investigation.