

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has referred Fox's proposed takeover of Sky to CMA on public interest grounds.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) will now examine how the deal would impact media plurality and broadcasting standards in the UK.

Media plurality means that a diversity of independent views about news and current affairs is available from the media. It also means that one person or group does not have too much influence over public opinion and the political agenda.

Broadcasting standards are set out in the Communications Act 2003 and apply to programmes broadcast on television and radio in the UK. They include: reporting the news with accuracy and impartiality, and ensuring harmful or offensive material is not broadcast on radio and tv.

Anne Lambert, Panel Chair, said:

The Competition and Markets Authority is the regulatory body for mergers in the UK and can be called upon to look at mergers affecting the public interest.

We have experience investigating different issues in a wide range of sectors, from publishing to hospitals and even defence.

We will use that same evidence-based approach to thoroughly and impartially investigate the proposed takeover of Sky Plc by 21st Century Fox on the public interest grounds of media plurality and a genuine commitment to broadcasting standards. Once the investigation is complete we will report back to Karen Bradley for her to make a final decision.

The CMA has appointed an investigation group, which is responsible for providing the Culture Secretary with the CMA's final report. This will be chaired by Anne Lambert (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cma-panel-member-biographies-and-disclosures-of-interest/inquiry-chairs-biographies#anne-lambert---panel-chair>). The other panel members are Sarah Chambers (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cma-panel-member-biographies-and-disclosures-of-interest/panel-members-biographies#sarah-chambers>), John Krumins (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cma-panel-member-biographies-and-disclosures-of-interest/panel-members-biographies#john-krumins>) and Tim Tutton (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cma-panel-member-biographies-and-disclosures-of-interest/panel-members-biographies#tim-tutton>). All the appointees are chosen from the CMA's expert independent panel members (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority/about/our-governance#cma-panel>), who come from a variety of backgrounds including telecommunications, business, economics and law.

A timetable for the 6-month investigation will be published shortly on the merger investigation page (<https://www.gov.uk/cma-cases/twenty-first-century-fox-sky-merger-european-intervention-notice>). This will set out all steps and provisional deadlines until the final report, including the timeline for submissions from third parties.