

Fox/Sky merger inquiry

Staff disclosures of interest

Andrea Coscelli

Andrea Coscelli, the Chief Executive of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), is a friend of Antonio Bavasso, a partner in law firm Allen & Overy LLP and whom the CMA understands advises 21st Century Fox, Inc in relation to its anticipated acquisition of the shares in Sky plc that it does not already own.

The CMA does not believe that this matter will prejudice the ability of the Inquiry Group to discharge its functions in an independent and impartial manner. The Inquiry Group is formed of four CMA panel members, appointed to perform all of the CMA's functions in respect of the inquiry and to act as decision-maker in the case. The members of the Inquiry Group must act independently when taking their decisions, based on their own judgement reached after analysis of the evidence before them, meaning that the CMA Board, and Mr Coscelli as Chief Executive, do not have any decision-making responsibilities in respect of the outcome of the inquiry.

However, the CMA is concerned to avoid any perception of bias arising in relation to its assessment of this case. Therefore, given that a perceived conflict of interest may be considered to arise from this matter in view of Mr Coscelli's position as Chief Executive, Mr Coscelli will take the prudent step of ceasing social interaction with Mr Bavasso during the course of the merger inquiry. The CMA has also put in place an internal procedure to ring-fence Mr Coscelli's role by restricting his access to information obtained or prepared by the CMA for the purpose of assisting the Inquiry Group in carrying out its functions in relation to the merger inquiry, unless and until it has been made public or has otherwise been communicated to the relevant party.

Alison Gold

Alison Gold, a Project Director at the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), previously worked from 2004 until February 2017 as Head of Strategy at the BBC Trust. Before working at the BBC Trust, Alison was a strategy management consultant at KPMG and at Human Capital, a media sector specialist advisory firm. Within the context of the Fox/Sky inquiry, Alison will help support the CMA staff team and Inquiry Group in relation to broadcasting industry issues relevant to the merger. The CMA does not believe that this matter will prejudice the ability of the Inquiry Group or its staff to discharge its functions in an independent and impartial manner.