

# Completed acquisition by Aramark Limited of Entier Limited

## Decision on relevant merger situation and substantial lessening of competition

ME/2241/25

### OVERVIEW OF THE CMA'S DECISION

1. The Competition and Markets Authority (**CMA**) has found that the acquisition by Aramark Limited (**Aramark**) of Entier Limited (**Entier**), gives rise to a realistic prospect of a substantial lessening of competition (**SLC**) in the supply of outsourced offshore catering and ancillary facilities management services as a result of horizontal unilateral effects.
2. On 24 January 2025, Aramark acquired 90% of the issued share capital in Entier. The CMA refers to this acquisition as the **Merger**. Aramark and Entier are together referred to as the **Parties** and, for statements relating to the future, the **Merged Entity**.
3. As the CMA has found that the Merger gives rise to a realistic prospect of an SLC, the Parties have until 29 July 2025 to offer undertakings in lieu of a reference (**UILs**) to the CMA that will remedy the competition concerns identified. If no such undertakings are offered, then the CMA will refer the Merger pursuant to sections 22(1) and 34ZA(2) of the Enterprise Act 2002 (the **Act**).

### Who are the businesses and what products/services do they provide?

4. Aramark and Entier both provide catering services to customers in the UK. The CMA's investigation has focused on the provision of catering services and ancillary facilities management services<sup>1</sup> to offshore customers (referred to collectively as

---

<sup>1</sup> Ancillary facilities management services include, for example, housekeeping and accommodation services (eg cleaning of cabins); laundry services; bond store management (snacks, tobacco, etc), waste management; and additional services such as recreation and emergency support).

**offshore catering** in this Decision) in the United Kingdom Continental Shelf (UKCS), as this is the main overlap between the Parties' activities.

### **Why did the CMA review this merger?**

5. The CMA's primary duty is to seek to promote competition for the benefit of consumers. It has a duty to investigate mergers that could raise competition concerns in the UK, provided it has jurisdiction to do so. In this case, the CMA has concluded that it has jurisdiction to review this Merger because a relevant merger situation has been created: each of Aramark and Entier is an enterprise and, as a result of the Merger, these enterprises have ceased to be distinct, and the share of supply test is met.

### **What evidence has the CMA looked at?**

6. In assessing this Merger, the CMA considered a wide range of evidence in the round.
7. The CMA received several submissions and responses to information requests from the Parties. The CMA also examined bidding data and the Parties' internal documents. The CMA gathered information about the extent to which the Parties currently compete against each other and the competitive strength of other offshore catering suppliers.
8. The CMA spoke to, and gathered evidence from, the Parties' customers and competitors to understand the competitive landscape and to get their views on the impact of the Merger. In particular, the CMA also obtained competitors' bidding data, and information from customers about their most recent (or future) tender processes.

### **What did the evidence tell the CMA about the effects on competition of the Merger?**

9. The CMA believes that the Merger raises significant competition concerns as a result of horizontal unilateral effects in the supply of offshore catering in the UKCS. The Parties have a combined share of supply of around 60% in the UKCS. There is only one other large supplier: a company called ESS. The Merged Entity and ESS would together account for over 90% of the market. In addition, the bidding data, internal documents and third-party views suggest the Parties compete closely with each other.
10. The evidence suggests that the Merged Entity would not face sufficient constraints from the other suppliers in the UKCS, which apart from ESS are very small, and

suppliers based in other parts of the North Sea. The CMA also believes that self-supply is not an option for at least the vast majority of the Parties' customers.

## **What happens next?**

11. As a result of these concerns, the CMA believes the merger gives rise to a realistic prospect of an SLC in the supply of outsourced offshore catering in the UKCS. Aramark has until 29 July 2025 to offer an undertaking which might be accepted by the CMA to address the SLC. If no such undertaking is offered, or the CMA decides that any undertaking offered is insufficient to remedy its concerns to the phase 1 standard, then the CMA will refer the Merger for an in-depth phase 2 investigation pursuant to sections 22(1) and 34ZA(2) of the Act.