



Media Statement

For Immediate Release

29 August 2018

THE COMMISSION UNCOVERS CARTEL OF BOOK PUBLISHERS

The Commissioner of the Competition Commission, Tembinkosi Bonakele, has initiated an investigation (complaint) against the Publishers' Association of South Africa (PASA) and its over 91 members for fixing prices of books.

The Commissioner received information pointing to the fact that the association and its members who are publishers, book importers and sellers of books to government departments, educational institutions, retailers among others, may have been involved in fixing prices of books in contravention of the Competition Act.

The Information indicates that PASA and its members allegedly agreed to fix prices for and trading conditions in respect of:

1. Pre-school to grade 12 books, associated teacher's guides and support materials;
2. Student textbooks, learning material, associated teacher's guide and support material for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVET) at secondary education;
3. Textbooks and other publications for learning at tertiary education institutions;
4. Trade books (books for sale to the general public); and
5. eBooks (Electronic versions of all of the abovementioned books).

This price fixing arrangement appears to be historic in the industry dating back as early as 1980s.

“Given how widespread the practise is and the importance of the products, we expect the participants to cooperate with the investigation by, by among other things, immediately bringing their cartel activities to a stop and approaching the Competition Commission” says Bonakele.

[ENDS]

Issued by:

Sipho Ngwema, Head of Communications

On behalf of: The Competition Commission of South Africa

Tel: 012 394 3493 / 081 253 8889

Email: Siphon@compcom.co.za

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