

# JCRA Media Release

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## JCRA Launches Competition Awareness Programme

The Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority (JCRA) is launching a programme to raise awareness and understanding of the Competition (Jersey) Law 2005 ('the Law'), which came fully into force in May last year. This will be a follow-up to a similar programme the JCRA conducted before the Law came into force.

Competition benefits consumers and the economy by helping to keep prices down, improve the quality of goods and services, and encourage innovation. The Law prohibits businesses from eliminating or restricting competition, and thereby harming consumers, through anti-competitive conduct such as price-fixing and abuses of market power.

The programme will draw from Jersey's experience thus far with the Law. For example, the JCRA has secured the removal of uniform fixed and recommended prices in conveyancing and dentistry, in driving instruction, and in the building, electrical and plumbing sectors. It also ensured that the Jersey Estate Agents' Association informed its members that they were free to set prices in competition with each other, clarifying the uncertainty which surrounded this issue.

Bill Brown, JCRA Executive Director, said:

*"We believe that achieving voluntary compliance where possible through discussions with businesses is preferable to resorting to formal enforcement action. It is proportionate, less costly and more efficient for businesses, the JCRA, and ultimately the Jersey taxpayer. Our achievement of voluntary compliance for the benefit of consumers across a number of key sectors has borne out this belief".*

The main objectives of the programme are to assist businesses in complying with the Law, and ensure that consumers and businesses which might suffer from anti-competitive

behaviour understand how the Law can help them. Participation in the programme will also be open to States members, civil servants, professional firms, and others who wish to acquire a deeper understanding of competition law and processes.

The programme will include detailed new and updated Guidelines on various aspects of the Law, a series of leaflets for consumers and businesses explaining how the Law can help them, and a seminar on the Law to be held in the Autumn.

Bill Brown said:

*“We are already seeing the benefits for consumers of competition, and the Competition Law, across a variety of sectors, even in the relatively short period since the Law came into force. Our programme plans to build on this by helping businesses comply with the Law, while ensuring that consumers and businesses who might suffer from anti-competitive practices understand how the Law can help them”.*

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All enquiries to Bill Brown on 01534 514990