

20 June 2023

For Immediate Release

Competition Commission conducts another search regarding fish wholesale case in Aberdeen and invites fishery industry to provide information

The Competition Commission (Commission) conducted another round of operation in its ongoing investigation codenamed “White Whale” early this morning. As part of this operation, the Commission executed search warrants at a number of premises in the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market (Fish Market) as well as two offices of the companies involved, during which the Commission exercised powers under Section 50 of the Competition Ordinance (Ordinance) which included the power to force entry into certain premises. The latest enforcement action, which followed an earlier operation in December 2022¹, targeted alleged anti-competitive conduct including market sharing, output limitation² and group boycott³ among wholesalers in the Fish Market, in contravention of the First Conduct Rule under the Ordinance.

The Commission has been closely following up on the case since it received a related complaint. In November 2022, the Commission participated in an anti-crime joint operation at the Fish Market organised by the Police⁴ and surveyed practitioners from over 30 wholesalers. Subsequent to the joint operation, the Commission escalated the case to investigation phase and conducted an operation in December 2022 to search a number of premises in the Fish Market.

The Commission analysed the information collected in detail and continued to exercise its compulsory powers, including requesting relevant parties to produce documents and information, as well as to attend before the Commission to provide information relating to the case.

Based on available evidence, the Commission has decided to widen the scope of investigation and conducted another joint operation with the Police and the Immigration Department today, during which the Commission seized certain exhibits and requested relevant parties to produce documents and information. The Commission expresses its deep appreciation to the Police and the Immigration Department for their assistance in today’s search.

The Commission would like to urge any interested parties who can provide information on the case, in particular members of the fishery industry, to complete a dedicated [questionnaire](#) (Chinese only) on the Commission’s website (www.compcomm.hk) and submit it by 4 July

¹ The operation focused on alleged anti-competitive conduct including price fixing, output limitation and group boycott. See the Commission’s [press release](#) dated 20 December 2022.

² Output limitation occurs when competitors agree to fix, maintain, control, prevent, limit or eliminate the production or supply of particular goods or services. It is considered a serious anti-competitive conduct under the Ordinance.

³ Group boycott occurs when there is an agreement or concerted practice amongst competitors not to do business with targeted individuals or undertakings.

⁴ See the Commission’s [press release](#) dated 27 November 2022.

2023. Alternatively, interested parties may contact the Commission by telephone at 3462 2118, e-mail (complaints@compcomm.hk), post, or in person at the Commission's office (by appointment only). The Commission will keep any information provided, including the identity of the informants confidential.

Those who consider that they may have engaged or been involved in anticompetitive conduct should approach the Commission for leniency or cooperation (Leniency Hotline: 3996 8010; e-mail: leniency@compcomm.hk).

No further comment will be made at this stage as the investigation is ongoing.

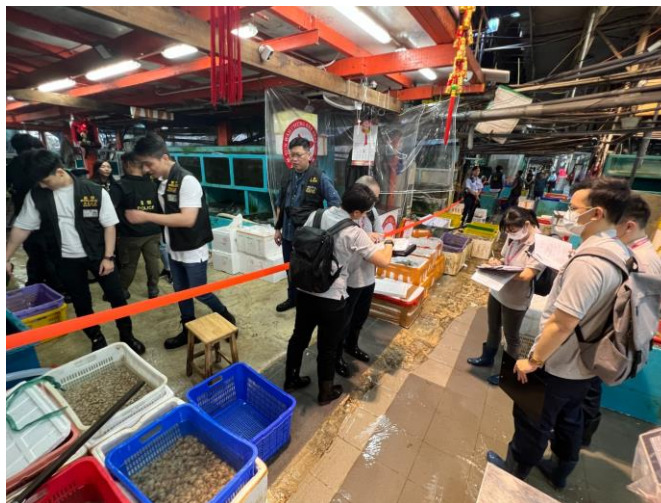
Photo captions:

Photo 1:



(From left) Mr. Felix Au, Acting Head of Investigations of the Competition Commission, Mr. Ho Yan-kit, Chief Inspector of Hong Kong Island Regional Anti-triad Unit of the Police, Mr. Lee Ka-ho, Senior Immigration Officer of the Immigration Department, and Mr Li Hiu-fai, Senior Immigration Officer of the Immigration Department

Photo 2:



The Competition Commission conducted a joint operation with the Police and the Immigration Department at the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market this morning.

Photo 3:



The Competition Commission searched a number of premises in the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market with the assistance of the Police.