

Brussels, 26 November 2009

## **Antitrust: Commission confirms sending Statement of Objections to alleged participants in TV and computer monitor tubes cartels**

*The European Commission can confirm that in November 2009 it has sent a Statement of Objections to a number of companies active in the cathode ray tubes (CRT) industry, concerning their alleged participation in two separate cartels in violation of EC Treaty rules on restrictive business practices (Article 81 of the EC Treaty and Article 53 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area). Cathode ray tubes are used in television sets and computer monitors.*

The Commission's investigation focuses on two types of cathode ray tubes, namely colour display tubes used in computer monitors and colour picture tubes used in colour television sets. A cathode ray tube is a glass envelope containing an electron gun and a fluorescent screen, usually with internal or external means to accelerate and deflect electrons. When electrons from the electron gun strike the fluorescent screen, light is emitted creating an image on the screen. The single electron beam can be processed in such a way as to display moving pictures in natural colours.

Surprise inspections were carried out by the Commission in November 2007 at the premises of manufacturers of cathode ray tubes (see [MEMO/07/453](#)).

### **Procedural background**

A Statement of Objections is a formal step in Commission antitrust investigations in which the Commission informs the parties concerned in writing of the objections raised against them. The addressee of a Statement of Objections can reply in writing to the Statement of Objections, setting out all facts known to it which are relevant to its defence against the objections raised by the Commission. The party may also request an oral hearing to present its comments on the case.

The Commission may then take a decision on whether the conduct addressed in the Statement of Objections is compatible or not with the EC Treaty's antitrust rules. Sending a Statement of Objections does not prejudice the final outcome of the procedure.