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CONTENTS

101 COMMENT

30th Report on Competition Policy: Statistics

102 COMMISSION NOTICE (ALL INDUSTRIES)

The De Minimis Rules

104 ABUSE OF DOMINANT POSITION (PACKAGING)

The DSD Case

107 PRICE-FIXING (BANKING)

The Bank Cartel Case

111 STATE AIDS (BANKING)

The German Banks Case

112 COMMISSION STATEMENT (ELECTRICITY)

The EDF Case

113 EXCLUSIVITY (EXPRESS MAIL)

The TNT Traco Case

MISCELLANEOUS

The Austrian Airlines Case *106*
The IATA Case *110*

30th Report on Competition Policy: Statistics

On 15th May, the Commission published its 30th Annual Report on Competition Policy (that is, for the year 2000). It shows that the number of new cases in 2000 was 1,206, of which 564 were in the area of state aid control, 345 were merger notifications and 297 were antitrust cases. The overall figure remained broadly stable (1,249 cases in 1999). This reflects a drastic reduction of anti-trust notifications, following adoption of a number of block exemption regulations, offset by an increase of 18% in merger filings.

Types of Case	1999	2000
ANTI-TRUST		
Ex officio	77	84
Complaints	149	112
Notifications	162	101
Total Anti-Trust	388	297
MERGERS		
Notifications	292	345
Decisions	270	345
Approvals in First Phase	254	321
Decisions in Second Phase	10	17
Prohibitions	1	2
Total Mergers	292	345
STATE AIDS		
Unnotified Aid	98	86
Notified Aid	469	469
Total State Aids	569	564
TOTAL of all NEW CASES	1249	1206
TOTAL of all CASES CLOSED	1321	1209

According to the Commission, the reduction in the number of new anti-trust cases can mainly be attributed to the new block exemption on vertical restraints. A second factor in the reduction of new cases is the drop in the number of complaints. It is interesting to note that almost 30% of the new cases were opened *ex officio*. In absolute terms, moreover, *ex officio* procedures increased over the previous year. This development reflects the Commission's policy of dealing with standard agreements through legislative action, while using the available resources to pursue a more proactive policy and concentrate on the most dangerous anti-competitive practices. ■

[Further comment on the 30th Report will be carried in a forthcoming issue.]