



NEWS RELEASE

5th May 2004

The Competition Authority to carry out full investigation of Uniphar's acquisition of Whelehan Group

The Competition Authority announced today (5th May) that it has decided to carry out a full (Phase 2) investigation in relation to the proposed acquisition by Uniphar plc (the parent company of the Uniphar Group) of Ammodo Limited, (the holding company for the Whelehan Group). Both parties are involved in the wholesale distribution of pharmaceutical and healthcare products.

The Competition Authority received notification of the proposed acquisition on 8th April 2004. The Authority is required under the Mergers and Acquisitions section of the Competition Act 2002 to determine whether the result of the proposed acquisition will "substantially lessen competition" in markets for goods and services in the State.

After a preliminary investigation (Phase 1) lasting one month, the Authority has been unable to conclude without further investigation that the transaction will not substantially lessen competition.

The Competition Authority has until 8th August 2004 to make a final determination on the transaction. The investigation will examine the competitive effect of the proposed acquisition on the wholesale distribution of pharmaceutical and healthcare products to retail pharmacies.

Interested parties are invited to make written submissions, which must be made **no later than 12:30pm on Wednesday, 26 May 2004**. Submissions should be marked "M/04/020 - Uniphar / Whelehan", and should be addressed to Patrick Neill, Mergers Division, The Competition Authority, Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 or sent by e-mail to mergers@tca.ie

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NOTES FOR THE EDITOR

The Parties

UniPhar plc is a pharmaceutical wholesaling company and the parent company of the UniPhar Group. A number of Irish retail pharmacists own UniPhar plc. The companies that make up the UniPhar Group are active in the wholesaling of pharmaceutical products and also in the distribution of healthcare products in Ireland. The Uniphar Group has three divisions: UniPhar plc, engaged in the wholesale supply of human pharmaceutical products to Irish retail pharmacies throughout Ireland; Allphar Services Limited, engaged in the supply of pharmaceutical products (specialist hospital medicines, diagnostic agents and ethical pharmaceuticals) and is the Irish agent and distributor for international manufacturers of medicines; and Surgicare Limited, engaged in the supply of healthcare products to hospitals.

Ammado Limited is a holding company and parent of the Whelehan Group, which is made up of three companies: T.P. Whelehan Son & Co. Limited, an agent company engaged in the marketing and distribution of a wide range of surgical, health and beauty, agricultural and garden products; Perrans Distribution Limited, an agent company engaged in the marketing and distribution of a wide range of alternative healthcare brands; and Boileau & Boyd Limited, engaged in the wholesale supply of human pharmaceutical products to Irish retail pharmacies.