Notification Waiver Determination

New England Motor Group – Armidale Automotive Group

Acquisition	Houma Holdings Pty Ltd (**Houma**) applied for a notification waiver in respect of New England Motor Group Pty Ltd's (**New England Motor Group**) proposed acquisition of the motor vehicle dealership business currently owned and operated by Armidale Automotive Group Pty Ltd (**Armidale Automotive Group**), as described in the transaction documents provided as part of the application (the **Acquisition**).
Determination	The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has determined under section 51ABV(1)(b) of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) not to make the notification waiver determination applied for.
Date of determination	12 November 2026

Parties to the Acquisition	The acquirer, New England Motor Group, of which Houma is an 80% shareholder, operates a motor vehicle dealership at 121 Marsh Street, Armidale, NSW. The dealership represents 2 vehicle brands as an authorised dealer of new vehicles, being Mazda and Suzuki. Houma is the majority shareholder of a new and used vehicle retail business operating 12 franchised dealerships across locations on the Central Coast, Newcastle, Hunter Region, Tuncurry, Taree, Dubbo, Armidale, Grafton, Boat Harbour and Gympie (the **Houma Dealerships**). The Houma Dealerships represent 22 vehicle brands as an authorised dealer of new vehicles. The Houma Dealerships also sell a range of used vehicles, in addition to providing vehicle servicing and repairs, genuine manufacturers' spare parts and accessories sales as well as facilitating finance, insurance and customer care products in connection with the vehicle transactions. Armidale Automotive Group operates a motor vehicle dealership business at several sites in Armidale, NSW, consisting of Armidale Ford, Armidale Isuzu Ute, Armidale Kia, Armidale Honda, Armidale Nissan, and Armidale 4 x 4. Armidale Automotive Group also operates a farm machinery business, Armidale Kubota. Both New England Motor Group and Armidale Automotive Group supply new and used cars, spare parts, car servicing and repair services, and finance.
Explanation for determination	In making this notification waiver determination, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (**ACCC**) has considered the information provided with the notification waiver application and had regard to the factors in section 51ABV(2)(b) of the Act.

	Based on the information provided in the application, the ACCC considers it is likely that, if the Acquisition were put into effect, the notification thresholds would be met. The ACCC is unable to reach a view that the Acquisition would not be likely to raise competition issues in any market based on the information provided, given: a. the Acquisition would combine the largest dealership of new cars in the local Armidale region of NSW with one of only four alternative new car dealerships in that region b. the merged entity's combined share of supply of new cars in the Armidale region of NSW may be significant c. there is uncertainty regarding the extent to which the merged entity would be likely to face inter-brand competition from alternative dealerships in the Armidale region and the surrounding areas more broadly. The ACCC considers that the Acquisition warrants consideration through the notification process, including further information gathering and consultation with third parties. Given the above, the ACCC has determined not to make the notification waiver determination applied for. The ACCC considers that the determination is consistent with the object of the Act and the interests of consumers in promoting competition. For more information about the ACCC's approach to considering notification waiver applications and to assessing competition effects more generally, see the ACCC's guidance on notification waivers and merger assessment guidelines.

Determination made by a division of the Commission constituted by a direction issued pursuant to section 19 of the Act