



News Release
24th July 2003

**Competition Authority clears Smurfit Ireland and
Lithographic Universal printing joint venture**

The Competition Authority today (24th July 2003) announced its determination that the proposed joint venture between Smurfit Ireland Limited and Lithographic Universal Limited can proceed.

The Competition Authority, in accordance with Section 21(2) of the Competition Act 2002, has determined that, in its opinion, the result of the proposed joint venture will not substantially lessen competition in markets for goods or services in the State and accordingly, that the joint venture may be put into effect.

The full determination on this matter is available on the Competition Authority website www.tca.ie

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Notes on the proposed Joint Venture:

- Notification M/03/012 to the Competition Authority concerns a proposal by Smurfit Ireland Limited and Lithographic Universal Limited to create a joint venture to which they would transfer their printing and pre-press assets and business. Smurfit Ireland will transfer the assets and business of two of its branches - Smurfit Web Press and Smurfit Pre-press - whereas Lithographic Universal will transfer almost all its assets and business to the joint venture.
- Smurfit and Lithographic Universal are two of the largest Irish-based providers of heat set web offset printing services to customers involved in the production of, amongst other things: newspaper supplements, magazines, catalogues, brochures, and commercial print runs (forms and inserts).
- The Authority conducted extensive enquiries - contacting customers, competitors and suppliers of Smurfit and Lithographic Universal.
- On the basis of these enquiries the Authority determined:
 1. the extent of the competitive pressure from UK heat set printers;
 2. the factors affecting rivalry between Irish-based printers and the Smurfit/Lithographic joint venture;
 3. the extent of the competitive pressure from the threat of entry.
- The Authority concluded that the combination of competitive pressure from UK heat set printers, rivalry between Irish-based printers and the joint venture, and the threat of entry in the longer term, will ensure that the creation of the joint venture will not result in a substantial lessening of competition in markets for goods or services in the State.