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# Guidance and information

## New publication

### Rural industry and the Trade Practices Act

The Commission has published a guideline dealing with trade practices issues of relevance to the rural sector.

The guideline explains how State legislation previously exempted some industries from parts of the Trade Practices Act, for example by allowing competitors to come together to agree on prices and other industry arrangements. With the review by governments of legislation, much rural legislation has been or will be changed, often resulting in changes to industry structure and removal of protections for the sector. For example, statutory marketing authorities are being removed and many industries deregulated, leaving industry participants subject to the full force of the Act.

The guideline is part of a Commission education campaign to assist rural associations, cooperatives and the rural sector generally to understand their rights and responsibilities under the national competition policy reforms.

It explains, in simple terms, recent developments in competition policy and those provisions of the Trade Practices Act which may be particularly relevant to the rural sector, including those relating to price fixing, boycotts, misuse of market power, refusal to supply and secondary boycotts. It also explains customers' rights.

The guideline also discusses the Commission's authorisation role, which may be particularly

important for industries undergoing transition from regulated to deregulated conditions. The guideline includes case studies of authorisation decisions made by the Commission in the rural sector.

The rural guideline is available for \$10.00 from Commission offices. It is also available from the Commission's web site. A leaflet summarising the guideline is available free from Commission offices.



Photography by Arthur Mostead