



THE MONOPOLIES AND MERGERS COMMISSION

Courier Press (Holdings) Ltd and EMAP PLC

A report on the proposed transfer of
Courier Press (Holdings) Ltd
to EMAP PLC

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State
for Trade and Industry by Command of Her Majesty
April 1987

LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
£4.80 net

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Chapter</i>	
1 Introduction	1
2 The local newspaper background	3
3 EMAP PLC	9
4 Courier Press (Holdings) Ltd.. .. .	12
5 The views of the principal parties and Lincolnshire Standard Group ..	14
6 Views of other parties	19
7 Conclusions	21
 <i>Appendices</i>	
1 The reference	26
2 Circulation areas of EMAP and Courier	27
3 EMAP titles and exhibitions	28
4 EMAP's summarised profit and loss accounts	30
5 Courier's publishing subsidiaries, titles and circulation figures	31
6 Courier's summarised profit and loss accounts	33

1 Introduction

1.1. On 17 November 1986 the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry received an application, which was amended by a letter dated 19 November 1986, for his consent under section 58 of the Fair Trading Act 1973 (the Act) to the transfer of certain newspapers, of which Courier Press (Holdings) Ltd (Courier) is proprietor, to EMAP PLC (EMAP).

1.2. On 16 December 1986, in pursuance of section 59 of the Act, the Secretary of State referred the proposed transfer to the Commission for investigation and report. We are required under section 60(1) of the Act to make our report within three months of the date of the reference, the text of which is reproduced at Appendix 1.

1.3. In pursuance of the powers vested in him by virtue of section 4 of the Fair Trading Act 1973 and Part II of Schedule 3 thereto, the Chairman directed that the functions of the Commission in relation to the proposed transfer of Courier Press (Holdings) Ltd to EMAP PLC reference should be discharged through a group consisting of the following members of the Commission:

Mr C C Baillieu
Mr M B Bunting
Miss P Mann
Mr D G Richards

1.4. He further appointed Mr D G Richards, being a member of the group, to act as Chairman of the group.

1.5. In pursuance of the powers vested in him by virtue of section 4 of the said Act and paragraph 22 of Schedule 3 thereto, the Secretary of State appointed for the purpose of this investigation the following additional members who, by virtue of the said paragraph 22, were also members of the group:

Mr David Churchill
Mr Mark Kersen

1.6. Notices inviting interested parties to submit evidence were inserted in the Financial Times, the United Kingdom Press Gazette and the newspapers named in the reference (see Appendix 1).

1.7. We ascertained that the reference to the Mid Glamorgan Chronicle (Ammanford Valley) newspaper in the reference was intended to refer to the West Glamorgan Chronicle. A notice inviting interested parties to submit evidence was inserted in the West Glamorgan Chronicle. We consider that this inquiry has therefore taken account of the intention that the West Glamorgan Chronicle should be included in the proposed transfer.

1.8. We invited written evidence from the Press Council, the Newspaper Society, the National Federation of Retail Newsagents, the Newspaper Publishers Association, the Guild of British Newspaper Editors and the Association of Free Newspapers. We also invited views from the British and European Patent Offices, the Independent Broadcasting Authority, the Cable Authority, from organisations which represent newspaper employees, including the TUC and affiliated unions, from the CBI, from organisations which represent newspaper proprietors and from various other advertising organisations. We asked for comments from local authorities and chambers of commerce in those areas

of the East and West Midlands, South-West Wales and North London in which the newspapers referred to us and the newspapers of which EMAP is already the proprietor circulate. We also sought comments from owners of competing newspapers which circulate in and around these areas. A summary of the evidence we received is included in Chapter 6.

1.9. We obtained written evidence from each of the parties to the proposed transfer. We held four hearings: one each with Courier and the Lincolnshire Standard Group (LSG) and two with EMAP.

1.10. Some of the evidence we gathered during the course of our inquiry was of a confidential nature. Our report contains only such information as we consider necessary for a proper understanding of our conclusions.

1.11. We thank all those who helped us in our investigation, particularly the two companies principally concerned.