



FTCNewsLine is an online quarterly newsletter of the **FAIR TRADING COMMISSION (FTC)** that contains information on competition matters dealt with by the Fair Trading Commission as well as other competition agencies from around the world. The aim is to provide readers with insights into some of the matters that are prosecuted in other jurisdictions and assist businesses and consumers in better identifying issues that may pose competition concerns.

Competition legislation is specific to each jurisdiction and activities prohibited in one jurisdiction are not necessarily prohibited in other jurisdictions. For information on the prohibitions under Jamaica's competition legislation, the **FAIR COMPETITION ACT (FCA)**, please visit our website at www.jftc.gov.jm.

In this Issue, we feature matters arising during the period July 1, 2026, to September 30, 2026.

FTC Completes Preliminary Assessment of Jamaica Rum GI Rectification

Stakeholder consultation to examine potential implications for exports, competition and industry transition.

The FTC has completed a preliminary study examining the potential economic and competitive implications of the rectification of the Jamaica Rum Geographical Indication (GI), with particular focus on the outlook for Jamaica's rum export industry.

The study indicates that the rectification, which would require Jamaica Rum to be aged exclusively in Jamaica, could increase operating costs and capital investment requirements for producers that currently rely on overseas ageing. These changes may affect export arrangements and the competitive positions of individual distillers. The FTC's preliminary assessment also suggests that the rectification may enhance the protection of the authenticity and provenance of Jamaica Rum, which in turn may contribute to greater product differentiation and could influence its long-term positioning in premium international markets.



The study identifies transition management as a key consideration in implementing the revised requirements, given the potential implications for production arrangements, export activity and market participants. Consideration may need to be given to how producers adapt to the revised requirements while minimising the risk of supply disruptions and unintended effects on export markets.

The FTC will commence stakeholder consultations on the study in October 2026. During this phase, the FTC will seek input from market participants, including J. Wray & Nephew Limited, National Rums of Jamaica

Limited, Worthy Park Estate and Everglades Farms (Hampden Distillery), as well as the Jamaica Intellectual Property Office, the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce, JAMPRO and other interested stakeholders.

The consultation process will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to submit additional information and perspectives on the study's findings, the potential implications of the rectification, and the practical considerations associated with transitioning to the revised requirements. A key issue for consideration during the consultation will be how the objectives of maintaining the authenticity, reputation and long-term commercial value of the Jamaica Rum GI can be balanced against the need to minimise avoidable disruption to production, export relationships and competition within the industry.

The FTC will consider stakeholder submissions as part of its ongoing assessment of the potential economic and competitive implications of the rectification. The consultation process is intended to facilitate a comprehensive assessment of the potential effects of the revised requirements and to ensure that a broad range of relevant perspectives is considered.

FTC Participates in Inaugural CARICOM Competition and Consumer Welfare Conference



The FTC participated in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Competition Commission's inaugural Competition and Consumer Welfare Conference, held virtually from July 20-23, 2026. The conference brought together competition authorities, policymakers, academics and private-sector representatives from across the globe to discuss emerging issues in competition enforcement, industrial policy, regulatory coordination and consumer welfare.

The FTC was actively represented throughout the conference, with members of staff serving as presenters and panellists on topics that reflected both the Commission's mandate and Jamaica's experience in promoting competitive markets.

Ms. Venessa Hall, Legal Officer, delivered a presentation entitled "Merger Assessment in Developing Economies: Practical Challenges and Solutions - A Jamaica Perspective", which examined practical considerations associated with merger assessment in developing economies. Ms. Michelle Phillips also participated as a panellist in the session "Merger Review in Practice - Investigation, Evidence Gathering, Remedies and Decision-Making", which explored key aspects of the merger review process.

Dr. Kevin Harriott, Competition Bureau Chief, served as a panellist in the Business Forum session "Private Sector Perspectives on Competition and Industrial Policy for Economic Growth". The discussion examined the relationship between competition policy, industrial development and private-sector growth.

Mrs. Susan Lawrence-Simms, Senior Legal Counsel, presented on "Coordination between Competition and Sector Regulators - A Jamaica Perspective", highlighting considerations relevant to cooperation between competition authorities and sector regulators.

Through its participation, the FTC contributed to regional and international discussions on strengthening competition frameworks, enhancing regulatory coordination and promoting consumer welfare. The conference also provided a valuable forum for sharing Jamaica's experiences and exchanging perspectives on practical approaches to addressing competition challenges across the Caribbean and beyond.

FTC Provides Input on Regional Consumer Protection and Financial Inclusion Matters

The FTC submitted comments to the 14th Meeting of Heads of Consumer Affairs on the topic of Monetary Policy to Benefit Vulnerable Consumers. Drawing on observations from its 2025 work relating to access to credit facilities in Jamaica, the FTC identified several matters for consideration in the development of policy measures intended to benefit vulnerable consumers.

Among the matters highlighted in the FTC's submission were the extent to which the intended beneficiaries of any intervention should include persons who do not have adequate access to formal banking services. The FTC also identified a range of outcomes that may be considered when evaluating the effectiveness of interventions, including lower transaction costs, greater product choice, increased participation by financial service providers, improved access to financial services, enhanced convenience, improved financial literacy, and more efficient dispute-resolution mechanisms. In addition, the FTC raised the question of whether legal and operational frameworks governing banking services could be strengthened through measures aimed at improving market conditions and addressing structural barriers to participation.



The FTC also submitted comments on the Proposed Amendments to the CARICOM Model Consumer Protection (CMCP) Bill relating to the publication of current price information. In its submission, the FTC noted that representations made to consumers should not be false or misleading and should contain material information necessary to ensure that consumers are not misled, consistent with the requirements of Section 37 of Jamaica's Fair Competition Act. The FTC further noted that consideration could be given to incorporating provisions similar to those proposed in the CMCP Bill into Jamaica's Consumer Protection Act (CPA), where appropriate, and to whether the CPA should expressly recognise and give effect to Jamaica's obligations under Article 176, Chapter VIII of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.

The FTC also observed that, while price transparency may provide consumers with additional market information and may support competition in some circumstances, the publication of price information may, under certain market conditions, be a factor that could facilitate coordinated conduct among competitors. The FTC further noted the potential implications for consumer welfare and market competition that may arise when designing frameworks for the publication of price information. Relevant considerations may include the time period covered by published prices, reporting frequency, market concentration, the use of pricing algorithms, and the characteristics of firms required to provide information.

Through these submissions, the FTC provided technical input to regional discussions on consumer protection, financial inclusion, market transparency, and competition policy. The submissions also reflected the FTC's experience and perspectives on issues relevant to consumer welfare and the operation of markets within the CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

FTC Develops Records of Processing Activities and Data Maps



The FTC continued its work to document and maintain information relating to its processing of personal data through the development of Records of Processing Activities (ROPA). These records form part of the Commission's data governance and compliance framework and document key aspects of its data-processing arrangements.

The ROPA records document the Commission's processing of personal data, including the categories of personal data processed, the purposes for which the data are processed, the data subjects concerned, recipients of personal data, applicable retention periods, and the measures used to safeguard personal information. The records support the identification and assessment of data protection risks and assist in maintaining documentation of the FTC's processing activities.

During the period, the FTC also developed related data maps to support the ROPA records. The data maps document the flow of personal data within the organisation and assist in identifying processing activities, information-sharing arrangements, retention requirements, and associated data protection considerations.

The development of the ROPA records and supporting data maps forms part of the FTC's ongoing data governance and compliance activities and contributes to maintaining up-to-date documentation of the Commission's personal data processing arrangements.



INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION NEWS

EU Fines Google US\$1 Billion Over Play Store and Search Practices

The European Commission has fined Google €890 million (approximately US\$1 billion) over alleged breaches of the European Union's digital competition rules, finding that the company used its Google Play app store and search engine to favour its own services and applications over competing providers.

The Commission's action follows an investigation into Google's business practices and forms part of the EU's broader efforts to ensure that major technology companies do not use their market positions to restrict competition or limit consumer choice. The EU classifies major technology companies, including Google's parent company Alphabet, as "gatekeepers" because of their control over important digital platforms and access to consumers.

Teresa Ribera, the Commission's Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition, stated that businesses should succeed based on the quality of their products rather than their ownership of a dominant platform. She also emphasised consumers' right to receive information about competing offers, including alternatives that may be cheaper or offer better value.

Google's President of Global Affairs, Kent Walker, criticised the fine, arguing that the EU's Digital Markets Act would reduce the quality of Google's products and remove features valued by European users. He also warned that the measures could negatively affect businesses and consumers.

The decision follows the EU's previous enforcement action against Google concerning its Android mobile operating system. Google recently lost its appeal against a separate antitrust fine of approximately US\$4.5 billion relating to practices the EU found restricted competition and consumer choice.

The case highlights the challenges competition authorities face in regulating digital markets, where companies that control key platforms may influence how consumers discover services and how competing businesses reach potential customers. Ensuring that digital markets remain open to competition is important for promoting innovation, consumer choice and access to alternative offers.

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