

11 June 2026

For Immediate Release

Competition Commission consults on proposed renewal of block exemption order for vessel sharing agreements in liner shipping industry

The Competition Commission (Commission) today published a notice on its proposed renewal (Notice) of the block exemption order for vessel sharing agreements (VSAs) between liner shipping companies¹ (Order), as varied in 2022, which is due to expire on 8 August 2026.

Pursuant to section 20 of the Competition Ordinance (Ordinance), the Commission would like to invite interested parties to submit representations on the Commission's proposal to renew the Order for a period of five years until 8 August 2031.

VSAs are agreements between shipping lines on certain operational arrangements, such as exchanging slots on each other's vessels or coordinating sailing timetables. The Commission first issued the Order in August 2017 in light of its assessment of the economic efficiencies generated by this category of liner shipping agreements. The Order declares that activities usually undertaken pursuant to VSAs are excluded from the application of the First Conduct Rule in the Ordinance, subject to certain conditions.² The Order was then reviewed in detail and subsequently extended in 2022 for a period of four years.³

Prior to the publication of the Notice, the Commission has, by way of an initial public consultation held between August and November 2025, conducted a second review into relevant market and industry developments since the Order's renewal in 2022.⁴ The Commission has carefully considered the submissions received during the initial public consultation and also held meetings with key industry stakeholders on this matter.

The Commission has reached the provisional conclusion that the activities of VSAs falling within the scope of the Order continue to meet the efficiency exclusion and that the Order continues to be merited and effective. As such, the Commission proposes to renew the Order on the same substantive terms for five years.

The Notice is available in English and Chinese on the Commission's website at www.compcomm.hk.

Interested parties are invited to submit representations by 6 p.m. on 13 July 2026. **Representations received after this time will not be considered.**

Submissions should be made in writing and preferably sent via email to applications@compcomm.hk, with the case number BE/0004 quoted in the subject line of the email.

¹ Competition (Block Exemption For Vessel Sharing Agreements) Order 2017

² See the Commission's [press release](#) dated 8 August 2017.

³ See the Commission's [press release](#) dated 7 July 2022.

⁴ See the Commission's [press release](#) dated 7 August 2025.



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Website: www.compcomm.hk

Representations may also be sent by post to:

Competition Commission
19/F, South Island Place,
8 Wong Chuk Hang Road,
Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong
Attn: Representations on Case BE/0004

Representations received will be posted on the Commission's website. If a representation contains confidential information, a non-confidential version of the representation should be provided to the Commission for the purpose of uploading to the Commission's website.

Further details on how to make representations or other aspects of this consultation are outlined in the Notice.
