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BY REGULAR MAIL

DG Competition – Unit F3  
Attn. Mr. Joaquin Fernandez  
Head of Unit

Rue Jozef II  
1000 Brussel

cc

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DG Competition  
Attn. Mrs. Guige-Coppen  
Rapporteur

Rue Jozef II  
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Ref.: VFP

2 July 2008

Dear Madam,  
Dear Sir,

**Re: Vlaamse Federatie van Persverkopers  
Complaint against Belgium regarding state aid granted to De Post/La Poste**

Together with Mr. Dirk Van Hove, we represent the interests of the Vlaamse Federatie van Persverkopers (“VFP”) vzw, one of the complainants in the complaint lodged against Belgium on 28 September 2005 regarding state aid granted to De Post/La Poste. The complaint was lodged by UDP Charleroi-Namur, Prodipresse, VFP, AMP and Belgique Diffusion (“the State aid Complaint”).

The State aid Complaint was one of the main topics for discussion at the most recent General Assembly of VFP. The General Assembly resolved that the unfair competition resulting from the State aid awarded to De Post remained a point of major concern to the VFP members and that contact should be made with your services so as to underscore the importance of an expeditious treatment of the State aid Complaint.

In the context of the aforesaid resolution of the General Assembly, we have established an initial contact by telephone with Mr. Fernandez.

From our telephone conversation, we understand that DG Competition is still actively investigating the matter. You indicated that your services are confronted with a difficulty in this matter, notably the qualification as state aid of the specific grant to De Post for the press delivery services (because of the fact that the amounts granted would not exceed the actual costs related to this service). We understand that for this reason, the scope of the investigation has been broadened to include the financing of De Post in general. We understand that in that framework, your services have recently addressed a request for information to the Belgian State.

In view hereof, we would like to bring the following observations of VFP to your attention:

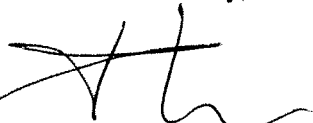
- The services for which De Post receives the aid are in direct competition with the same or similar services offered by normal market players. The aid granted is directly targeted at these services. The factual background is therefore markedly different from both the *Deutsche Post* and *Chronopost/La Poste* cases. Therefore, the relevance of the extent to which the aid covers costs incurred is not entirely clear to us. VFP would be grateful to understand this point better and, if your services would deem it useful, VFP is certainly prepared to assist your services to address this particular point with input from the market.
- VFP is somewhat concerned that the State aid Complaint is included in a much broader investigation. This may entail at least a double risk: (i) the handling of the case may require more time as the broader investigation will undoubtedly imply additional complexities and (ii) the specific anti-competitive impact of the measures addressed in the State aid Complaint may get buried in the broader case and hence not result in a sufficiently specific outcome so as to address the precise concerns of the complainants.

VFP respectfully submits that it represents several hundreds of SMEs and that by means of the State aid Complaint such SMEs have placed their trust in the Commission. In view hereof, we would be grateful to receive additional input on the case, including the possibility to assist DG Competition with additional market information (inter alia in respect of the fact that the services

offered by De Post with regard to press delivery are in direct competition with the VFP members) and clarification on the manner in which the specific complaint of VFP is intended to be handled.

On behalf of VFP and its members, we would like to thank your services for the attention that will be given to this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Frank Wijckmans

Cc : Dirk Van hove