

# Guidelines for Submissions of Data and Technical Analysis

## Preamble

These guidelines are intended to promote mutual understanding and efficiency. Submissions which do not follow these guidelines may, be returned to participants for reformatting or to request additional clarification, information, or data.

The guidelines are based on international experience and best practice. In particular, this document makes reference to the general principles articulated in the UK-based Competition and Market Authority's "*Suggested best practice for submissions of technical economic analysis from parties to the Competition Commission.*"<sup>1</sup>

## **1. General principles for the submission of electronic information**

1.1. For the purposes of submissions made by stakeholders to the Grocery Retail Market Sector Inquiry ("the Inquiry"), the following instructions will apply to data files and all forms of electronically stored information and documentation.

1.2. In addition to hard-copy documents submitted to the Inquiry, stakeholders are to submit electronically stored documents, information, or data in an electronic format that is compatible with the Competition Commission's ("the Commission") IT systems:

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<sup>1</sup> Previously known as the Competition Commission. Last accessed on 31 July 2014. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/284388/best\\_practice.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284388/best_practice.pdf)

1.2.1. Currently supported electronic data formats are listed below. The Inquiry may accept data in formats that are not listed below subject to the stakeholder obtaining authorization for the format from the Inquiry Technical Team.

1.2.2. Supported data formats for word-processing files include Microsoft word documents (.doc and .docx). Supported spreadsheet files include Microsoft Excel (.xls and .xlsx). Supported econometric analysis files include Stata (.dta). Supported database files include Microsoft Access 2007 or prior versions. Supported data format for graphic images are .jpeg and .png. Stakeholders may provide large files that require data compression in .zip format. Stakeholders are encouraged to submit PDF format documents that are machine searchable.

1.2.3. Stakeholders must submit documentation for each electronically stored data file submitted to the Inquiry. This documentation must include, without limitation, the following:

- a) File name;
- b) Type of media on which the file is submitted;
- c) The creation date of the file,
- d) Brief description of the file's subject matter, and
- e) Description of any linked data files, including their file formats, which have not been submitted to the Inquiry.

- 1.2.4. The Inquiry reserves the right to request any additional documentation or special formatting of submitted data files (i.e., the creation of directory paths on submitted disk files), as needed to assist the reading of submitted data files on Commission equipment.
- 1.2.5. In lieu of original hard-copy documents or electronically stored documents, stakeholders may submit legible copies. However, if the colouring of any document communicates any substantive information, stakeholders must submit a like-coloured photocopy.
- 1.2.6. Each submitted page or sheet must include a consecutive control number. The Stakeholder must provide the Inquiry with a Document Log listing all submitted documents.
- 1.3. The submissions must be sent to the Panel by email, post or hand delivered to the following addresses:

**Attention: Ms Louise Du Plessis**

Head of the Inquiry Technical Team

Market Inquiry into the Grocery Retail Sector

Postal Address:

The Competition Commission,

Private Bag x23,

Lynwood Ridge,

Pretoria

0040

Physical Address for hand deliveries:

THE DTI CAMPUS

Block C, Mulayo Building

77 Meintjies Street

Sunnyside,

Pretoria,

0002

**Email:** [Retail@compcom.co.za](mailto:Retail@compcom.co.za)

**Contact Number:** 012 394 3200/3320

## **2. General principles for the submission of survey evidence**

- 2.1. Stakeholders may wish to submit evidence that relies on surveys they have commissioned. If the Inquiry is to place any reliance on the evidence from surveys commissioned by stakeholders, it will be important for the stakeholders to submit the following supporting information:

2.1.1. A description of the research process. This should include a statement of the purpose of the survey and the terms of reference provided to the research team who conducted the survey. A short description detailing the identity of the members of the research team, the affiliations of the members, their respective roles in the project, and the timeline of the project and the fieldwork must be provided;

2.1.2. The questionnaire used in the survey; and

2.1.3. A description of the sampling design and research methodology must be provided and should cover:

- a) The method of selection of respondents, how they were approached, the locations and timing of fieldwork, and any other procedures and protocols applicable to the selection of respondents and engagement with them;
- b) Data collection methods and the rationale for any choice of method used;
- c) A precise description of the final sample used including details by category of the numbers that did not respond or were excluded. The description must also include a comparison of the characteristics of the sample with those of the population from which the sample was drawn; and
- d) Copies of all materials used to support the research process. This would include question scripts with pre-coded responses, procedures for categorizing responses, and supplementary materials given to fieldworkers,

interviewers, and respondents (e.g., instruction manuals, guidance notes etc.)

2.1.4. A description of the research output. This should include the presentation of the results of the survey and relevant materials used in the presentation (e.g., original presentation files and tables of results used to generate presentation files and reports). Where weighted results are reported, stakeholders must provide details of the weights used and counts of un-weighted responses.

### **3. General principles for submission of quantitative technical analysis**

Stakeholders may wish to submit evidence that reports on the results of quantitative technical analysis.<sup>2</sup> These submissions should, as far as possible, be comprehensible to non-experts. It is therefore important that stakeholders set out their analysis as clearly and completely as possible. The following general principles should be adhered to in order to ensure that submissions achieve maximum impact and explanatory power:

#### **3.1. Clarity, transparency and completeness**

3.1.1. Submissions on technical data and analysis should be presented clearly. In order to increase transparency and ensure completeness it must be possible for the

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<sup>2</sup> It is expected that most technical submissions will be economic in nature. However, the guidelines are also applicable to statistical, financial and other quantitative technical analysis

Inquiry to determine how the stakeholder's analysts reached the conclusions.

This entails stating clearly and as completely as possible:

- a) The methodology used including a description of all relevant statistical, econometric and other relevant quantitative methods used as well as justification as to why these methods were used.
- b) The assumptions made in the results. This includes a discussion of all of the assumptions made in the analysis as well as a justification on why these assumptions were made.
- c) The significance and robustness of the results. The Inquiry must be able to understand the statistical and econometric significance of reported results in order to be able to evaluate what output is most important and which is less influential. Therefore all relevant diagnostics ( $R^2$ , t-statistics, etc.) must be submitted and the statistical and econometric relevance of results explained.

3.1.2. It is important for the Inquiry to test the sensitivity of the results of quantitative analysis to plausible changes in the underlying assumptions. While the Inquiry may wish to perform their own tests, it will be important for stakeholders to provide evidence of the robustness of the analysis underlying the results in their submissions.

3.1.3. In addition, all references to academic literature must be cited.

### **3.2. Replication of results**

3.2.1. If the Inquiry is to understand how conclusions are reached it must be possible to replicate the results of the analysis using the methods employed and the data used. Stakeholders must therefore submit all relevant data files and computer code necessary for the replication of the results.

- a) The Inquiry must have access to both the raw and clean data because the aggregation and cleaning of data could have an impact on the outcome of the analysis. The format of the raw and clean data should be in line with Section 1 above.
- b) The procedures for cleaning data and the program files used for this purpose must be submitted. This is because omitted data from the cleaning process (e.g. due to there being outliers or reporting errors) may potentially bias results.
- c) The program files used for generating quantitative analysis must be submitted, together with clear and complete explanatory comments and annotations.