

South Africa

## Competition Act, 1998

Act 89 of 1998

Legislation as at 19 August 1999

FRBR URI: /akn/za/act/1998/89/eng@1999-08-19

There may have been updates since this file was created.

PDF created on 13 March 2024 at 11:01.

[Check for updates](#)



About this collection

The legislation in this collection has been reproduced as it was originally printed in the Government Gazette, with improved formatting and with minor typographical errors corrected. All amendments have been applied directly to the text and annotated. A scan of the original gazette of each piece of legislation (including amendments) is available for reference.

This is a free download from LawLibrary and is presented in collaboration with the African Legal Information Institute, the Judicial Institute for Africa and the Laws.Africa Legislation Commons, a collection of African legislation that is digitised by Laws.Africa and made available for free.

[www.lawlibrary.org.za](http://www.lawlibrary.org.za) | [info@lawlibrary.org.za](mailto:info@lawlibrary.org.za)

[www.laws.africa](http://www.laws.africa) | [info@laws.africa](mailto:info@laws.africa)

There is no copyright on the legislative content of this document.

This PDF copy is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License (CC BY 4.0). Share widely and freely.

Competition Act, 1998  
 Contents

- Chapter 1 – Definitions, interpretation, purpose and application of Act ..... 2
  - 1. Definitions and interpretation ..... 2
  - 2. Purpose of Act ..... 3
  - 3. Application of Act ..... 4
- Chapter 2 – Prohibited practices ..... 4
  - Part A – Restrictive practices ..... 4
    - 4. Restrictive horizontal practices prohibited ..... 4
    - 5. Restrictive vertical practices prohibited ..... 5
  - Part B – Abuse of a dominant position ..... 5
    - 6. Restricted application of Part ..... 5
    - 7. Dominant firms ..... 6
    - 8. Abuse of dominance prohibited ..... 6
    - 9. Price discrimination by dominant firm prohibited ..... 6
  - Part C – Exemptions from application of Chapter ..... 7
    - 10. Exemption ..... 7
- Chapter 3 – Merger control ..... 8
  - 11. Restricted application of Chapter ..... 8
  - 12. Merger defined ..... 9
  - 13. Notification of merger required ..... 9
  - 14. Competition Commission merger proceedings ..... 10
  - 15. Competition Tribunal merger proceedings ..... 10
  - 16. Consideration of mergers ..... 11
  - 17. Competition Appeal Court Merger Proceedings ..... 12
  - 18. Minister may participate in proceedings ..... 12
- Chapter 4 – Competition Commission, Tribunal and Court ..... 12
  - Part A – The Competition Commission ..... 12
    - 19. Establishment and constitution of Competition Commission ..... 12
    - 20. Independence of Competition Commission ..... 12
    - 21. Functions of Competition Commission ..... 13
    - 22. Appointment of Commissioner ..... 14
    - 23. Appointment of Deputy Commissioner ..... 14
    - 24. Appointment of inspectors ..... 15
    - 25. Staff of Competition Commission ..... 15
  - Part B – The Competition Tribunal ..... 15

26. Establishment and constitution of Competition Tribunal .....	15
27. Functions of Competition Tribunal .....	16
28. Qualifications of members of Competition Tribunal .....	16
29. Term of office of members of Competition Tribunal .....	16
30. Deputy Chairperson of Competition Tribunal .....	17
31. Competition Tribunal proceedings .....	17
32. Conflicts and disclosure of interest by members of Competition Tribunal .....	18
33. Acting by member of Competition Tribunal after expiry of term of office .....	18
34. Remuneration and benefits of members of Competition Tribunal .....	18
35. Staff of Competition Tribunal .....	18
Part C – The Competition Appeal Court .....	18
36. Establishment and constitution of Competition Appeal Court .....	18
37. Function of Competition Appeal Court .....	19
38. Business of Competition Appeal Court .....	19
39. Terms of office of members of Competition Appeal Court .....	19
Part D – Administrative matters concerning the Competition Commission and the Competition Tribunal .....	20
40. Finances .....	20
41. Annual report .....	21
42. Rules applicable to Competition Tribunal .....	22
43. Liability .....	22
Chapter 5 – Competition Tribunal procedures .....	22
44. Initiating a complaint .....	22
45. Investigation by Competition Commission .....	22
46. Authority to enter and search under warrant .....	23
47. Authority to enter and search without warrant .....	23
48. Powers to enter and search .....	24
49. Conduct of entry and search .....	24
50. Outcome of complaint .....	25
51. Referral to Competition Tribunal .....	25
52. Hearings before Competition Tribunal .....	25
53. Right to participate in hearing .....	26
54. Powers of member presiding at hearing .....	26
55. Rules of procedure .....	26
56. Witnesses .....	26
57. Costs .....	27

58. Appeals .....	27
Chapter 6 – Remedies and enforcement .....	27
59. Interim relief .....	27
60. Orders of Competition Tribunal .....	28
61. Administrative fines .....	28
62. Divestiture .....	29
63. Consent orders .....	29
64. Status and enforcement of orders .....	30
65. Civil actions and jurisdiction .....	30
66. Variation of order .....	31
67. Limitations of bringing action .....	31
68. Standard of proof .....	31
Chapter 7 – Offences .....	32
69. Breach of confidence .....	32
70. Hindering administration of Act .....	32
71. Failure to attend when summoned .....	32
72. Failure to answer fully or truthfully .....	32
73. Failure to comply with Act .....	32
74. Penalties .....	33
75. Magistrate’s Court jurisdiction to impose penalties .....	33
76. Serving documents .....	33
77. Proof of facts .....	33
Chapter 8 – General provisions .....	34
78. Regulations .....	34
79. Guidelines .....	34
80. Official seal .....	34
81. Act binds State .....	34
82. Information exchange with foreign agencies .....	34
83. Transitional arrangements and repeal of laws .....	34
84. Short title and commencement of Act .....	34
Schedule 3 .....	37
Schedule 2 .....	37

# South Africa

## Competition Act, 1998

### Act 89 of 1998

Published in Government Gazette 19412 on 30 October 1998

Assented to on 20 October 1998

There are multiple commencements

Provisions	Status
Chapter 1 (section 13); Chapter 2, Part B, section 6; Chapter 3, section 11; Chapter 4 (section 1943); Chapter 8, section 7879, section 84	commenced on 30 November 1998 by <a href="#">Proclamation R121 of 1998</a> .
Chapter 2, Part A (section 45); Part B, section 79; Part C (section 10); Chapter 3, section 1218; Chapter 5 (section 4458); Chapter 6 (section 5968); Chapter 7 (section 6977); Chapter 8, section 8083	commenced on 1 September 1999 by <a href="#">Proclamation R88 of 1999</a> .

*[This is the version of this document as it was from 19 August 1999 to 31 August 1999.]*

*[Amended by [Competition Amendment Act, 1999 \(Act 35 of 1999\)](#) on 19 August 1999]*

(English text signed by the President.)

## ACT

**To provide for the establishment of a Competition Commission responsible for the investigation, control and evaluation of restrictive practices, abuse of dominant position, and mergers; and for the establishment of a Competition Tribunal responsible to adjudicate such matters; and for the establishment of a Competition Appeal Court; and for related matters.**

The people of South Africa recognise:

That apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices of the past resulted in excessive concentrations of ownership and control within the national economy, weak enforcement of anti-competitive trade practices, and unjust restrictions on full and free participation in the economy by all South Africans.

That the economy must be open to greater ownership by a greater number of South Africans.

That credible competition law, and effective structures to administer that law, are necessary for an efficient functioning economy.

That an efficient, competitive economic environment, balancing the interests of workers, owners and consumers and focussed on development, will benefit all South Africans.

### IN ORDER TO—

- provide all South Africans equal opportunity to participate fairly in the national economy;
- achieve a more effective and efficient economy in South Africa;

provide for markets in which consumers have access to, and can freely select, the quality and variety of goods and services they desire;

create greater capability and an environment for South Africans to compete effectively in international markets;

restrain particular trade practices which undermine a competitive economy;

regulate the transfer of economic ownership in keeping with the public interest;

establish independent institutions to monitor economic competition: and give effect to the international law obligations of the Republic.

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, as follows:—

## Chapter 1 Definitions, interpretation, purpose and application of Act

### 1. Definitions and interpretation

(1) In this Act—

‘**agreement**’ includes a contract, arrangement or understanding, whether or not legally enforceable;

‘**civil court**’ means a High Court or Magistrates Court, as referred to in sections 166(c) and (d) of the [Constitution](#);

‘**confidential information**’ means trade, business or industrial information that belongs to a firm, has a particular economic value, and is not generally available to or known by others;

‘**concerted practice**’ means co-operative or co-ordinated conduct between firms, achieved through direct or indirect contact, that replaces their independent action, but which does not amount to an agreement;

‘**Constitution**’ means the [Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 \(Act No. 108 of 1996\)](#);

‘**essential facility**’ means an infrastructure or resource that cannot reasonably be duplicated, and without access to which competitors cannot reasonably provide goods or services to their customers;

‘**excessive price**’ means a price for a good or service which—

(aa) bears no reasonable relation to the economic value of that good or service; and

(bb) is higher than the value referred to in subparagraph (aa);

‘**exclusionary act**’ means an act that impedes or prevents a firm from entering into, or expanding within, a market;

‘**firm**’ includes a person, partnership or a trust;

‘**goods or services**’, when used with respect to particular goods or services, includes any other goods or services that are reasonably capable of being substituted for them, taking into account ordinary commercial practice and geographical, technical and temporal constraints;

‘**horizontal relationship**’ means a relationship between competitors;

‘**interest**’ means a member’s interest as defined in the Close Corporations Act, 1984 ([Act No. 69 of 1984](#));

‘**market power**’ means the power of a firm to control prices, to exclude competition or to behave to an appreciable extent independently of its competitors, customers or suppliers;

‘**Minister**’ means the Minister of Trade and Industry;

‘**organ of state**’ has the meaning set out in section 239 of the [Constitution](#);

‘**premises**’ includes land, any building, structure, vehicle, ship, boat, vessel, aircraft or container;

‘**prescribed**’ means prescribed from time to time by regulation in terms of [section 78](#);

‘**private dwelling**’ means any part of a structure that is occupied as a residence, or any part of a structure or outdoor living area that is accessory to, and used wholly for the purposes of, a residence;

‘**prohibited practice**’ means a practice prohibited in terms of Chapter 2;

‘**public regulation**’ means any national, provincial or local government legislation or subordinate legislation, or any license, tariff, directive or similar authorisation issued by a regulatory authority or pursuant to any statutory authority;

‘**regulation**’ means a regulation made under this Act;

‘**regulatory authority**’ means an entity established in terms of national, provincial or local government legislation or subordinate legislation responsible for regulating an industry, or sector of an industry;

‘**respondent**’ means a firm against whom a complaint of a prohibited practice has been initiated in terms of this Act;

‘**restrictive horizontal practice**’ means any practice listed in [section 4](#);

‘**restrictive vertical practice**’ means any practice listed in [section 5](#);

‘**small business**’ has the meaning set out in the National Small Business Act, 1996 ([Act No. 102 of 1996](#));

‘**this Act**’ includes the regulations and Schedules;

‘**vertical relationship**’ means the relationship between a firm and its suppliers, its customers or both.

- (2) This Act must be interpreted—
- (a) in a manner that is consistent with the [Constitution](#) and gives effect to the purposes set out in [section 2](#); and
  - (b) in compliance with the international law obligations of the Republic.
- (3) Any person interpreting or applying this Act may consider appropriate foreign and international law.

## 2. Purpose of Act

The purpose of this Act is to promote and maintain competition in the Republic in order—

- (a) to promote the efficiency, adaptability and development of the economy;
- (b) to provide consumers with competitive prices and product choices;
- (c) to promote employment and advance the social and economic welfare of South Africans;
- (d) to expand opportunities for South African participation in world markets and recognise the role of foreign competition in the Republic;
- (e) to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises have an equitable opportunity to participate in the economy; and

- (f) to promote a greater spread of ownership, in particular to increase the ownership stakes of historically disadvantaged persons.

### 3. Application of Act

- (1) This Act applies to all economic activity within, or having an effect within, the Republic, except—
  - (a) collective bargaining within the meaning of section 23 of the [Constitution](#), and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 ([Act No. 66 of 1995](#));
  - (b) a collective agreement, as defined in section 213 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995;
  - (c) the rules of a professional association to the extent that they are exempted in terms of Schedule 1;
  - (d) acts subject to or authorised by public regulation; or
  - (e) concerted conduct designed to achieve a non-commercial socio-economic objective or similar purpose.
- (2) For all purposes of this Act, a person is a historically disadvantaged person if that person—
  - (a) is one of a category of individuals who, before the [Constitution](#) of the Republic of South Africa, 1993 ([Act No. 200 of 1993](#)), came into operation, were disadvantaged by unfair discrimination on the basis of race;
  - (b) is an association, a majority of whose members are individuals referred to in paragraph (a);
  - (c) is a juristic person other than an association, and individuals referred to in paragraph (a) own and control a majority of its issued share capital or members' interest and are able to control a majority of its votes; or
  - (d) is a juristic person or association, and persons referred to in paragraph (a), (b) or (c) own and control a majority of its issued share capital or members' interest and are able to control a majority of its votes.

## Chapter 2 Prohibited practices

### Part A – Restrictive practices

#### 4. Restrictive horizontal practices prohibited

- (1) An agreement between, or concerted practice by, firms, or a decision by an association of firms, is prohibited if—
  - (a) it is between parties in a horizontal relationship and it has the effect of substantially preventing or lessening competition in a market, unless a party to the agreement, concerted practice, or decision can prove that any technology, efficiency or other pro-competitive, gain resulting from it outweighs that effect; or
  - (b) it involves any of the following restrictive horizontal practices:
    - (i) directly or indirectly fixing a purchase or selling price or any other trading condition;
    - (ii) dividing markets by allocating customers, suppliers, territories, or specific types of goods or services; or
    - (iii) collusive tendering.



- (2) An agreement to engage in a restrictive horizontal practice referred to in subsection (1)(b) is presumed to exist between two or more firms if—
  - (a) any one of those firms owns a substantial shareholding, interest or similar right in the other, or they have at least one director or substantial shareholder in common; and
  - (b) any combination of those firms engages in that restrictive horizontal practice.
- (3) A presumption contemplated in subsection (2) may be rebutted if a firm, director or shareholder concerned establishes that a reasonable basis exists to conclude that the practice referred to in subsection (1)(b) was a normal commercial response to conditions prevailing in that market.
- (4) For the purposes of subsection (2), "director" means—
  - (a) a director of a company as defined in the Companies Act, 1973 ([Act No. 61 of 1973](#));
  - (b) a member of a close corporation as defined in the Close Corporations Act, 1984 ([Act No. 69 of 1984](#));
  - (c) a trustee of a trust ; or
  - (d) a person holding an equivalent position in a firm.
- (5) The provisions of subsection (1) do not apply to an agreement between, or concerted practice engaged in by,—
  - (a) a company, its wholly owned subsidiary as contemplated in section 1(5) of the Companies Act, 1973, a wholly owned subsidiary of that subsidiary or any combination of them; or
  - (b) the constituent firms within a single economic entity similar in structure to those referred to in paragraph (a).

## 5. Restrictive vertical practices prohibited

- (1) An agreement between parties in a vertical relationship is prohibited if it has the effect of substantially preventing or lessening competition in a market, unless a party to the agreement can prove that any technological, efficiency or other pro-competitive, gain resulting from that agreement outweighs that effect.
- (2) The practice of minimum resale price maintenance is prohibited.
- (3) Despite subsection (2), a supplier or producer may recommend a minimum resale price to the reseller of a good or service provided—
  - (a) the supplier or producer makes it clear to the reseller that the recommendation is not binding; and
  - (b) if the product has its price stated on it, the words "recommended price" appear next to the stated price.

## Part B – Abuse of a dominant position

### 6. Restricted application of Part

- (1) As soon as practicable after this Act comes into operation, and at intervals of not less than five years thereafter, the Minister must, in consultation with the Competition Commission, and by notice in the *Gazette*—
  - (a) determine a threshold of annual turnover, or assets, in the Republic, either in general or in relation to specific industries, below which this Part does not apply to a firm; and
  - (b) provide a method for the calculation of annual turnover or assets.

- (2) A threshold determined by the Minister in terms of subsection (1) takes effect six months after the date of publication of that notice in the *Gazette*.

## 7. Dominant firms

A firm is dominant in a market if—

- (a) it has at least 45% of that market;
- (b) it has at least 35%, but less than 45%, of that market, unless it can show that it does not have market power; or
- (c) it has less than 35% of that market, but has market power.

## 8. Abuse of dominance prohibited

It is prohibited for a dominant firm to—

- (a) charge an excessive price to the detriment of consumers;
- (b) refuse to give a competitor access to an essential facility when it is economically feasible to do so;
- (c) engage in an exclusionary act, other than an act listed in paragraph (d), if the anti-competitive effect of that act outweighs its technological, efficiency or other pro-competitive, gain; or
- (d) engage in any of the following exclusionary acts, unless the firm concerned can show technological, efficiency or other pro-competitive, gains which outweigh the anti-competitive effect of its act:
  - (i) requiring or inducing a supplier or customer to not deal with a competitor;
  - (ii) refusing to supply scarce goods to a competitor when supplying those goods is economically feasible;
  - (iii) selling goods or services on condition that the buyer purchases separate goods or services unrelated to the object of a contract, or forcing a buyer to accept a condition unrelated to the object of a contract;
  - (iv) selling goods or services below their marginal or average variable cost; or
  - (v) buying-up a scarce supply of intermediate goods or resources required by a competitor.

## 9. Price discrimination by dominant firm prohibited

- (1) An action by a dominant firm, as the seller of goods or services, is prohibited price discrimination, if —
- (a) it is likely to have the effect of substantially preventing or lessening competition;
  - (b) it relates to the sale, in equivalent transactions, of goods or services of like grade and quality to different purchasers; and
  - (c) it involves discriminating between those purchasers in terms of—
    - (i) the price charged for the goods or services;
    - (ii) any discount, allowance, rebate or credit given or allowed in relation to the supply of goods or services;
    - (iii) the provision of services in respect of the goods or services; or
    - (iv) payment for services provided in respect of the goods or services.

- (2) Despite subsection (1), conduct involving differential treatment of purchasers in terms of any matter listed in paragraph (c) of that subsection is not prohibited price discrimination if the dominant firm establishes that the differential treatment—
- (a) makes only reasonable allowance for differences in cost or likely cost of manufacture, distribution, sale, promotion or delivery resulting from the differing places to which, methods by which, or quantities in which, goods or services are supplied to different purchasers;
  - (b) is constituted by doing acts in good faith to meet a price or benefit offered by a competitor; or
  - (c) is in response to changing conditions affecting the market for the goods or services concerned, including—
    - (i) any action in response to the actual or imminent deterioration of perishable goods;
    - (ii) any action in response to the obsolescence of goods;
    - (iii) a sale pursuant to a liquidation or sequestration procedure; or
    - (iv) a sale in good faith in discontinuance of business in the goods or services concerned.

### **Part C – Exemptions from application of Chapter**

#### **10. Exemption**

- (1) A firm may apply to the Competition Commission to exempt an agreement, or practice, or category of either agreements, or practices, from the application of this Chapter.
- (2) Upon receiving an application in terms of subsection (1), the Competition Commission may—
- (a) advise the applicant in writing that the agreement, or practice, or category of either agreements, or practices, does not constitute a prohibited practice in terms of this Chapter;
  - (b) grant a conditional or unconditional exemption for a specified term, if the agreement, or practice, or category of either agreements, or practices concerned meets the requirements of subsection (3); or
  - (c) refuse to grant an exemption.
- (3) The Competition Commission may grant an exemption in terms of subsection (2)(b), if—
- (a) any restriction imposed on the firms concerned by the agreement, or practice, or category of either agreements, or practices, concerned, is required to attain an objective mentioned in paragraph (b); and
  - (b) the agreement, or practice, or category of either agreements, or practices, concerned, contributes to any of the following objectives:
    - (i) maintenance or promotion of exports;
    - (ii) promotion of the ability of small businesses, or firms controlled or owned by historically disadvantaged persons, to become competitive;
    - (iii) change in productive capacity necessary to stop decline in an industry; or
    - (iv) the economic stability of any industry designated by the Minister, after consulting the minister responsible for that industry.
- (4) In addition to the provisions of subsections (2) and (3), the Competition Commission may exempt an agreement, or practice, or category of either agreements, or practices, that relates to the exercise of a right acquired or protected in terms of the Performers' Protection Act, 1967 ([Act No. 11 of](#)

1967), the Plant Breeder's Rights Act, 1976 ([Act No. 15 of 1976](#)), the Patents Act, 1978 ([Act No. 57 of 1978](#)), the Copyright Act, 1978 ([Act No. 98 of 1978](#)), the Trade Marks Act, 1993 ([Act No. 194 of 1993](#)) and the Designs Act, 1993 ([Act No. 195 of 1993](#)).

- (5) The Competition Commission may revoke its written advice given in terms of subsection 2(a), or an exemption granted in terms of subsection (2)(b), if—
  - (a) the advice was given, or the exemption was granted, on the basis of false or incorrect information;
  - (b) a condition for the exemption is not fulfilled; or
  - (c) the reason for granting the exemption no longer exists.
- (6) Before granting an exemption in terms of subsection (2) or (4), or revoking an exemption in terms of subsection (5), the Competition Commission must—
  - (a) give notice in the *Gazette* of the application for an exemption, or of its intention to revoke that exemption; and
  - (b) allow interested parties 30 days from the date of that notice to make written representations as to why the exemption should not be granted or revoked.
- (7) The Competition Commission must, by notice in the *Gazette*, give notice of any exemption granted or revoked in terms of this section.
- (8) The firm concerned, or any other person with a substantial material interest affected by a decision of the Competition Commission in terms of subsection (2)(b) or (c), or subsections (4) or (5), may appeal against that decision to the Competition Tribunal in the prescribed manner.

### Chapter 3 Merger control

#### 11. Restricted application of Chapter

- (1) As soon as practicable after this Act comes into operation, and at intervals of not less than five years thereafter, the Minister must, in consultation with the Competition Commission, and by notice in the *Gazette*—
  - (a) determine a threshold of combined annual turnover, or assets, in the Republic, either in general or in relation to specific industries, at or below which this Chapter does not apply to a merger;
  - (b) determine a second threshold of combined annual turnover, or assets, in the Republic, either in general or in relation to specific industries, higher than the threshold referred to in paragraph (a), for the purpose of determining categories of mergers in terms of subsection (3); and
  - (c) provide a method for the calculation of annual turnover and assets.
- (2) A threshold determined by the Minister in terms of subsection (1) takes effect six months after the date of publication of that notice in the *Gazette*.
- (3) For the purposes of this Chapter, at any time—
  - (a) "an intermediate merger" means a merger or proposed merger with a value between the then current thresholds established in terms of subsection (1)(a) and (b) respectively; and
  - (b) "a large merger" means a merger or proposed merger with a value at or above the then current threshold established in terms of subsection (1)(b).

## 12. Merger defined

- (1) For the purpose of this Chapter, "merger" means the direct or indirect acquisition or direct or indirect establishment of control, by one or more persons over all significant interests in the whole or part of the business of a competitor, supplier, customer or other person, whether that control is achieved as a result of—
  - (a) purchase or lease of the shares, interest, or assets of that competitor, supplier, customer or other person;
  - (b) amalgamation or combination with that competitor, supplier, customer or other person; or
  - (c) any other means.
- (2) A person controls a firm if that person—
  - (a) beneficially owns more than one half of the issued share capital of the firm;
  - (b) is entitled to vote a majority of the votes that may be cast at a general meeting of the firm, or has the ability to control the voting of a majority of those votes, either directly or through a controlled entity of that person;
  - (c) is able to appoint or to veto the appointment of a majority of the directors of the firm;
  - (d) is a holding company, and the firm is a subsidiary of that company as contemplated in section 1(3)(a) of the Companies Act, 1973 ([Act No. 61 of 1973](#));
  - (e) in the case of a firm that is a trust, has the ability to control the majority of the votes of the trustees, to appoint the majority of the trustees, to appoint or change the majority of the beneficiaries of the trust;
  - (f) in the case of a close corporation, owns the majority of members' interest, or controls directly, or has the right to control the majority of members' votes in the close corporation; or
  - (g) has the ability to materially influence the policy of the firm in a manner comparable to a person who, in ordinary commercial practice, can exercise an element of control referred to in paragraphs (a) to (f).

## 13. Notification of merger required

- (1) Any party to an intermediate or large merger must notify the Competition Commission of that merger no more than seven days after the earlier of—
  - (a) the conclusion of the merger agreement;
  - (b) the public announcement of a proposed merger bid; or
  - (c) the acquisition by any one of the parties to that merger, of a controlling interest in another.
- (2) A party that is required in terms of subsection (1) to notify the Competition Commission of a merger must provide a copy of that notice to a representative trade union representing the employees of any of the merging firms, and, if there is no representative trade union in one of the merging firms, the notice in respect of that firm, must be directed to—
  - (a) any registered trade union that represents a substantial number of the employees of that firm; or
  - (b) if there are no registered trade unions in that firm, the employees concerned, or representatives of the employees concerned.
- (3) The parties to an intermediate or large merger must not implement that merger until they have received approval from either the Competition Commission in terms of [section 14\(1\)](#), the

Competition Tribunal in terms of [section 15\(2\)](#) or the Competition Appeal Court in terms of [section 17](#).

#### 14. Competition Commission merger proceedings

- (1) Within 30 days after receiving notice of an intermediate merger, the Competition Commission must—
  - (a) extend the period in which it has to consider the proposed merger by a period not exceeding 60 days, and in that case, issue an extension certificate to any party that notified it of the merger; or
  - (b) after considering the merger in terms of [section 16](#)—
    - (i) approve the merger by issuing a clearance certificate;
    - (ii) approve the merger subject to any conditions; or
    - (iii) prohibit implementation of the merger.
- (2) If, upon the expiry of the 30 day period provided for in subsection (1), the Competition Commission has not issued any of the certificates referred to in that subsection, or upon the expiry of an extension period contemplated in subsection (1)(a), the Commission has not issued a certificate referred to in subsection (1)(b), the Commission will be deemed to have approved the merger, subject to subsection (5).
- (3) After receiving notice of a large merger, the Competition Commission, must refer that notice to the Competition Tribunal and to the Minister, and must within the prescribed time, forward to the Competition Tribunal and the Minister a recommendation whether implementation of the merger should be either—
  - (a) approved;
  - (b) approved subject to any conditions; or
  - (c) prohibited.
- (4) Upon making a decision in terms of subsection (1) or (2), or a referral and recommendation in terms of subsection (3), the Competition Commission must—
  - (a) issue written reasons for the decision or recommendation; and
  - (b) publish a notice of the decision, or referral and recommendation, in the *Gazette*.
- (5) The Competition Commission may revoke a decision to approve or conditionally approve a merger in terms of subsection (1) if—
  - (a) the decision was based on incorrect information for which a party to the merger is responsible;
  - (b) the approval was obtained by deceit; or
  - (c) a firm concerned has breached an obligation attached to the decision.
- (6) Despite the time limits set out in this section, if, in terms of subsection (5), the Competition Commission revokes a decision to approve a merger, the Commission may prohibit that merger even though any of those time limits may have elapsed.

#### 15. Competition Tribunal merger proceedings

- (1) If the Competition Commission approves a merger subject to any conditions in terms of [section 14\(1\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#), or prohibits a merger in terms of [section 14\(1\)\(b\)\(iii\)](#), a party to the merger may, by written notice in the prescribed form, request the Competition Tribunal to consider the conditions or prohibited merger.

- (2) Upon receiving a referral of a large merger and recommendation from the Competition Commission in terms of [section 14\(3\)](#), or a request from a party to an intermediate merger in terms of subsection (1), the Competition Tribunal must consider the merger in terms of [section 16](#), and the recommendation or decision, as the case may be, of the Competition Commission, and must within the prescribed time—
  - (a) approve the merger;
  - (b) approve the merger subject to any conditions; or
  - (c) prohibit implementation of the merger.
- (3) [Section 14\(4\)](#), (5) and (6), each read with the changes required by the context, apply to the Competition Tribunal in relation to any merger that it is required to consider in terms of subsection (2).

## 16. Consideration of mergers

- (1) Whenever required to consider a merger, the Competition Commission or Competition Tribunal must initially determine whether or not the merger is likely to substantially prevent or lessen competition, by assessing the factors set out in subsection (2), and—
  - (a) if it appears that the merger is likely to substantially prevent or lessen competition, the Commission or the Tribunal must then determine—
    - (i) whether the merger is likely to result in any technological, efficiency or other pro-competitive, gain which will be greater than, and offset, the effects of any prevention or lessening of competition, that may result or is likely to result from the merger, and would not likely be obtained if the merger is prevented; and
    - (ii) whether the merger can or cannot be justified on substantial public interest grounds by assessing the factors set out in subsection (3); and
  - (b) otherwise, must determine whether the merger can or cannot be justified on substantial public interest grounds by assessing the factors set out in subsection (3).
- (2) When determining whether or not a merger is likely to substantially prevent or lessen competition, the Competition Commission or the Competition Tribunal must assess the strength of competition in the relevant market, and the probability that the firms in the market after the merger will behave competitively or co-operatively, taking into account any factor that is relevant to competition in that market, including—
  - (i) the actual and potential level of import competition in the market;
  - (ii) the ease of entry into the market, including tariff and regulatory barriers;
  - (iii) the level, trends of concentration, and history of collusion, in the market;
  - (iv) the degree of countervailing power in the market;
  - (v) the likelihood that the acquisition would result in the merged firm having market power;
  - (vi) the dynamic characteristics of the market, including growth, innovation, and product differentiation;
  - (vii) the nature and extent of vertical integration in the market;
  - (viii) whether the business or part of the business of a party to the merger or proposed merger has failed or is likely to fail; and
  - (ix) whether the merger will result in the removal of an effective competitor.

- (3) When determining whether a merger can or cannot be justified on public interest grounds, the Competition Commission or the Competition Tribunal must consider the effect that the merger will have on—
- (i) a particular industrial sector or region;
  - (ii) employment;
  - (iii) the ability of small businesses, or firms controlled or owned by historically disadvantaged persons, to become competitive; and
  - (iv) the ability of national industries to compete in international markets.

#### **17. Competition Appeal Court Merger Proceedings**

- (1) Within 30 days after notice of a decision by the Competition Tribunal in terms of [section 15\(2\)](#), a party to the merger, or any other person who, in terms of [section 13\(2\)](#), is required to be given notice of the merger, may appeal to the Competition Appeal Court from that decision, and the Court must either—
- (a) set aside the decision of the Tribunal;
  - (b) amend that decision by ordering restrictions or by including conditions; or
  - (c) confirm that decision.

#### **18. Minister may participate in proceedings**

In order to make representations on any public interest ground referred to in [section 16\(3\)](#), the Minister may participate as a party in any merger proceedings before the Competition Commission, the Competition Tribunal or the Competition Appeal Court, in the manner provided for in rules made in terms of [section 21\(4\)](#), [27\(2\)](#) or [38\(1\)\(c\)](#), respectively.

## **Chapter 4 Competition Commission, Tribunal and Court**

### **Part A – The Competition Commission**

#### **19. Establishment and constitution of Competition Commission**

- (1) There is hereby established a body to be known as the Competition Commission, which—
- (a) has jurisdiction throughout the Republic;
  - (b) is a juristic person; and
  - (c) must exercise its functions in accordance with this Act.
- (2) The Competition Commission consists of the Commissioner and one or more Deputy Commissioners as may be necessary, appointed by the Minister in terms of this Act.

#### **20. Independence of Competition Commission**

- (1) The Competition Commission—
- (a) is independent and subject only to the [Constitution](#) and the law; and
  - (b) must be impartial and must perform its functions without fear, favour, or prejudice.



- (2) The Commissioner, each Deputy Commissioner and each member of the staff of the Competition Commission, must not—
  - (a) engage in any activity that may undermine the integrity of the Commission;
  - (b) participate in any investigation, hearing or decision concerning a matter in respect of which that person has a direct financial interest or any similar personal interest;
  - (c) make private use of, or profit from, any confidential information obtained as a result of performing that person's official functions in the Commission; or
  - (d) divulge any information referred to in paragraph 2(c) to any third party, except as required as part of that person's official functions within the Commission.
- (3) Each organ of state must assist the Commission to maintain its independence and impartiality, and to effectively carry out its powers and duties.

## 21. Functions of Competition Commission

- (1) The Competition Commission is responsible to—
  - (a) implement measures to increase market transparency;
  - (b) implement measures to develop public awareness of the provisions of this Act;
  - (c) investigate and evaluate alleged contravention of Chapter 2;
  - (d) grant or refuse applications for exemption in terms of Chapter 2;
  - (e) authorise, with or without conditions, prohibit or refer mergers of which it receives notice in terms of Chapter 3;
  - (f) negotiate and conclude consent orders in terms of [section 63](#);
  - (g) refer matters to the Competition Tribunal, and appear before the Tribunal, as required by this Act;
  - (h) negotiate agreements with any regulatory authority to co-ordinate and harmonise the exercise of jurisdiction over competition matters within the relevant industry or sector, and to ensure the consistent application of the principles of this Act;
  - (i) participate in the proceedings of any regulatory authority;
  - (j) advise, and receive advice from any regulatory authority;
  - (k) over time, review legislation and public regulations, and report to the Minister concerning any provision that permits uncompetitive behaviour; and
  - (l) deal with any other matter referred to it by the Tribunal.
- (2) In addition to the functions listed in subsection (1), the Competition Commission may—
  - (a) report to the Minister on any matter relating to the application of this Act;
  - (b) enquire into and report to the Minister on any matter concerning the purposes of this Act; and
  - (c) perform any other function assigned to it in terms of this or any other Act.
- (3) The Minister must table in the National Assembly any report submitted in terms of subsection (1)(k), and any report submitted in terms of subsection (2) if that report deals with a substantial matter relating to the purposes of this Act—
  - (a) within 14 days after receiving that report from the Competition Commission, if Parliament is in session at that time; or

- (b) if Parliament is not in session, within 14 days after the commencement of the next session.
- (4) The Minister may, in consultation with the Competition Commission, and by notice in the *Gazette*, prescribe regulations for matters relating to the functions of the Commission, including—
  - (a) forms;
  - (b) time periods;
  - (c) information required;
  - (d) additional definitions;
  - (e) filing fees;
  - (f) access to confidential information;
  - (g) manner and form of participation in Commission procedures; and
  - (h) procedures.

## 22. Appointment of Commissioner

- (1) The Minister must appoint a person with suitable qualifications and experience in economics, law, commerce, industry or public affairs to be the Commissioner for a term of five years.
- (2) The Minister may re-appoint a person as Commissioner at the expiry of that person's term of office.
- (3) The Commissioner, who is the Chief Executive Officer of the Competition Commission, is responsible for the general administration of the Commission and for carrying out any functions assigned to it in terms of this Act, and must—
  - (a) perform the functions that are conferred on the Commissioner by or in terms of this Act;
  - (b) manage and direct the activities of the Commission; and
  - (c) supervise the Commission's staff.
- (4) The Minister must, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, determine the Commissioner's remuneration, allowances, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment.
- (5) The Commissioner, on one month written notice addressed to the Minister, may resign as Commissioner.
- (6) The Minister—
  - (a) must remove the Commissioner from office if that person becomes subject to any of the disqualifications referred to in [section 28\(3\)\(a\) to \(d\)](#); and
  - (b) other than as provided in paragraph (a), may remove the Commissioner from office only for—
    - (i) serious misconduct;
    - (ii) permanent incapacity; or
    - (iii) engaging in any activity that may undermine the integrity of the Competition Commission.

## 23. Appointment of Deputy Commissioner

- (1) The Minister must appoint at least one person, and may appoint other persons, with suitable qualifications and experience in economics, law, commerce, industry or public affairs as Deputy Commissioner to assist the Commissioner in carrying out the functions of the Competition Commission.

- (2) The Minister must designate a Deputy Commissioner to perform the functions of the Commissioner whenever—
  - (a) the Commissioner is unable for any reason to perform the functions of the Commissioner; or
  - (b) the office of Commissioner is vacant.

#### **24. Appointment of inspectors**

- (1) The Commissioner may appoint any person in the service of the Competition Commission, or any other suitable person, as an inspector.
- (2) The Minister may, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, determine the remuneration paid to a person who is appointed in terms of subsection (1), but who is not in the full-time service of the Competition Commission.
- (3) An inspector must be provided with a certificate of appointment signed by the Commissioner stating that the person has been appointed as an inspector in terms of this Act.
- (4) When an inspector performs any function in terms of Chapter 5, the inspector must—
  - (a) be in possession of a certificate of appointment issued to that inspector in terms of subsection (3); and
  - (b) show that certificate to any person who—
    - (i) is affected by the exercise of the functions of the inspector; and
    - (ii) requests to see the certificate.

#### **25. Staff of Competition Commission**

- (1) The Commissioner may—
  - (a) appoint staff, or contract with other persons, to assist the Competition Commission in carrying out its functions; and
  - (b) in consultation with the Minister and the Minister of Finance, determine the remuneration, allowances, benefits, and other terms and conditions of appointment of each member of the staff.

### **Part B – The Competition Tribunal**

#### **26. Establishment and constitution of Competition Tribunal**

- (1) There is hereby established a body to be known as the Competition Tribunal, which—
  - (a) has jurisdiction throughout the Republic;
  - (b) is a juristic person;
  - (c) is a Tribunal of record; and
  - (d) must exercise its functions in accordance with this Act.
- (2) The Competition Tribunal consists of a Chairperson and not less than three, but not more than ten, other women or men appointed by the President, on a full or part-time basis, on the recommendation of the Minister, from among persons nominated by the Minister either on the Minister's initiative or in response to a call for nominations, which must be published by the Minister in the *Gazette*.

- (3) The President must—
  - (a) appoint the Chairperson and other members of the Competition Tribunal on the date that this Act comes into operation; and
  - (b) appoint a person to fill any vacancy on the Tribunal.
- (4) [Section 20](#), read with the changes required by the context, applies to the Competition Tribunal.

## 27. Functions of Competition Tribunal

- (1) Upon a matter being referred to it in terms of this Act, the Competition Tribunal may—
  - (a) grant an exemption from a relevant provision of this Act;
  - (b) authorise a merger, with or without conditions, or prohibit a merger;
  - (c) adjudicate in relation to any conduct prohibited in terms of Chapter 2 or 3, by determining whether prohibited conduct has occurred, and if so, impose a remedy provided for in Chapter 6; or
  - (d) grant an order for costs in terms of [section 57](#).
- (2) [Section 21\(4\)](#), read with the changes required by the context, applies to the Competition Tribunal.

## 28. Qualifications of members of Competition Tribunal

- (1) The Chairperson and other members of the Competition Tribunal, viewed collectively must—
  - (a) represent a broad cross-section of the population of the Republic; and
  - (b) comprise sufficient persons with legal training and experience to satisfy the requirements of [section 31\(2\)\(a\)](#).
- (2) Each member of the Competition Tribunal must—
  - (a) be a citizen of South Africa, who is ordinarily resident in South Africa;
  - (b) have suitable qualifications and experience in economics, law, commerce, industry or public affairs; and
  - (c) be committed to the purposes and principles enunciated in [section 2](#).
- (3) A person may not be a member of the Competition Tribunal if that person—
  - (a) is an office-bearer of any party, movement, organisation or body of a partisan political nature;
  - (b) is an unrehabilitated insolvent;
  - (c) is subject to an order of a competent court holding that person to be mentally unfit or disordered; or
  - (d) has been convicted of an offence committed after the [Constitution](#) of the Republic of South Africa, 1993 ([Act No. 200 of 1993](#)), took effect, and sentenced to imprisonment without the option of a fine.

## 29. Term of office of members of Competition Tribunal

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), the Chairperson and each other member of the Competition Tribunal serves for a term of five years.
- (2) The President may re-appoint a member of the Competition Tribunal at the expiry of that member's term of office, but no person may be appointed to the office of the Chairperson of the Tribunal for more than two consecutive terms.

- (3) The Chairperson, on one month written notice addressed to the Minister, may—
  - (a) resign from the Competition Tribunal; or
  - (b) resign as Chairperson, but remain as a member of the Tribunal.
- (4) A member of the Competition Tribunal other than the Chairperson may resign by giving at least one month's written notice to the Minister.
- (5) The President, on the recommendation of the Minister,—
  - (a) must remove the Chairperson or any other member of the Competition Tribunal from office if that person becomes subject to any of the disqualifications referred to in [section 28\(3\)](#); and
  - (b) other than as provided in subsection (a), may remove the Chairperson or a member from office only for—
    - (i) serious misconduct;
    - (ii) permanent incapacity; or
    - (iii) engaging in any activity that may undermine the integrity of the Tribunal.

### **30. Deputy Chairperson of Competition Tribunal**

- (1) The President must, on the recommendation of the Minister, designate a member of the Competition Tribunal as Deputy Chairperson of the Tribunal.
- (2) The Deputy Chairperson performs the functions of Chairperson whenever—
  - (a) the office of Chairperson is vacant; or
  - (b) the Chairperson is for any other reason temporarily unable to perform the functions of Chairperson.

### **31. Competition Tribunal proceedings**

- (1) The Chairperson is responsible to manage the caseload of the Competition Tribunal, and must assign each matter referred to the Tribunal to a panel composed of any three members of the Tribunal.
- (2) When assigning a matter in terms of subsection (1), the Chairperson must—
  - (a) ensure that at least one member of the panel is a person who has legal training and experience; and
  - (b) designate a member of the panel to preside over the panel's proceedings.
- (3) If, because of withdrawal from a hearing in terms of [section 32](#), resignation, illness or death, a member of the panel is unable to complete the proceedings in a matter assigned to that panel, the Chairperson must—
  - (a) direct that the hearing of that matter proceed before any remaining members of the panel subject to the requirements of subsection (2)(a); or
  - (b) terminate the proceedings before that panel and constitute another panel, which may include any member of the original panel, and direct that panel to conduct a new hearing.
- (4) The decision of a panel on a matter referred to it must be in writing and include reasons for that decision.
- (5) A decision of a majority of the members of a panel is the decision of the Tribunal.

### 32. Conflicts and disclosure of interest by members of Competition Tribunal

- (1) A member of the Tribunal may not represent any person before a panel of the Tribunal.
- (2) If, during a hearing, it appears to a member of the Competition Tribunal that a matter concerns a financial or other interest of that member contemplated in [section 20\(2\)\(b\)](#), that member must—
  - (a) immediately and fully disclose the fact and nature of that interest to the Chairperson and to the presiding member at that hearing; and
  - (b) withdraw from any further involvement in that hearing.

### 33. Acting by member of Competition Tribunal after expiry of term of office

If, on the expiry of the term of office of a member of the Competition Tribunal, that member is still considering a matter before the Tribunal, that member may continue to act as a member in respect of that matter only.

### 34. Remuneration and benefits of members of Competition Tribunal

- (1) The Minister may, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, determine the remuneration, allowances, and other benefits of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and other members of the Competition Tribunal.
- (2) The Minister may not during the term of office of a member of the Competition Tribunal, reduce the member's salary, allowances or benefits.
- (3) The Minister may determine any other conditions of appointment not provided for in this section.

### 35. Staff of Competition Tribunal

The Chairperson may—

- (a) appoint staff, or contract with other persons, to assist the Competition Tribunal in carrying out its functions; and
- (b) in consultation with the Minister and the Minister of Finance, determine the remuneration, allowances, benefits, and other terms and conditions of appointment of a member of the staff.

## Part C – The Competition Appeal Court

### 36. Establishment and constitution of Competition Appeal Court

- (1) There is hereby established a court to be known as the Competition Appeal Court, which—
  - (a) is a court contemplated in section 166(e) of the [Constitution](#) with a status similar to that of a High Court;
  - (b) has jurisdiction throughout the Republic; and
  - (c) is a court of record.
- (2) The Competition Appeal Court consists of members appointed by the President in accordance with section 174 of the [Constitution](#), and comprises—
  - (a) at least three members, each of whom is a judge of the High Court, and one of whom must be designated by the President to be Judge President of the Competition Appeal Court; and
  - (b) two other members, each of whom—
    - (i) is a citizen of South Africa, and is ordinarily resident in the Republic;

- (ii) has suitable qualifications and experience in economics, law, commerce, industry or public affairs; and
- (iii) is committed to the purposes and principles mentioned in [section 2](#).

### 37. Function of Competition Appeal Court

- (1) The Competition Appeal Court may consider any appeal from, or review of, a decision of the Competition Tribunal.
- (2) The Competition Appeal Court may—
  - (a) confirm, amend or set aside a decision or order that is the subject of an appeal or review from the Competition Tribunal; and
  - (b) give any judgment or make any order that the circumstances require.

### 38. Business of Competition Appeal Court

- (1) The Judge President of the Competition Appeal Court—
  - (a) is responsible to supervise and direct the work of the Court;
  - (b) must preside at proceedings of the Court; and
  - (c) by notice in the *Gazette*, may make rules for the proceedings of the Court.
- (2) A matter before the Competition Appeal Court must be heard by the full Court.
- (3) The decision of a majority of the members of the Competition Appeal Court is the decision of the Court.
- (4) Despite subsection (2) and (3), any matter of law arising for decision by the Competition Appeal Court, and any question as to whether a matter for decision is a matter of fact or a matter of law, must be decided only by the members appointed in terms of [section 36\(2\)\(a\)](#), and a decision by a majority of them is the decision of the court.
- (5) A decision of the Competition Appeal Court must be in writing and include reasons for that decision.

### 39. Terms of office of members of Competition Appeal Court

- (1) Subject to subsection (2)—
  - (a) sections [26\(3\)](#) and [33](#), each read with the changes required by the context, apply to the Competition Appeal Court; and
  - (b) Sections [28,29](#), [32](#), and [34](#) each read with the changes required by the context, apply to the members of the Court appointed in terms of [section 36\(2\)\(b\)](#).
- (2) In addition to the provisions of' subsection (1)(a), the following rules apply to the Judge President and each other member of the Competition Appeal Court appointed in terms of [section 36\(2\)\(a\)](#);
  - (a) A member is appointed for a fixed term determined by the President at the time of appointment.
  - (b) a member may resign from the Court by giving written notice to the President.
  - (c) a member holds office until—
    - (i) the member's term of office in the Court ends;
    - (ii) the member's resignation takes effect;

- (iii) the member is removed from office; or
  - (iv) the member ceases to be a judge of the High Court.
- (3) The Judge President is appointed for a fixed term determined by the President at the time of appointment.
- (4) The Judge president may resign from the Competition Appeal Court by giving written notice addressed to the President.
- (5) A person holds office as Judge President of the Competition Appeal Court until—
  - (a) that person's term of office in the Court ends;
  - (b) that person's resignation takes effect;
  - (c) that person is removed from office; or
  - (d) that person ceases to be a judge of the High Court.
- (6) The tenure of office, the remuneration, and the terms and conditions of appointment applicable to a judge of the High Court in terms of the Judges Remuneration and Conditions of Employment Act, 1989 ([Act No. 88 of 1989](#)), are not affected by that judge's appointment and concurrent tenure of office as a member of the Competition Appeal Court appointed in terms of [section 36\(2\)\(a\)](#).
- (7) A member of the Competition Appeal Court, appointed in terms of [section 36\(2\)\(a\)](#)—
  - (a) may be removed from the Court only if that person has first been removed from office as a judge of the High Court; and
  - (b) upon being removed as a judge of the High Court, must be removed from office as a judge of the Competition Appeal Court.

## **Part D – Administrative matters concerning the Competition Commission and the Competition Tribunal**

### **40. Finances**

- (1) The Competition Commission is financed from—
  - (a) money that is appropriated by Parliament for the Commission;
  - (b) fees payable to the Commission in terms of this Act;
  - (c) income derived by the Commission from its investment and deposit of surplus money in terms of subsection (6); and
  - (d) money received from any other source.
- (2) The financial year of the Competition Commission is the period from 1 April in any year to 31 March in the following year, except that the first financial year of the Commission begins on the date that this Act comes into operation, and ends on 31 March next following that date.
- (3) Each year, at a time determined by the Minister, the Commissioner must submit to the Minister a statement of the Competition Commission's estimated income and expenditure, and requested appropriation from Parliament, in respect of the next ensuing financial year.
- (4) The Competition Commission must open and maintain an account in the name of the Commission with a registered bank, or other registered financial institution, in the Republic, and—
  - (a) any money received by the Commission must be deposited into that account; and
  - (b) every payment on behalf of the Commission must be made from that account.



- (5) Cheques drawn on the account of the Competition Commission must be signed on its behalf by two persons authorised for that purpose by resolution of the Commission.
- (6) The Competition Commission may invest or deposit money of the Commission that is not immediately required for contingencies or to meet current expenditures—
  - (a) on a call or short-term fixed deposit with any registered bank or financial institution in the Republic: or
  - (b) in an investment account with the Corporation for Public Deposits established by section 2 of the Corporation for Public Deposits Act, 1984 ([Act No. 46 of 1984](#)).
- (7) The Commissioner—
  - (a) is the accounting officer of the Competition Commission in terms of the Exchequer Act, 1975, ([Act No. 66 of 1975](#)); and
  - (b) is accountable for all money that the Commission receives or pays, and must keep the accounting records required by that Act.
- (8) The Competition Commission—
  - (a) is exempt from the provisions of the Exchequer Act, 1975, subject to subsection (7);
  - (b) is exempt from the provisions of the State Tender Board Rules; and
  - (c) is subject to the provisions of the Reporting by Public Entities Act, 1992 ([Act No. 93 of 1992](#)).
- (9) Within six months after the end of each financial year, the Commissioner must prepare financial statements in accordance with established accounting practice, principles and procedures, comprising—
  - (a) a statement reflecting, with suitable and sufficient particulars, the income and expenditure of the Competition Commission during the preceding financial year; and
  - (b) a balance sheet showing the state of its assets, liabilities and financial position as at the end of that financial year.
- (10) The Auditor General must audit the Competition Commission's financial records each year.

#### 41. Annual report

- (1) Within six months after the end of the Competition Commission's financial year, the Commissioner must prepare and submit to the Minister an annual report in the prescribed form, including—
  - (a) the audited financial statements prepared in terms of [section 40\(9\)](#);
  - (b) the auditor's report prepared in terms of [section 40\(10\)](#);
  - (c) a report of activities undertaken in terms of its functions set out in this Act;
  - (d) a statement of the progress achieved during the preceding year towards realization of the purposes of this Act; and
  - (e) any other information that the Minister, by notice in the *Gazette*, determines.
- (2) The Minister must table in the National Assembly each annual report submitted in terms of subsection (1)—
  - (a) within 14 days after receiving that report from the Competition Commission, if Parliament is in session at that time; or
  - (b) if Parliament is not in session, within 14 days after the commencement of the next session.

#### 42. Rules applicable to Competition Tribunal

Sections [40](#) and [41](#), each read with the changes required by the context, applies to the Competition Tribunal, except that a reference in either section to the Commissioner must be read as referring to the Chairperson of the Tribunal.

#### 43. Liability

- (1) The State Liability Act, 1957 ([Act No. 20 of 1957](#)), read with the changes required by the context, applies to the Competition Commission and to the Competition Tribunal, but a reference in that Act to "the Minister of the Department concerned" must be interpreted as referring to the Commissioner, or to the Chairperson, as the case may be.
- (2) No Competition Tribunal member. Competition Appeal Court member. Commissioner, staff person or contractor is liable for any report, finding, point of view or recommendation that is given in good faith and is submitted to Parliament, or made known, under the [Constitution](#) or this Act.

### Chapter 5 Competition Tribunal procedures

#### 44. Initiating a complaint

A complaint against a prohibited practice by a firm may be initiated by the Commissioner, or submitted to the Competition Commission by any person in the prescribed manner.

#### 45. Investigation by Competition Commission

- (1) Upon initiating or receiving a complaint in terms of [section 44](#), the Commissioner must direct an inspector to investigate the complaint as quickly as practicable.
- (2) At any time during an investigation, the Commissioner may designate one or more persons to assist the inspector conducting the investigation.
- (3) A person questioned by an inspector conducting an investigation must answer each question truthfully and to the best of that person's ability, but a person is not obliged to answer any question if the answer is self-incriminating.
- (4) At any time during an investigation, the Commissioner may summon any person who is believed to be able to furnish any information on the subject of the investigation, or to have possession or control of any book, document or other object that has a bearing on that subject—
  - (a) to appear before the Commissioner or a person authorised by the Commissioner, to be interrogated at a time and place specified in the summons; or
  - (b) to deliver or produce to the Commissioner, or a person authorised by the Commissioner, any book, document or other object referred to in paragraph (a) at a time and place specified in the summons.
- (5) No self-incriminating answer given or statement made by any person to an inspector exercising powers in terms of this section will be admissible as evidence against that person in criminal proceedings against that person instituted in any court, except in criminal proceedings for perjury or in which that person is tried for an offence contemplated in [section 72](#) or [section 73\(2\)\(d\)](#), and then only to the extent that the answer or statement is relevant to prove the offence charged.

#### 46. Authority to enter and search under warrant

- (1) A judge of the High Court, a regional magistrate or a magistrate may issue a warrant to enter and search any premises that are within the jurisdiction of that judge or magistrate, if, from information on oath or affirmation, there are reasonable grounds to believe that—
  - (a) a prohibited practice has taken place, is taking place or is likely to take place on or in those premises; or
  - (b) that anything connected with an investigation into that prohibited practice is in the possession of or under the control of, a person who is on or in those premises.
- (2) A warrant to enter and search may be issued at any time and must specifically—
  - (a) identify the premises that may be entered and searched; and
  - (b) authorise an inspector or a police officer to enter and search the premises and to do anything listed in [section 48](#).
- (3) A warrant to enter and search is valid until one of the following events occurs:
  - (a) the warrant is executed;
  - (b) the warrant is cancelled by the person who issued it or, in that person's absence, by a person with similar authority;
  - (c) the purpose for issuing it has lapsed; or
  - (d) the expiry of one month after the date it was issued.
- (4) A warrant to enter and search may be executed only during the day, unless the judge, regional magistrate, or magistrate who issued it authorises that it may be executed at night at a time that is reasonable in the circumstances.
- (5) A person authorised by warrant issued in terms of subsection (2) may enter and search premises named in that warrant.
- (6) Immediately before commencing with the execution of a warrant, a person executing that warrant must—
  - (a) if the owner, or person in control, of the premises to be searched is present—
    - (i) provide identification to that person and explain to that person the authority by which the warrant is being executed; and
    - (ii) hand a copy of the warrant to that person or to the person named in it; or
  - (b) if none of those persons is present, affix a copy of the warrant to the premises in a prominent and visible place.

#### 47. Authority to enter and search without warrant

- (1) An inspector who is not authorised by a warrant in terms of [section 46\(2\)](#) may enter and search premises other than a private dwelling.
- (2) Immediately before entering and searching in terms of this section, the inspector conducting the search must provide identification to the owner or person in control of the premises and explain to that person the authority by which the search is being conducted, and must either—
  - (a) get permission from that person to enter and search the premises; or
  - (b) believe on reasonable grounds that a warrant would be issued under [section 46](#) if applied for, and that the delay that would ensue by first obtaining a warrant would defeat the object or purpose of the entry and search.

- (3) An entry and search without a warrant may be carried out only during the day, unless doing it at night is justifiable and necessary in the circumstances.

#### 48. Powers to enter and search

- (1) A person who is authorised under section [46](#) or [47](#) to enter and search premises may—
- (a) enter upon or into those premises;
  - (b) search those premises;
  - (c) search any person on those premises if there are reasonable grounds for believing that the person has personal possession of an article or document that has a bearing on the investigation;
  - (d) examine any article or document that is on or in those premises that has a bearing on the investigation;
  - (e) request information about any article or document from the owner of, or person in control of, the premises or from any person who has control of the article or document, or from any other person who may have the information;
  - (f) take extracts from, or make copies of, any book or document that is on or in the premises that has a bearing on the investigation;
  - (g) use any computer system on the premises, or require assistance of any person on the premises to use that computer system, to—
    - (i) search any data contained in or available to that computer system;
    - (ii) reproduce any record from that data; and
    - (iii) seize any output from that computer for examination and copying; and
  - (h) attach and, if necessary, remove from the premises for examination and safekeeping anything that has a bearing on the investigation.
- (2) [Section 45\(5\)](#) applies to an answer given or statement made to an inspector in terms of this section.
- (3) An inspector authorised to conduct an entry and search in terms of section [46](#) or [47](#) may be accompanied and assisted by a police officer.

#### 49. Conduct of entry and search

- (1) A person who enters and searches any premises under [section 48](#) must conduct the entry and search with strict regard for decency and order, and with regard for each person's right to dignity, freedom, security and privacy.
- (2) During any search under [section 48\(1\)\(c\)](#), only a female inspector or police officer may search a female person, and only a male inspector or police officer may search a male person.
- (3) A person who enters and searches premises under [section 48](#), must before questioning anyone—
- (a) advise that person of the right to be assisted at the time by an advocate or attorney; and
  - (b) allow that person to exercise that right.
- (4) A person who removes anything from premises being searched must—
- (a) issue a receipt for it to the owner of, or person in control of, the premises; and
  - (b) return it as soon as practicable after achieving the purpose for which it was removed.

- (5) During a search, a person may refuse to permit the inspection or removal of an article or document on the grounds that it contains privileged information.
- (6) If the owner or person in control of an article or document refuses in terms of subsection (5) to give that article or document to the person conducting the search, the person conducting the search may request the registrar or sheriff of the High Court that has jurisdiction to attach and remove the article or document for safe custody until that court determines whether or not the information is privileged.
- (7) A police officer who is authorised to enter and search premises under [section 46](#), or who is assisting an inspector who is authorised to enter and search premises under [section 46](#) or [47](#), may overcome resistance to the entry and search by using as much force as is reasonably required, including breaking a door or window of the premises.
- (8) Before using force in terms of subsection (7), a police officer must audibly demand admission and must announce the purpose of the entry, unless it is reasonable to believe that doing so may induce someone to destroy or dispose of an article or document that is the object of the search.
- (9) The Competition Commission may compensate anyone who suffers damage because of a forced entry during a search when no one responsible for the premises was present.

## 50. Outcome of complaint

After completing its investigation, the Competition Commission must—

- (a) refer the matter to the Competition Tribunal, if it determines that a prohibited practice has been established; or
- (b) in any other case, issue a notice of non-referral to the complainant in the prescribed form.

## 51. Referral to Competition Tribunal

- (1) If the Competition Commission issues a notice of non-referral in response to a complaint, the complainant concerned may refer the matter directly to the Competition Tribunal.
- (2) A referral to the Competition Tribunal, whether by the Competition Commission in terms of [section 50\(a\)](#), or by a complainant in terms of subsection (1), must be in the prescribed form.
- (3) The Chairperson of the Competition Tribunal must, by notice in the *Gazette*, publish each referral made to the Tribunal.
- (4) The notice published in terms of subsection (3) must include—
  - (a) the name of the firm whose conduct is the subject of the referral; and
  - (b) the nature of the conduct that is the subject of the referral.

## 52. Hearings before Competition Tribunal

- (1) The Competition Tribunal must conduct a hearing into every matter referred to it in terms of [section 50\(a\)](#) or [section 51\(1\)](#).
- (2) The Competition Tribunal must conduct its hearings in public—
  - (a) in an inquisitorial manner;
  - (b) as expeditiously as possible;
  - (c) as informally as possible; and
  - (d) in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

- (3) Despite subsection (2), the Tribunal member presiding at a hearing may exclude members of the public, or specific persons or categories of persons, from attending the proceedings—
  - (a) if evidence to be presented is confidential information, but only to the extent that the information cannot otherwise be protected;
  - (b) if the proper conduct of the hearing requires it; or
  - (c) for any other reason that would be justifiable in civil proceedings in a High court.
- (4) At the conclusion of a hearing, the Competition Tribunal must make any order permitted in terms of Chapter 6, and must issue written reasons for its decision.
- (5) The Competition Tribunal must provide the participants and other members of the public reasonable access to the record of each hearing, subject to any ruling to protect confidential information made in terms of subsection (3)(a).

### 53. Right to participate in hearing

The following persons may participate in a hearing contemplated in [section 52](#), in person or through a representative, and may put questions to witnesses and inspect any books, documents or items presented at the hearing:

- (a) the Commissioner, or any person appointed by the Commissioner;
- (b) the complainant;
- (c) the firm whose conduct forms the basis of the hearing; and
- (d) any other person who has a material interest in the hearing, unless, in the opinion of the presiding member of the Competition Tribunal, that interest is adequately represented by another participant.

### 54. Powers of member presiding at hearing

The member of the Competition Tribunal presiding at a hearing may—

- (a) direct or summon any person to appear at any specified time and place;
- (b) question any person under oath or affirmation;
- (c) summon or order any person—
  - (i) to produce any book, document or item necessary for the purposes of the hearing; or
  - (ii) to perform any other act in relation to this Act; and
- (d) give directions prohibiting or restricting the publication of any evidence given to the Competition Tribunal.

### 55. Rules of procedure

Subject to the Competition Tribunal's rules of procedure, the Tribunal member presiding at a hearing may determine any matter of procedure for that hearing, with due regard to the circumstances of the case, and the requirements of [section 52\(2\)](#).

### 56. Witnesses

- (1) Every person giving evidence at a hearing of the Competition Tribunal must answer any relevant question.
- (2) The law regarding a witness' privilege in a criminal case in a court of law applies equally to a person who provides information during a hearing.

- (3) The Competition Tribunal may order a person to answer any question, or to produce any article or document, even if it is self-incriminating to do so.
- (4) [Section 45\(5\)](#) applies to evidence given by a witness in terms of this section.

### 57. Costs

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), each party participating in a hearing must bear its own costs.
- (2) If the Competition Tribunal—
  - (a) has not made a finding against a respondent, the Tribunal member presiding at a hearing may award costs to the respondent, and against a complainant who referred the complaint in terms of [section 51](#) (1); or
  - (b) has made a finding against a respondent, the Tribunal member presiding at hearing may award costs against the respondent, and to a complainant who referred the complaint in terms of [section 51\(1\)](#).

### 58. Appeals

- (1) Subject to the rules of the Competition Appeal Court, a participant in a hearing referred to in [section 53](#) may—
  - (a) appeal against any decision of the Competition Tribunal, other than a decision in terms of [section 62\(3\)](#), to the Competition Appeal Court; or
  - (b) apply to the Competition Appeal Court to review a decision of the Competition Tribunal.
- (2) The Competition Appeal Court may make an order for the payment of costs against any party in the hearing, or against any person who represented a party in the hearing, according to the requirements of the law and fairness.
- (3) A judgment of the Competition Appeal Court is binding on the Competition Tribunal, and the Competition Commission.

## Chapter 6 Remedies and enforcement

### 59. Interim relief

- (1) At any time, whether or not a hearing has commenced into an alleged prohibited practice, a person referred to in [section 44](#) may apply to the Competition Tribunal for an interim order in respect of that alleged practice, and the Tribunal may grant such an order if—
  - (a) there is evidence that a prohibited practice has occurred;
  - (b) an interim order is reasonably necessary to—
    - (i) prevent serious, irreparable damage to that person; or
    - (ii) to prevent the purposes of this Act being frustrated;
  - (c) the respondent has been given a reasonable opportunity to be heard, having regard to the urgency of the proceedings; and
  - (d) the balance of convenience favours the granting of the order.
- (2) An interim order in terms of this section must not extend beyond the earlier of—
  - (a) the conclusion of a hearing into the alleged prohibited practice; or

- (b) the date that is six months after the date of issue of the interim order.
- (3) If an interim order has been granted, and a hearing into that matter has not been concluded within six months after the date of that order, the Competition Tribunal, on good cause shown, may extend the interim order for a further period not exceeding six months.

## 60. Orders of Competition Tribunal

- (1) In addition to its other powers in terms of this Act, the Competition Tribunal may—
  - (a) make an appropriate order in relation to a prohibited practice, including—
    - (i) interdicting any prohibited practice;
    - (ii) ordering a party to supply or distribute goods or services to another party on terms reasonably required to end a prohibited practice;
    - (iii) imposing an administrative fine, in terms of [section 61](#), with or without the addition of any other order in terms of this section;
    - (iv) ordering divestiture, subject to [section 62](#);
    - (v) declaring conduct of a firm to be a prohibited practice in terms of this Act, for the purposes of [section 65](#);
    - (vi) declaring the whole or any part of an agreement to be void;
    - (vii) ordering access to an essential facility on terms reasonably required;
  - (b) confirm a consent agreement in terms of [section 63](#) as an order of the Tribunal; or
  - (c) condone any breach of its rules and procedures on good cause shown.
- (2) At any time, the Competition Tribunal may adjourn a hearing for a reasonable period of time, if there is reason to believe that the hearing relates to a prohibited practice that might qualify for exemption in terms of [section 10](#).
- (3) Despite any other provision of this Act, if the Competition Tribunal adjourns a hearing in terms of subsection (2), the respondent may apply for an exemption during that adjournment.

## 61. Administrative fines

- (1) The Competition Tribunal may impose an administrative penalty only—
  - (a) for a prohibited practice in terms of sections [4\(1\)\(b\)](#), [5\(2\)](#) or [8\(a\)](#), (b) and (d);
  - (b) for a prohibited practice in terms of sections [4\(1\)\(a\)](#), [5\(1\)](#), [8\(c\)](#) or [9\(1\)](#), if the conduct is substantially a repeat by the same firm of conduct previously found by the Tribunal to be a prohibited practice; or
  - (c) if the parties to a merger have—
    - (i) failed to give notice of the merger as required by [section 13](#);
    - (ii) proceeded to implement the merger in contravention of a decision by the Competition Commission or the Competition Tribunal to prohibit that merger;
    - (iii) proceeded to implement the merger in a manner contrary to a condition for the approval of that merger imposed by the Commission in terms of [section 14](#), or the Tribunal in terms of [section 15](#); or
    - (iv) proceeded to implement the merger without the approval of the Commission or the Tribunal.



- (2) An administrative fine imposed in terms of subsection(1) may not exceed 10% of the firm's annual turnover in the Republic and its exports from the Republic during the firm's preceding financial year.
- (3) When determining an appropriate fine, the Competition Tribunal must consider the following factors:
  - (a) the nature, duration, gravity and extent of the contravention;
  - (b) any loss or damage suffered as a result of the contravention;
  - (c) the behaviour of the respondent;
  - (d) the market circumstances in which the contravention took place;
  - (e) the level of profit derived from the contravention;
  - (f) the degree to which the respondent has co-operated with the Competition Commission and the Tribunal; and
  - (g) whether the respondent has previously been found in contravention of this Act.
- (4) A fine payable in terms of this section must be paid into the National Revenue Fund referred to in section 213 of the [Constitution](#).

## 62. Divestiture

- (1) If a merger is implemented in contravention of Chapter 3, the Competition Tribunal may—
  - (a) order a party to the merger to sell any shares, interest or other assets it has acquired pursuant to the merger; or
  - (b) declare void any provision of an agreement to which the merger was subject.
- (2) The Competition Tribunal, in addition to or in lieu of making an order under [section 60](#), may make an order directing any firm, or any other person to sell any shares, interest or assets of the firm if—
  - (a) it has contravened [section 8](#), and
  - (b) the prohibited practice—
    - (i) cannot adequately be remedied in terms of another provision of this Act; or
    - (ii) is substantially a repeat by that firm of conduct previously found by the Tribunal to be a prohibited practice.
- (3) An order made by the Competition Tribunal in terms of subsection (2) is of no force or effect unless confirmed by the Competition Appeal Court.
- (4) An order made in terms of subsection (1) or (2) may set a time for compliance, and any other terms that the Competition Tribunal considers appropriate, having regard to the commercial interests of the party concerned.

## 63. Consent orders

- (1) If a complaint of a prohibited practice has been investigated by the Competition Commission, and the Commission and the respondent agree on the terms of an appropriate order, the Competition Tribunal, without hearing any evidence, may confirm that agreement as a consent order in terms of [section 60](#).
- (2) With the consent of a complainant, a consent order confirmed in terms of subsection (1) may include an award of damages to that complainant.

- (3) A consent order does not preclude a complainant applying for—
  - (a) a declaration in terms of [section 60\(1\)\(a\)\(v\)](#) or (vi); or
  - (b) an award of civil damages in terms of [section 65](#), unless the consent order includes an award of damages to the complainant.

#### **64. Status and enforcement of orders**

- (1) Any decision, judgment or order of the Competition Commission, Competition Tribunal or Competition Appeal Court may be served, executed and enforced as if it were an order of the High Court.
- (2) The Competition Commission may institute proceedings in the High Court on its own behalf for recovery of an administrative penalty imposed by the Competition Tribunal.
- (3) A proceeding under subsection (2) may not be initiated more than three years after the imposition of the administrative penalty.

#### **65. Civil actions and jurisdiction**

- (1) Nothing in this Act renders void a provision of an agreement that, in terms of this Act, is prohibited or may be declared void, unless the Competition Tribunal or Competition Appeal Court declares that provision to be void.
- (2) If, in any action in a civil court, a party raises an issue concerning conduct that is prohibited in terms of this Act, that court must not consider that issue on its merits, and—
  - (a) if the issue raised is one in respect of which the Competition Tribunal or Competition Appeal Court has made an order, the court must apply the determination of the Tribunal or the Competition Appeal Court to the issue; or
  - (b) otherwise, the court must refer that issue to the Tribunal to be considered on its merits, if the court is satisfied that—
    - (i) the issue has not been raised in a frivolous or vexatious manner; and
    - (ii) the resolution of that issue is required to determine the final outcome of the action.
- (3) The Competition Tribunal and the Competition Appeal Court share exclusive jurisdiction in respect of the following matters:
  - (a) Interpretation and application of the provisions of Chapters 2, 3, and 6, other than this section; and
  - (b) the functions referred to in [sections 21\(1\)](#), [27\(1\)](#) and [37\(1\)](#).
- (4) The Competition Appeal Court has final jurisdiction in respect of any matter referred to in subsection (3) that may be appealed to it or reviewed by it.
- (5) For greater certainty, the Competition Tribunal and the Competition Appeal Court have no jurisdiction over the assessment of the amount, and awarding, of damages arising out of a prohibited practice.
- (6) A person who has suffered loss or damage as a result of a prohibited practice—
  - (a) may not commence an action in a civil court for the assessment of the amount or awarding of damages if that person has been awarded damages in a consent order confirmed in terms of [section 63\(1\)](#); or
  - (b) if entitled to commence an action referred to in paragraph (a), when instituting proceedings, must file with the Registrar or Clerk of the Court a notice from the Chairperson of the

Competition Tribunal, or from the Judge President of the Competition Appeal Court, in the prescribed form—

- (i) certifying that the conduct constituting the basis for the action has been found to be a prohibited practice in terms of this Act;
  - (ii) stating the date of the Tribunal or Competition Appeal Court finding; and
  - (iii) setting out the section of this Act in terms of which the Tribunal or the Competition Appeal Court made its finding.
- (7) A certificate referred to in subsection (6)(b) is conclusive proof of its contents, and is binding on a civil court.
- (8) An appeal or application for review against an order made by the Competition Tribunal in terms of [section 60](#) suspends any right to commence an action in a civil court with respect to the same matter.
- (9) A person's right to damages arising out of a prohibited practice comes into existence—
- (a) on the date that the Competition Tribunal made a determination in respect of a matter that affects that person; or
  - (b) in the case of an appeal, on the date that the appeal process in respect of that matter is concluded.
- (10) For the purposes of section 2A(2)(a) of the Prescribed Rate of Interest Act, 1975 ([Act No. 55 of 1975](#)), interest on a debt in relation to a claim for damages in terms of this Act will commence on the date of issue of the certificate referred to in subsection (6).

## 66. Variation of order

- (1) The Competition Tribunal, or the Competition Appeal Court, acting of its own accord or on application of a person affected by a decision or order, may vary or rescind its decision or order—
- (a) erroneously sought or erroneously granted in the absence of any party affected by it;
  - (b) in which there is ambiguity, or an obvious error or omission, but only to the extent of correcting that ambiguity, error or omission; or
  - (c) made or granted as a result of a mistake common to all of the parties to the proceeding.

## 67. Limitations of bringing action

- (1) A complaint in respect of a prohibited practice may not be initiated more than three years after the practice has ceased.
- (2) A complaint may not be initiated against any firm that is, or has been, a respondent in proceedings under another section of this Act relating substantially to the same conduct.

## 68. Standard of proof

In any proceedings in terms of Chapter 3 or this Chapter, the standard of proof is on a balance of probabilities.

## Chapter 7 Offences

### 69. Breach of confidence

- (1) It is an offence to disclose any confidential information concerning the affairs of any person or firm obtained—
  - (a) in carrying out any function in terms of this Act; or
  - (b) as a result of initiating a complaint or participating in any proceedings in terms of this Act.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply to information disclosed—
  - (a) for the purpose of the proper administration or enforcement of this Act;
  - (b) for the purpose of the administration of justice; or
  - (c) at the request of an inspector, Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner or Competition Tribunal member entitled to receive the information.

### 70. Hindering administration of Act

It is an offence to hinder, oppose, obstruct or unduly influence any person who is exercising a power or performing a duty delegated, conferred or imposed on that person by this Act.

### 71. Failure to attend when summoned

- (1) A person commits an offence who, having been directed or summoned to attend a hearing—
  - (a) fails without sufficient cause to appear at the time and place specified or to remain in attendance until excused; or
  - (b) attends as required, but—
    - (i) refuses to be sworn in or to make an affirmation; or
    - (ii) fails to produce a book, document or other item as ordered, if it is in the possession of, or under the control of, that person.

### 72. Failure to answer fully or truthfully

A person commits an offence who, having been sworn in or having made an affirmation—

- (a) subject to [section 56](#), fails to answer any question fully and to the best of that person's ability; or
- (b) gives false evidence, knowing or believing it to be false.

### 73. Failure to comply with Act

- (1) A person commits an offence who contravenes or fails to comply with an order of the Competition Tribunal or the Competition Appeal Court.
- (2) A person commits an offence who—
  - (a) does anything calculated to improperly influence the Competition Tribunal or Competition Commission concerning any matter connected with an investigation;
  - (b) anticipates any findings of the Tribunal or Commission concerning an investigation in a way that is calculated to influence the proceedings or findings;

- (c) does anything in connection with an investigation that would have been contempt of court if the proceedings had occurred in a court of law;
- (d) knowingly provides false information to the Commission;
- (e) defames the Tribunal or the Competition Appeal Court, or a member of either of them, in their respective official capacities;
- (f) wilfully interrupts the proceedings or misbehaves in the place where a hearing is being conducted;
- (g) acts contrary to a warrant to enter and search;
- (h) without authority, but claiming to have authority in terms of section 46 or 47—
  - (i) enters or searches premises; or
  - (ii) attaches or removes an article or document.

#### 74. Penalties

- (1) Any person convicted of an offence in terms of this Act, is liable—
  - (a) in the case of a contravention of section 73(1), to a fine not exceeding R500 000-00 or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding 10 years, or to both a fine and imprisonment;
  - (b) in any other case, to a fine not exceeding R2 000-00 or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or to both a fine and imprisonment.

#### 75. Magistrate's Court jurisdiction to impose penalties

Despite anything to the contrary contained in any other law, a Magistrate's Court has jurisdiction to impose any penalty provided for in this Act.

#### 76. Serving documents

Unless otherwise provided in this Act, a notice, order or other document that, in terms of this Act, must be served on or given to a person, will have been properly served or given when it has been—

- (a) delivered to that person;
- (b) sent by registered post to that person's last known address; or
- (c) published in the *Gazette*.

#### 77. Proof of facts

- (1) In any criminal proceedings in terms of this Act—
  - (a) if it is alleged that a person at a firm is or was an employee, that person must be presumed to be an employee at that firm, unless the contrary is proved;
  - (b) if it is proved that a false statement, entry or record or false information appears in or on a book, document, plan, drawing or computer storage medium, the person who kept that item must be presumed to have made the statement, entry, record or information, unless the contrary is proved; and
  - (c) an order certified by the Chairperson of the Competition Tribunal or the Judge President of the Competition Appeal Court, is conclusive proof of the contents of the order of the Competition Tribunal or the Competition Appeal Court, as the case may be.
- (2) A statement, entry or record or information, in or on any book, document, plan, drawing or computer storage medium is admissible in evidence as an admission of the facts in or on it by the

person who appears to have made, entered, recorded or stored it unless it is proved that that person did not make, enter, record or store it.

## **Chapter 8**

### **General provisions**

#### **78. Regulations**

The Minister, by notice in the *Gazette*, may make regulations that are required to give effect to the purposes of this Act.

#### **79. Guidelines**

- (1) The Competition Commission may prepare guidelines to indicate the Commission's policy approach to any matter within its jurisdiction in terms of this Act.
- (2) A guideline prepared in terms of subsection (1)—
  - (a) must be published in the *Gazette*; but
  - (b) is not binding on the Competition Commission, the Competition Tribunal or the Competition Appeal Court in the exercise of their respective discretion, or their interpretation of this Act.

#### **80. Official seal**

The President, by proclamation in the *Gazette*, may prescribe an official seal for each of the Competition Commission, Competition Tribunal and the Competition Appeal Court.

#### **81. Act binds State**

This Act binds the State.

#### **82. Information exchange with foreign agencies**

The President may assign to the Competition Commission any duty of the Republic, in terms of an international agreement relating to the purpose of this Act, to exchange information with a similar foreign agency.

#### **83. Transitional arrangements and repeal of laws**

- (1) Subject to Schedule 3, the laws specified in Schedule 2, and all proclamations, regulations or notices promulgated or published in terms of those laws, are repealed.
- (2) The repeal of those laws specified in Schedule 2 does not affect any transitional arrangements made in Schedule 3.

#### **84. Short title and commencement of Act**

- (1) This Act is called the Competition Act and comes into operation on a date fixed by the President by proclamation in the *Gazette*.
- (2) The president may set different dates for different provisions of this Act to come into operation.
- (3) Unless the context otherwise indicates, a reference in a section of this Act to a time when this Act comes into operation must be construed as a reference to the time when that section comes into operation.

## Schedule 1

### Exemption of professional rules in terms of Section 2(c)

#### Part A

1. A professional association may apply in the prescribed manner to the Competition Commission to have all or part of its rules exempted from the provisions of Part A of Chapter 2 of this Act, provided—
  - (a) the rules do not contain any restriction that has the effect of substantially preventing or lessening competition in a market; or
  - (b) if the rules do contain a restriction contemplated in paragraph (a), that restriction, having regard to internationally applied norms, is reasonably required to maintain—
    - (i) professional standards; or
    - (ii) the ordinary function of the profession.
2. Upon receiving an application in terms of item 1, the Competition Commission may exempt the rules concerned after it has—
  - (a) given notice of the application in the *Gazette*;
  - (b) allowed interested parties 30 days from the date of that notice to make representations concerning the application; and
  - (c) consulted the responsible Minister, or member of the Executive Council.
3. The Competition Commission, in the prescribed manner, may revoke an exemption granted under item 2 on good cause shown, at any time after it has—
  - (a) given notice in the *Gazette* of its intention to revoke the exemption;
  - (b) allowed interested parties 30 days from the date of that notice to make representations concerning the exemption: and
  - (c) consulted the responsible Minister, or member of the Executive Council.
4. A professional rule is exempt, or its exemption revoked, only as of the date that notice of the exemption or revocation, as the case may be, is published in the *Gazette*.
5. The Competition Commission must maintain for public inspection a record of all professional rules that have received exemption, or for which exemption has been revoked.
6. In this Schedule—
  - ‘professional association’ means an association referred to in Part B of this Schedule;
  - ‘professional rules’ means rules regulating a professional association that are binding on its members;
  - ‘rules’ includes regulations, codes of practice and statements of principle;

#### Part B

For the purpose of this Act, a professional association is—

- (a) for each of the following professions, a governing body of that profession registered in terms of an Act mentioned below the name of that profession; or

- (b) any other association, if the Competition Commission is satisfied that it represents the interests of members of a profession referred to in paragraph (a):

**Accountants and Auditors**

Public Accountants and Auditors Act, 1991 ([Act No. 80 of 1991](#)).

**Architects**

Architects Act, 1970 ([Act No. 35 of 1970](#)).

**Engineering**

Engineering Profession of South Africa Act, 1990 ([Act No. 114 of 1990](#))

**Estate Agents**

Estate Agents Act, 1976 (Act No. 112 of 1976)

**Attorneys and Advocates**

Attorneys Act, 1979 ([Act No. 53 of 1979](#))

Admission of Advocates Act, 1964 ([Act No. 74 of 1964](#))

**Natural sciences**

Natural Scientific Professions Act, 1993([Act No. 106 of 1993](#))

**Quantity Surveyors**

Quantity Surveyors Act, 1970 ([Act No. 36 of 1970](#))

**Surveyors**

Professional and Technical Surveyors Act,1984 ([Act No.40 of 1984](#))

**Town and Regional Planners**

Town and Regional Planners Act, 1984 ([Act No. 19 of 1984](#))

**Valuers**

Valuers Act, 1982 ([Act No. 23 of 1982](#))

**Medical**

Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act, 1974 ([Act No. 56 of 1974](#))

Nursing Act, 1978 ([Act No. 50 of 1978](#))

Dental Technicians Act, 1979 ([Act No. 19 of 1979](#))

Pharmacy Act, 1974 ([Act No. 53 of 1974](#))

Veterinary and Para-veterinary Professions Act, 1982 ([Act No. 19 of 1982](#))

Chiropractors Homeopaths and Allied Health Service Professions Act, 1982 ([Act No. 63 of 1982](#))

**Miscellaneous**

Any other professional association to whom the provisions of this Schedule have been declared applicable by the Minister by notice in the *Gazette*.



## Schedule 2

### Repeal of laws (section 83)

No and year of law	Short title	Extent of repeal
<a href="#">Act No. 96 of 1979</a>	Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979	The whole
<a href="#">Act No. 58 of 1980</a>	Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Amendment Act, 1980	The whole
<a href="#">Act No. 62 of 1983</a>	Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Amendment Act, 1983	The whole
<a href="#">Act No. 12 of 1985</a>	Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Amendment Act, 1985	The whole
<a href="#">Act No. 5 of 1986</a>	Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Amendment Act, 1986	The whole
<a href="#">Act No. 96 of 1987</a>	Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Amendment Act, 1987	The whole
<a href="#">Act No. 88 of 1990</a>	Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Amendment Act, 1990	The whole

## Schedule 3

### Transitional Arrangements

1. A ruling issued in terms of section 6(1)(a) of the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), or notice issued in terms of section 14(1)(c) of that Act, in relation to an "acquisition" as defined in that Act, must be regarded for purposes of this Act to be a conditional approval of a merger as if it had been granted after this Act came into operation by the Competition Commission in terms of section 14(1)(b), or by the Competition Tribunal in terms of section 16(2)(b).
2. An arrangement entered into in terms of section 11(1) of the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), must be regarded as having been confirmed as a consent order in terms of section 63 of this Act and is valid for a period of 12 months from the date on which this Act comes into operation.

3. An exemption granted in terms of Section 14(5) of the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), must be regarded as having been granted in terms of section 10 of this Act and is valid for a period of 12 months from the date on which this Act comes into operation.
4. Any reference in any other statute to—
  - (a) the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), must be regarded as a reference to this Act;
  - (b) a "restrictive practice" or "monopoly situation" as defined in terms of section 1 of the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), must be regarded as a reference to a "prohibited practice" in terms of this Act;
  - (c) an "acquisition" as defined in terms of section 1 of the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), must be regarded as a reference to a "merger" in terms of this Act;
  - (d) the "Competition Board" as established in terms of section 3 of the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), must be regarded as a reference to the Competition Commission.
- 4F. (1) Notwithstanding sections 6 and 11, the first determinations of thresholds made by the Minister in terms of those sections must be made before the date on which this Act comes into operation.  
(2) Notwithstanding sections 6(2) and 11(2), the first determinations contemplated in subsection (1) take effect on the date on which this Act comes into operation.

*[item 4F inserted by section 1(d) of [Act 35 of 1999](#)]*

5. When this Act comes into operation an officer or employee appointed in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994, to serve the Competition Board established by the Maintenance and Promotion of Competition Act, 1979 ([Act No. 86 of 1979](#)), continues to be an officer or employee under the Public Service Act, subject to the direction of the Department of Trade and Industry.
6. If an officer or an employee referred to in item 5 is appointed as an officer or employee of the Competition Commission, the accumulated value of that person's contributions to any pension fund, together with the accumulated value of the contributions made to that fund by that person's employer, may be transferred to a pension fund established for the benefit of the staff of the Commission.