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No
Submission type
Have Your Say
What should be the priorities for a competition policy reform agenda to ensure that efficient businesses, large or small, can compete effectively and drive growth in productivity and living standards?
To ensure that, in fact, there is competition. In my opinion large and multinational business has become far too powerful. It is now dictating all the terms. From my bitter experience (fuel industry) large companies do not compete with each other. They have divided the world up between them. In a small country like Australia, which still has an enormous amount of growing to do, it's extremely important that small business is encouraged and assisted against predatory practices from the large companies. This is now quite clear in the food industry. Unless stopped, the same will happen there as did with the fuel industry. Government will never be able anymore to force competition between majors. It's therefor essential that it promotes small business in order to ensure that human enterprise does not die.
Are there unwarranted regulatory impediments to competition in any sector in Australia that should be removed or altered?
From my experience (1990-2003) the role of the ACCC was counterproductive in a sense that it was just a mouthpiece for the major corporations. It's interesting to now hear Alan Fels calling for control of big business. Where was he when we needed him? Apart from somehow ensuring that competition is maintained and stopping predatory practices (best achieved by setting limits to the size of market share), government should be out of business' hair.
Are government-provided goods and services delivered in a manner conducive to competition, while meeting other policy objectives?
I cannot think of anything specific. But the practice of allowing Coles and Woolworth (in Australia's case) to dictate where and how shopping centres are built, is abhorrent. This includes other anti-competitive and corrupt pro-big business practices by State- and local government.
Is there a need for further competition-related reform in infrastructure sectors with a history of heavy government involvement (such as the water, energy and transport sectors)?
I believe it's time for us to think about re-nationalising some of these services, including banking. Australia is too small a country to leave all our natural resources at the beck and call of multinationals. We are becoming more and more like slaves of international systems. Globalisation is fine as long as there is some kind of level playing field. The way things are at present, Australia will always lose out in the long run. There are too few of us to fight back.
Would there be a public benefit in encouraging greater competition and choice in sectors with substantial government participation (including education, health and disability care and support)?
See comments above: not for the time being. We have already given away our prisons and some hospitals to Serco, which is only competing with Serco. Big mistake. Next will be the military and off we go to war again, it does not matter where.
Are the current competition laws working effectively to promote competitive markets, given increasing globalisation, changing market and social structures, and technological change?
NO. See comments above. Unfortunately the free market is dead already.
Are competition-related institutions functioning effectively and promoting efficient outcomes for consumers and the maximum scope for industry participation?
NO

What institutional arrangements would best support a self-sustaining process for continual competition policy reform and review?

You are right. The entire institution needs to change. Starting with governments which are not beholden to big business. We have to look after people, not money. All through history, small business has carried the can, to the benefit of everybody. We have become lazy and allowed capitalism to drive small business away in favour of capital itself, which only looks after creating more money, rather than produce anything worthwhile for the world. The result is hunger and misery everywhere and the climate being destroyed. I believe that we can still stop this process by accepting that the pursuit of economic growth is killing us and by ensuring that private enterprise does not die..