

MEDIA RELEASE



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ACCC seeks further views on ANZ's proposed acquisition of Suncorp Bank

The ACCC has released a statement of preliminary views on ANZ Banking Group's (ASX:ANZ) proposed acquisition of Suncorp Group's (ASX:SUN) banking arm.

The ACCC's review so far has been focused on home loans and retail deposits, agribusiness banking and small and medium sized enterprise banking, as these are the areas where interested parties have raised the most issues. It is also considering how the proposed acquisition would affect competition in the banking sector more generally.

"We have today set out our initial views for further consideration and are calling for further submissions from industry and consumers on how the proposed acquisition may impact competition," ACCC Deputy Chair Mick Keogh said.

"We are seeking comment on issues including the extent to which it will impact lending rates, deposit rates, fees and charges, consumer choice, service levels, and innovation."

"Our home loan price inquiry reports of 2018 and 2020 showed competition between the biggest four banks has been at best muted. Any acquisition of a potential rival by one of the major banks must be closely considered," Mr Keogh said.

"Our statement of preliminary views outlines the key competition issues we've identified to date. Before we finalise our views, we welcome further submissions from stakeholders and consumers alike on the issues raised. After we consider submissions from consumers and interested parties, we will conclude our review and expect to announce our decision in mid-June."

"We are also eager to hear from stakeholders about whether they think the acquisition will have any public benefits," Mr Keogh said.

The ACCC can only grant authorisation if it is satisfied in all the circumstances that either there is not a likely substantial lessening of competition, or that there are likely to be public benefits that outweigh any public detriments.

The ACCC's final decision is currently scheduled for 12 June 2023. Submissions can be made to the ACCC until 18 April 2023.

Further information can be found on the ACCC's public register: [ANZ proposed acquisition of Suncorp Bank](#)

Notes to editors

ANZ has applied for merger authorisation to acquire Suncorp Bank. The merger authorisation process is an alternative to the [informal merger review process](#). The informal merger review process is used for the vast majority of merger matters that come before the ACCC.

In general, the ACCC has 90 days to make its decision on applications for merger authorisation, although it can extend the timeframe if the applicant agrees. In this case, ANZ

has agreed to an extension, meaning the ACCC now has until 12 June 2023 to make its decision.

More information on the merger authorisation process, including the applicable legal test the ACCC must apply can be found here: [Merger authorisation guidelines](#).

Background

ANZ and Suncorp Group are publicly listed financial institutions which offer retail and business banking products and services in Australia.

On 2 December 2022, the ACCC received an application for merger authorisation from ANZ in relation to its proposal to acquire Suncorp Bank.

The proposed acquisition involves ANZ acquiring the banking arm of Suncorp Group. Suncorp Group also owns and operates, via other entities, an insurance business in Australia and a separate insurance business in New Zealand. Those insurance businesses do not form part of the proposed acquisition and will continue to be operated by Suncorp Group.

In response to the application, the ACCC sought the views of a range of interested parties including providers of banking and financial services, consumer organisations, and brokers and aggregators.

Submissions are available on the ACCC's public register, except if information has been excluded for confidentiality reasons or raise legal issues.

In addition to the ACCC's review, the proposed acquisition is subject to:

- Merger authorisation under the Competition and Consumer Act
- Federal Treasurer approval under the Financial Sector (Shareholdings) Act (if satisfied the acquisition is in the national interest)
- Queensland Treasury making amendments to the State Financial Institutions and Metway Merger Act (which currently requires Suncorp's head office and key personnel to be in Queensland).

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