

PRESS RELEASE

The CNMC expands its investigation into more companies active in the scrap metal sector

- During last week, the CNMC conducted additional inspections to those carried out in November.
- The investigation focuses on potential coordination for setting up scrap prices, as well as finished carbon steel products prices.

Madrid, 6 March, 2020- The CNMC expands its investigation into several companies for potential anti-competitive practices, including possible coordination for setting up purchase prices of scrap, as well as the sale prices of finished carbon steel products, especially long products.

Specifically, the CNMC carried out new inspections on 3rd, 4th and 5th March in the market for the purchase of scrap to produce steel, as well as in the market for manufacturing and marketing finished carbon steel products, especially long products.

The new inspections carried out are part of the investigation opened by the CNMC after unannounced inspections conducted between 27th-29th November 2018, at the headquarters of several competing companies. The firms may have colluded to set prices for their suppliers of scrap for making steel, and to set the sale prices of finished carbon steel products, especially long products.

Inspectors from local competition authorities collaborated with the CNMC in the regions where some of the inspected companies are located.

Dawn-raids represent a preliminary step in the process of investigating the alleged anti-trust behaviours and do not presume the outcome of the investigation or the guilt of the companies inspected.

Disciplinary proceedings will be formally initiated in case the inspection finds signs of practices prohibited by the Anti-Trust Law. Agreements between competitors constitute a very serious violation of anti-trust law and can lead to fines of up to 10% of the total turnover of the investigated companies.

The investigation of cartels is one of the CNMC's top priorities, given the particular seriousness of their consequences on consumers and on the proper operation of the markets.

To this end, the CNMC offers a [leniency programme](#), whereby companies that provide information about a cartel in which they participated might receive full or partial immunity from fines.

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