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Dear Lucy,

Thank you for your query raised during Second Reading of the UK Internal Market Bill, regarding why the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is best placed to host the new Office for the Internal Market (OIM).

The choice of delivery vehicle for the Office for the Internal Market was subject to a detailed analytical assessment which considered a full range of options for the delivery of the UK Internal Market functions, including delivering in-house, through existing bodies and through a newly established body. Based on this assessment, the CMA emerged as the most appropriate body to fulfil this new role.

The Competition and Markets Authority has built up a wealth of expertise and experience that makes it a natural fit to house the Office for the Internal Market. The CMA has significant existing technical and economic expertise, which will prove important in monitoring the further development of the UK internal market. Moreover, as you have noted, the CMA has a global reputation for promoting competition for the benefit of consumers and the economy more widely. This will be highly relevant in the reporting of the OIM.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to reinforce that the advising, reporting, and monitoring undertaken by the OIM will be carried out independently from UK Government Ministers and devolved administrations, ensuring impartiality and transparency when developing its evidence base. The Government will not have a role in the OIM's day-to-day operations.

I hope this response clarifies the Government's decision to choose the CMA as the most appropriate delivery vehicle for the OIM. Thank you for your continued involvement in the passage of the Bill.

Lord Callanan