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PRESS RELEASE

The Competition Commission adopts an infringement decision against two gas supply companies (“Gas Supply Company of THESSALONIKI S.A.” and “Gas Supply Company of Thessaly S.A”) for infringement of Article 2 of L. 703/77 (abuse of dominance).

In its unanimous decision No **516/VI/2011** upon completion of the evidential proceedings, the Competition Commission held, following a complaint filed by the company “CH. DIMOVASSILIS & CO E.E.”, that the companies “Gas Supply Company of THESSALONIKI S.A.” (hereinafter referred to as EPA of Thessaloniki) and “Gas Supply Company of Thessaly” (hereinafter referred to as EPA of Thessaly) abused their dominant position within the meaning of Article 2 of L. 703/77, from February 2006 onwards.

In particular, the Competition Commission concluded that EPAs of Thessaloniki and Thessaly abused their dominant position on the relevant market pertaining to the authorisation of natural gas installations, by way of discrimination, as they did not accept the use of certain types of pipes for gas indoor installations (without due justification). This practice resulted to an impediment of competition in the relevant market, while placing competitors-suppliers of gas pipes which are active in the neighboring market for flexible steel pipes at a competitive disadvantage. The said practice also narrowed choices to the detriment of consumers.

By its decision, the Competition Commission ordered the undertakings concerned to cease the infringement, while threatening with the imposition of a daily fine of **5,000.00** Euros in case of non-compliance. By the same decision, the Commission

imposed on EPA of Thessaloniki and EPA of Thessalia fines totalling **419,781.88 €** and **201,201.28 €** respectively for the infringement of Article 2 of L. 703/77.

In addition, the Commission imposed a fine of **20,000 €** on the first of the aforementioned companies for failing to respond in due time to information requests issued by the authority, and a fine of **15,000 €** on the second company for providing incomplete information in response to information requests.

Finally, the Competition Commission ordered the undertakings concerned to inform installation engineers and technicians via press releases about the possibility of the flexible CSST steel pipes to be used in indoor natural gas installations, according to the applicable Technical Regulation, just as copper and steel pipes, and to modify accordingly the model studies for indoor installations posted on their websites (by including explicit models also for the flexible CSST steel pipes-Gastite of the complainant).