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Channel Islands Competition and Regulatory Authority PR Brief

Who we are?

CICRA (the Channel Islands Competition and Regulatory Authorities) comprises the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority (JCRA) and the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority (GCRA). We are independent of the States of Jersey and Guernsey.

We employ nine staff and have offices in Jersey and Guernsey.

Responsibilities

Our responsibilities encompass both competition law and economic regulation.

Specifically we are responsible for the administration and enforcement of competition law across the Channel Islands together with the economic regulation of the telecom, ports and postal sectors in Jersey and the telecoms sector in Guernsey.

Our strategic aims

The overarching aim of CICRA is to ensure markets work well for consumers.

Our Strategic Aims document provides more detail including our prioritisation principles when carrying out our role.

Who we work with

We work in partnership with a range of organisations across the Channel Islands, the UK and internationally. These include:

- Trading Standards
- Citizens Advice
- Jersey Consumer Council
- Business groups
- Government departments
- Fellow competition and economic regulatory bodies across the world

What we are looking for

We are a professional, pragmatic and consumer-minded economic regulator as well as being a

competition law enforcement body and we wish to improve the perception of the organisation across the Channel Islands, through the following three areas of focus:

- Attain and maintain a position where key stakeholder groups understand and value the role given to CICRA
- Attain and maintain a position where there is strong trust and confidence in CICRA as a capable body fulfilling its role
- Establish strong alliances that both support CICRA's raison d'être and inform its priorities

Why do we want to do this?

We now have clear policies from the CI governments to improve the economic future of the Islands. (Competition Law and Ports will follow) So we want to make CICRA more engaging and easier to understand, especially our aims and the value we provide to society. We have the desire to be more pragmatic in our approach and improve communication and relationships with key stakeholders.

CICRA is seeking to provide an open environment for regulated businesses, stakeholders and businesses to understand their responsibilities and how CICRA can help ensure they remain compliant with the laws that we administer without the need to implement formal proceedings, while understanding the consequences of non-compliance.

We are a future-looking economic regulator and competition law enforcement body; our ultimate aim is to benefit the economy as a whole, which obviously includes businesses and household consumers. We support fair dealing businesses which flourish when markets are competitive. We want to create an environment, which acts in the best interests of consumers.

Transparency? We're being accountable, focused and coherent in every decision we make, ensuring all our stakeholders are aware of our aims and decisions. Our greatest challenge, but ambition, is that the Islanders trust our decisions are in their best interest and by being clear and taking an open approach we can improve perceptions and be seen as adding value to the economies and the people of the Channel Islands.

The final but the most important challenge for CICRA is providing an economic regulatory framework and competition law enforcement approach that cuts out the unnecessary and focuses on government policies and what our Islanders need to ensure businesses are able to provide valued services. In practice, this means that we will focus on areas that add true value to the economies of the Islands, ensuring businesses act in a responsible manner in line with their licence or competition obligations.

We need to be better at telling our story in social media, so we are able to control our messages in a way that relates to our stakeholders. We need to look at the value of Twitter, Facebook and also get good engagement and conversation on LinkedIn.

Our goal is to improve the current perception of CICRA and maintain a positive profile across the CI, with well-informed supportive stakeholders.

What we need from you.

We want to be the best at what we do, we want to work with outstanding people who share our aims, our vision and our values. We are looking for a true partner.

Many businesses/organisations will say that they want a 'partnership' or to 'work as one team', but this is something that we whole-heartedly believe in and don't want to work in any other way; we don't want a 'you' and 'us', we want 'us'.

We're on a new journey and as such, need to know you believe in what we are trying to do as much as we do, and we want you to come on this journey with us.

Our relationship with you is key, but alongside this there are of course key things we need and expect from our PR partner to work on and deliver.

We have the challenge of finding a good balance between being a regulatory organisation subject to legal processes and duties while taking a pragmatic approach. Building trust & confidence with stakeholders who understand and value the role we perform are key aims of ours. We want to tell our story in an engaging way that is transparent and in conjunction with other stakeholders where possible.

We need to help build our reputation but tell the CICRA story in the most creative ways possible, to those key stakeholder groups.

The Brief

The first objective: How can we use PR to maximise what for us, is a complex set of messages and aims across all sectors of the Islands? Objective 1 is the Understood and Valued role we perform.

The second is: The bigger picture; how do you think we should behave as a regulator to inspire Trust and Confidence? How should we approach PR given our current perceived position? What should we be saying to whom and where should we be seen, what will be your role?

Objective 1: We need to reset what the public believe a regulator can be and do – “The Understood and Valued role.”

We must reset what people think what CICRA can be or deliver. To do that we're going to behave in a more open and transparent manner; by providing an environment that stakeholders have confidence in engaging with, instead of being primarily reactive. By providing something that stakeholders say 'CICRA I understand how your role helps me get a better deal, or, enables me to compete in a fair environment' or 'I might not like your decision, but I understand why you have done it this way'.

The extent of growth in positive perceptions among key stakeholders of our role will be a key yardstick of our success in this area.

We want you to help us make this change and maintain a positive position in the future.

To reset what people think of economic regulation/competition law enforcement we need to behave differently. We need to create a new benchmark for how we engage with our stakeholders;

- Reset of regulatory approach; out with the old and in with the new
- Push the reset button and take a new PR approach that people will believe in
- We want to partner with the media, being open and transparent
- We need to produce a new tone and language to use in all our communications
- We want to create a desire for stakeholders to work and communicate with us

We need to approach communications in an appropriately progressive way, our communications shouldn't just be the things we need to say but also develop some thought leadership and what good competition /regulation looks like.

There is no one big event or campaign that will change the long term perception of CICRA, but a sustained, carefully coordinated approach is needed.

As such, we want to know the way you think and how you'd approach a short-term change and PR campaign required to achieve our objectives:

Phase 1

- How do we get the right people interested? How do we use stakeholders to assist us
- How do we introduce our new approach? How do we build interest and a real sense that something is going to change?
- How do we start building momentum?
- How do we involve multiple audience; retail, business and other stakeholders?

Phase 2

- How should it be managed? How do we use social media? What do the influencers do? What are the narratives we want media to pick up?
- How do we use media partners/channels?
- What assets do we want to create?

Phase 3

- What is the on going narrative and how does this drive momentum?
- What should come next?

Objective 2: The bigger picture - How do you think we should approach our new first year in the world of PR? How can we be different, more creative and relevant to each of our stakeholder groups ? How do we find the balance between building trust and a solid reputation vs telling the CICRA story, building on our accomplishments to date while demonstrating how we can be more relevant in future? Where should we be seen? What should we be talking about? What can we do to set us apart from the past? We want to know how creative you can be?

Challenges – the current environment

We find ourselves in a situation where opinion in several quarters is either negative or people have no real understanding of what value CICRA provides, so they do not understand why CICRA is necessary.

We also have a number of politicians who are actively working against CICRA and challenging the need for the current regulatory and competition law framework. This is either due to personal gripes or a lack of understanding of our remit and value to the Islands.

There has been no formal engagement strategy in place, which has resulted in many myths about how and what work CICRA undertake across the Channel Islands.

We have not measured the public perception in any comprehensive manner, which can lead to being measured by public opinion in the media. Few appear willing to voluntarily promote CICRA or tell a good story.

Our relationship with the media needs to be reevaluated. Too often we have been subject to inaccurate information being printed and this can then become fact in people's minds.

A good PR outcome would be:

- People have a view of CICRA based on facts
- Politicians are well informed and the majority have confidence in CICRA
- Stakeholders are well informed and advocates of the work we do and the value we add to businesses and consumers
- The media provide CICRA with an opportunity to respond to any competition or regulatory stories before they go to print
- We are seen to be value for money

When we want to hear back:

We are aware that this is a rather large brief and we are looking for a lot, so don't worry, we aren't expecting a change of brand or high level marketing campaigns and all of the answers today. But, we would like to know how you think we can achieve our objectives by 12th April 2018. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Footnote:

It is important that any business responding to this brief should consider and make CICRA aware of any potential conflict of interest that may affect their ability to carry out this work across the Channel Islands.

You must be able to build and sustain excellent key stakeholder relationships and have had previous experience of advising on political and economic Channel Island issues.

Should you wish to meet with us prior to your submission we will be available for further discussion on 10 April 2018.

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