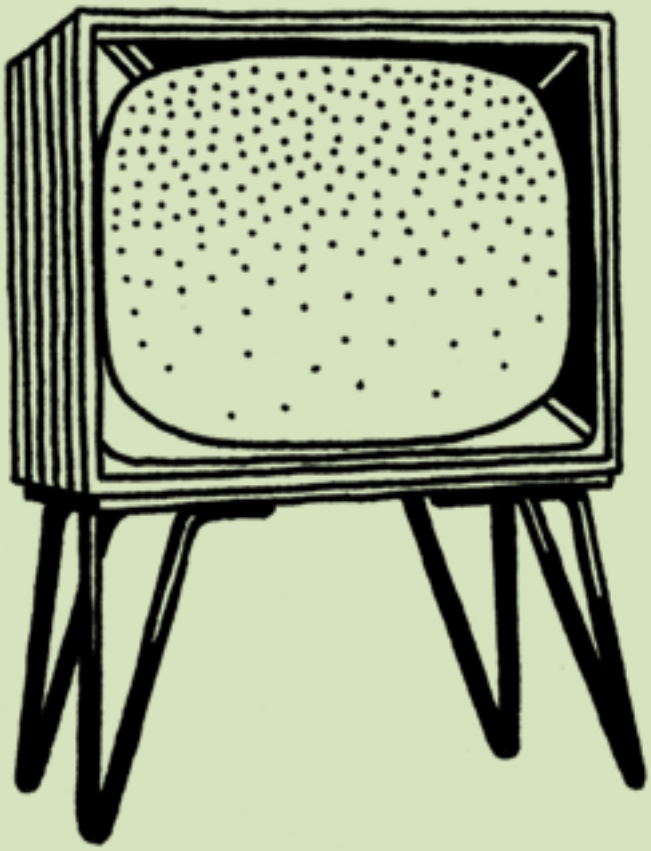
BUREAU BRANDEIS

CARTEL DAMAGES



QUARTERLY REPORT II 2017

We are pleased to present the latest quarterly report on cartel damages litigation

Amsterdam, September 2017

During the second quarter of 2017 there have once again been interesting developments in the area of civil lawsuits and legislation.

In the Netherlands, two days of hearings were held in one of the proceedings regarding the Air Cargo case. These hearings concerned the applicable law and the legal validity of the assignment of the claims. In this report we will examine the discussion that took place during the hearings. The subsequent interlocutory rulings of July 2017 will be discussed in the following quarterly report.

In the United Kingdom, the first cartel damages lawsuit has been filed against the participants of the trucks cartel for which the European Commission imposed fines in July 2016. It is expected that more parties will start cartel damages proceedings in the coming period.

New cartel damages lawsuits are also expected following the judgment of the European Court of Justice of last April in connection with the cartel on heat stabilizers. The Court of Justice confirmed the fines that the European Commission imposed on Akzo Nobel for this cartel. The Court of Justice has accordingly also confirmed that unlawful pricing agreements were made between 1987 and 2000.

We hope this summary proves to be useful for practitioners and academics. We welcome any additions or comments you may have regarding this report.

Hans Bousie, **Louis Berger**,
Sophie van Everdingen and **Nammy Vellinga**

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1

Private enforcement in cartel damages claims – case law

The Netherlands

- Hearings took place on 16 and 18 May 2017 in the cartel damages case of Stichting Cartel Compensation ("SCC") versus the (alleged) members of the Aircargo cartel ("KLM & others") at the District Court of Amsterdam. This concerns one of a number of cases in the matter of the Air Cargo cartel between injured parties and airline companies that are currently pending before the court in the Netherlands.

The key issue during the hearing of 16 May 2017 was which national law the Amsterdam court should apply to this case and what the objective link should be for making this choice. One of the guiding principles in this respect is the following question. Where did the unlawful act take place? Would this be the place where the cartel agreement was made (Handlungsort) or would this be the place where the cartel agreement was put into practice (Erfolgsort)? And what importance does this have for the risk of fragmentation and the principle of effectiveness? At the time the damages occurred, Rome II Regulation was not in force yet. The District Court made it known that it wished to refer questions to the Supreme Court for a preliminary ruling regarding which law should be applied.

The key issue during the hearing of 18 May 2017 was whether the claims of the shippers were transferred to SCC in a legally valid manner as well as the question of who should bear the burden of proof in relation to this and what needs to be proved. Must the debtor (KLM & others) trust that the holder of a deed of assignment (SCC) is also an entitled party in the claim? Or in the event that this is disputed by KLM & others, must SCC prove that it is indeed entitled to the claims?

In addition, the parties were allowed to give their opinion with regard to the meaning of the new decision from the European Commission in the Aircargo case and the consequences of this for the proceedings at the District Court of Amsterdam.

The next judgment from the District Court of Amsterdam in the Aircargo case is expected on 26 July 2017. The outcome will be incorporated in the Q3 2017 report.

United Kingdom

- In Q2 and Q3 2016, we touched upon the antitrust proceedings between MasterCard Inc. & Others versus Deutsche Bahn AG & Others before the High Court of England and Wales. The decision *"to give the claimants (Deutsche Bahn AG & Others) permission to amend their claim form and particulars of claim to introduce a new claim, which was to be deemed for limitation purposes to have been commenced on the dates when the respective sets of proceedings were commenced by the claimants in December 2012 and February 2013 under the principle of relation back set out in section 35(1)(b) of the Limitation Act 1980"* was appealed by MasterCard. The principle of "Relation Back" entails that an act done today is to be treated as if it were done earlier. The parties agreed that the Relation Back principle was to be applied if the new claim

"arises out of the same facts or substantially the same facts". On 12 April 2017, the England and Wales Court of Appeal allowed MasterCard's appeal. The England and Wales Court of Appeal ruled that the new claim did not arise from the same facts or substantially the same facts.[1]

- On 25 May 2017, in the proceedings between Dorothy Gibson and Pride Mobility Products Limited, Dorothy Gibson withdrew the application to launch an opt-out class action against the mobility scooters manufacturer.[2] In Q1 2017, we mentioned that the class certification was adjourned. Dorothy Gibson was given the chance to reformulate her claim. As a result of the withdrawal of the application, these proceedings came to an end.

- In Q3 2016, we mentioned the fine imposed by the European Commission on the truck manufacturers DAF, Volvo/Renault, Daimler, MAN and Iveco. On 14 June 2017, a UK road transport trade association, RHA, issued a statement in which it concluded that the injured parties are entitled to £ 6,000 per truck. This would mean that RHA plans to bring a claim that is worth as much as £ 3.6 billion.[3] RHA intends to bring a group claim before the Competition Appeal Tribunal.

- On 7 June 2017, in the cartel damages case between Vodafone Group Services Limited & Others ("Vodafone") and Infineon Technologies AG & Others ("Infineon"), the England and Wales High Court issued a decision. Vodafone is an indirect purchaser of SIM cards. On 3 September 2014, the European Commission fined Infineon among others for acting in breach of the cartel prohibition with regard to smart card chips.[4] Vodafone started a follow-on damages claim for the period that Infineon was deemed by the European Commission to be in the cartel. Vodafone started a stand-alone damages claim for the period before and after the cartel as established by the European Commission.

Vodafone is seeking further disclosure as it finds Infineon's data disclosure incomplete and seeks to broaden the disclosure to:

> *"All documents and data held by the Defendants/ Part 20 Defendants which show their share of the smart card chip market during the period from January 1999 to December 2012 including documents and data which is relevant to establishing the Defendants'/Part 20 Defendant's share of supply to: (i) SIM card manufacturers as a whole; and (ii) individual SIM card manufacturers."*

The England and Wales High Court is not persuaded as there will already be information publicly available and information that can be gleaned from what will be disclosed. The judge is not of the opinion that *"any worthwhile improvement in the accuracy bearing in mind the costs involved*" will be made. [5]

Germany[6]

- On 1 December 2016, the Higher Regional Court of Hamm (OLG Hamm) issued a decision in the track rails case between three Deutsche Bahn companies as claimants and German, Austrian and Czech manufacturers of track rails as defendants. The discussion between parties concerned (inter alia) the allocation of the damages according to defendants' liabilities. According to the Austrian and Czech parties, the claims against them were not 'closely connected' with the claims against the German defendants and therefore the German court would not be competent pursuant to Article 8(1) of the Brussels I bis Regulation. The OLG Hamm rejected this argument with reference to the CJEU's reasoning in the CDC case (C-352/13). In that case, the CJEU considered that separately assessing actions for damages against several undertakings domiciled in different Member States which participated in a single and continuous cartel may lead to irreconcilable judgments within the meaning of Article 6(1) Brussels (which is similar to Article 8(1) Brussels I bis Regulation). The OLG Hamm decided that claims in the case at hand were

1. The England and Wales Court of Appeal, MasterCard Inc. & others v Deutsche Bahn AG & Others [2017] EWCA Civ 272, 12 April 2017.
2. CAT, Dorothy Gibson v Pride Mobility Products Limited, case no 1257/7/7/16.
3. RHA, Truck Cartel Legal Action.
4. European Commission, Decision of 3 September 2014, Case AT 39574.
5. The England and Wales High Court, Vodafone Group Services Limited & Other v Infineon Technologies AG & Others [2017] EWHC 1383 (Ch), 7/8 June 2017.
6. By mistake three relevant cases were not reported on in Q1 2017. We therefore mention these cases in Q2 2017. Kristina Sirakova contributed to this section.

similar and could lead to irreconcilable judgments if claimants were obliged to start proceedings in several jurisdictions. Therefore it ruled that the claims were 'closely connected' and that it was competent to hear the case.[7]

- On 21 December 2016, the Regional Court of Dortmund (LG Dortmund) issued a decision relating to damages resulting from antitrust violations by the main suppliers of so-called superstructure materials for transportation, such as rails and switches. The public undertaking which is responsible for public transport in the middle-Ruhr area claimed a declaratory judgment of the suppliers of superstructure materials and no damages. The defendants argued that a declaratory claim could only be claimed in the alternative after a damages claim and should therefore be rejected. The LG Dortmund followed a claimant-friendly approach stating that the claimant had a legitimate interest in a declaratory judgment, although it could have brought an action for damages instead. The court pointed out that the quantification of cartel damages typically requires much effort. Therefore, the requirements for a declaratory action in the case at hand should not be set too high. Furthermore, the court accepted prima facie evidence concerning the fact that specific transactions have been affected by the cartel due to the cartel's long duration and the strict way in which it had been organized.[8]

- On 24 January 2017, the Regional Court of Mannheim in the proceedings between HeidelbergCement and Cartel Damage Claims ("CDC"), issued a decision with regard to the cement cartel. The claims of injured parties of the cement cartel were assigned tot CDC. CDC already litigated in Germany about the same cartel for years. In that proceeding before the Higher Regional Court of Düsseldorf, the court ruled that the assignments of the claims were inadmissible, CDC seemed not able to bear the costs of the proceedings. CDC started new litigation against HeidelbergCement. CDC changed its claim and focused only on one producer in regional markets for cement instead of focusing on a national cartel with multiple members. Therefore no problem with res judicata (meaning the case already received a final judgment and the matter cannot be raised again) was seen by the Mannheim court. The judges however decided the claim of CDC was time-barred due to the fact paragraph 33 sub 5 of the GWB could not be applied. This article provides for starting points for the limitation period that start at a later moment than the starting point from the German Civil Code (BGB), which states claims will be time-barred in ten years from creation of the claim.[9] That paragraph in the GWB was introduced in 2005 and the limitation period of the claim of CDC started in 2002 or at the latest in 2003. The GWB is not applicable as the claim arose at an earlier moment than the GWB was introduced. Therefore, CDC's claims were rejected.[10]

This decision is in line with an earlier decision of the Dutch District Court of Limburg in a similar situation in relation to the prestressing steel cartel, which we discussed in Q4 of 2016. That case also concerned a discussion on the prescription of claims. The District Court ruled that according to the German applicable law, article 33(5) of the GWB should not be taken into account as the limitation period started before this article came into effect and the provision does not have any retrospective effect. The claims were therefore time-barred and were dismissed by the court.[11]

7. OLG Hamm, ECLI:DE:OLGHAM:2016:1201.32SA43.16.00, 1 December 2016.
8. LG Dortmund, ECLI:DE:LGDO:2016:1221.8O90.14KART.00, 21 December 2016.
9. Artikel 852 BGB.
10. LG Mannheim, ar 2017 – 2 O 195/15, 24 January 2017.
11. District Court of Limburg, 16 November 2016, ECLI:NL:RBLIM:2016:9897. See also Q4 of 2017.

2

Developments regarding public law aspects of cartel damages

The Netherlands

- On 30 June 2017, the Netherlands Authority for Consumers & Markets made a decision to fine employers' association BMWT and the undertakings Exide, Hoppecke, EnerSys, Celentric and R&W ("parties") for acting in breach under the cartel prohibition pursuant to Article 6 of the Competitive Trading Act. The parties acted in concert from 15 January 2004 until 30 September 2013, by agreeing to apply a surcharge for lead in the sale prices for traction batteries. The object of the parties' conduct was to exempt part of the price-setting of traction batteries from the competition.[12]

European Union

- On 26 April 2017, Advocate-General Evgeni Tanchev stated in the case between Toshiba Corporation and the European Commission, that the European Commission does not have to issue a new statement of objections before re-adopting a decision that has been annulled by the General Court. The Advocate-General stated in his (non-binding) statement that:

> *"The Commission was not required to issue a new statement of objections before the adoption of the contested decision. First, the annulment of the 2007 decision had no effect on the validity of the 2006 statement of objections. Second, the Commission was under no obligation to provide information as to how it intended to ensure the deterrent effect of the fine in the contested decision."*

In addition, the Advocate-General explained in paragraph 62:

> *"Information provided in the 2006 statement of objections had to be taken into account in order to determine whether Toshiba's right of defence was respected in the procedure which led to the adoption of the contested decision."* [13]

- On 27 April 2017, the European Court of Justice delivered a decision in the case between Akzo Nobel N.V., Akzo Nobel Chemicals GmbH, Akzo Nobel Chemicals B.V. (Akzo) and Akcros Chemicals Ltd, and the European Commission. Akzo asked the Court to set aside the General Court decision which upheld part of an imposed fine with regard to the participation in the heat stabilisers cartel.

The European Commission divided the participation in the infringements committed by Akzo Nobel, Akzo Nobel Chemicals GmbH, Akzo Nobel Chemicals BV and Akcros Chemicals into three separate infringement periods. In the decision, Akzo Nobel was held to be liable for the entire infringement period.

12. ACM Decision, Fine for importers of forklift truck batteries for price agreements, 5 July 2017.
13. Opinion of Advocate-General Tanchev, Case C-180/16P (Toshiba Corporation v European Commission).

The penalty in connection with the first infringement period has been declared void due to statutes of limitations to the extent that fines were imposed on Akzo Nobel Chemicals GmbH and Akzo Nobel Chemicals BV. However, the fine imposed on Akzo Nobel remains in place, including for the period of the first infringement. [14]

The European Court of Justice found as follows:

> *64. It has been established in the case at hand that Akzo Nobel Chemicals GmbH and Akzo Nobel Chemicals BV, as is clear from article 1 of the litigious decision, participated directly in the cartels in question, from 24 February 1987 to 28 June 1993 and from 11 September 1991 to 28 June 1993 respectively.*
>
> *71. The fact that penalties can no longer be imposed on certain companies because this option is time-barred does not stand in the way of instituting proceedings against another company that is deemed to be personally and, together with the former companies, jointly and severally liable for the same anti-competitive practices for which the limitation period has not expired."*

There is no statute of limitations in relation to the first infringement period because Akzo Nobel is held to be liable for the entire infringement period. The prescription period relating to the entire infringement period for Akzo Nobel went into effect at a later date than the prescription period relating to only the first infringement period. The prescription period starts on the date on which the infringement is committed. However, for continuous or continuing infringements, the prescription period starts from the date on which the infringement ends.[15]

- Advocate-General Szpunar stated that the CRT cartel appeals by LG Electronics Inc. and Koninklijke Philips Electronics NV should be dismissed. We discussed the CRT cartel in Q3 2016. In the CRT cartel the European Commission only sent a statement of objections to the parent companies instead of to all addressees of the European Commission decision. Therefore, LG and Philips claim the European Commission breached the rights of defence. The Advocate-General considers: [16]

> *55. The present appeals raise the question of whether those requirements have been observed, in relation to a parent company, in the event that the Commission decides not to send the statement of objections to the subsidiary that participated in the cartel, although that subsidiary has been declared bankrupt, with the result that the documents in its possession and its employees are no longer accessible to the parent company.*
>
> *56. I will observe that the statement of objections, which is the subject of Article 27(1) of Regulation No 1/2003, (23) constitutes an essential procedural safeguard to give effect to the principle of respect for the rights of the defence, in that it enables the person to whom it is addressed effectively to submit its arguments in the proceedings brought against it. (24) The statement of objections must identify unequivocally the natural or legal person on whom fines might be imposed and it must be sent to that person, stating in which capacity that person is called on to answer the allegations. (25)*
>
> *57. The statement of objections is thus designed to ensure the exercise of the rights of the defence, individually, by each natural or legal person concerned by the administrative proceedings in relation to the competition rules.*
>
> *58. Consequently, compliance with that procedural guarantee with respect to a parent company that has received a statement of objections cannot be called into question by the mere fact that the statement of objections was not sent to another legal entity, namely the subsidiary of that company which directly participated in the infringement."*

- On 30 May 2017, Advocate-General Paolo Mengozzi issued an opinion on the appeal of British Airways in the Air Cargo case. The Advocate-General decided that the General

14. European Court of Justice C-516/15P, 27 April 2017.
15. Article 25 Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules of competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82.
16. Opinion of Advocate-General Szpunar, Joined Cases C-588/15 P and C-622/15 P (LG Electronics Inc. (C588/15 P),Koninklijke Philips Electronics NV (C-622/15 P) v European Commission).

Court was right not to dismiss the 2010 decision of the European Commission. On 9 November 2010, the Commission adopted a decision in which it established the anticompetitive conduct in the air cargo market. The adopted decision is addressed to 21 carriers, including British Airways.

Except for Qantas Airways Ltd., all addressees appealed the decision. British Airways offered seven pleas in law in its action to seek annulment in part of the decision. The General Court found that, due to inconsistencies, most of the fines had to be annulled. The decision of the European commission addressed to British Airways was left in force, as British Airways had not asked the General Court for full annulment. On the ground of the principle of *ne ultra petita* the General Court was not able to annul the decision in its totality.

In its appeal, British Airways put forward two pleas of law: (i) The General Court had erred in law by stating it is restricted by the principle of *ne ultra petita*, and (ii) that the right of British Airways to effective judicial protection provided for in Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union had been infringed.

The Advocate-General stated with regard to the first plea of British Airways:[17]

> *125. Accordingly, my view is that the General Court did not err in law in considering its powers to be limited by the form of order sought by BA in its application when it drew the appropriate conclusions from its finding that the statement of reasons for the contested decision was defective.*
>
> *126. It is true that where, as in the present case, there is a conflict of fundamental principles of the legal order and it is necessary to give precedence to one over the other, none of the outcomes will be entirety satisfactory. Thus, in AssiDomän, the result of the Court's approach was that a decision that was vitiated by illegality but had become final continued to produce legal effects. There is a similar outcome in the present case: the part of the contested decision not challenged before the EU Courts will continue to produce legal effects, notwithstanding the fact that it is unlawful. However, as in AssiDomän, that outcome will simply be the consequence of BA's decision not to challenge that part of the contested decision."*

And with regard to the second plea of British Airways, the Advocate-General stated:[18]

> *142. Thus, it is apparent from the inter partes nature of proceedings before the EU Courts, and the fact that observance of the right guaranteed by Article 47 of the Charter does not require those Courts to conduct a review of their own motion of the contested decision in its entirety, that a judicial review mechanism, based on the principle that the subject matter of an action is delimited by the parties and that the Courts may not exceed those limits, is compatible with the right in question. Accordingly, the fact that the full and unrestricted review — which the EU Courts are obliged to carry out and which requires them to have the power to annul the contested decision — is limited by the claims of the parties as set out in the forms of order sought is not contrary to the principle of effective judicial protection.*
>
> *143. Furthermore, since the right to effective judicial protection is not undermined by the strict application of the rules governing time limits for bringing proceedings, observance of that right by no means requires that, in order to ensure that the judicial protection enjoyed by the parties is effective, the EU Courts should be obliged, by way of exception to those rules, (77) to expand the scope of the parties' claims beyond the claims made in the form of order sought, thereby extending the reach of its review beyond the matters submitted to it for adjudication, even where the Courts have raised a public policy issue of their own motion and/or made a finding of infringement of the rights of the defence.*
>
> *144. It follows that, in the present case, compliance with the principle of effective judicial protection did not require the General Court to go beyond the form of order sought by BA, with the result that BA's second plea in law must be rejected."*

17. Opinion of Advocate-General Mengozzi, delivered on 30 May 2017, Case C-122/16P.
18. Opinion of Advocate-General Mengozzi, delivered on 30 May 2017, Case C-122/16P.

3

Fines and procedural regulations by the Commission and European Court of Justice

• On 6 April 2017, the European Commission published a non-confidential version of the decision regarding the Truck cartel. We elaborated on the Truck cartel in Q3 2016.[19] We now know the decision relates to a single and continuous infringement of article 101 TFEU and article 53 of the EEA Agreement.

• On 12 April 2017, the European Commission published a summary decision, the opinion on the Advisory Committee restrictive agreement and dominant position and other documents with regard to case 39904 concerning rechargeable batteries. We elaborated on this case in Q4 2016.[20]

• On 10 April 2017, the European Commission closed a preliminary investigation with regard to the bioethanol sector. The European Commission was concerned that the companies active in the production of trading and production of bioethanol were acting in breach of the cartel prohibition. No further actions have been announced by the European Commission.[21]

• On 27 April 2017, the European Court of Justice delivered a decision in the case between FSL Holdings N.V., Firma Léon Van Parys N.V., Pacific Fruit Company Italy SpA and the European Commission.[22] The European Court of Justice dismissed the appeal launched by Pacific Fruit Company. We already discussed the Advocate-General's opinion in Q4 2016.

• On 27 June 2017, the European Commission issued a decision with regard to the abuse of dominance of Google. The decision of the Commission was addressed to Google Inc. and Alphabet Inc. (Google's parent company). The European Commission issued a fine of € 2.42 billion to Google.

In 2004, Google entered the market of comparison shopping in Europe, with a product that was finally named "Google Shopping". From 2008, Google began to implement a fundamental change in strategy in European markets to push its comparison shopping service. According to the Commission's decision, this strategy relied on Google's dominance in general internet search, rather than competition on the merits in comparison shopping markets:

19. European Commission, press release 19.07.2016.
20. OJ. Summary of Commission Decision of 12 December 2016, in case 39904.
21. European Commission, Competition case 40244 Bioethanol, 10 April 2017.
22. European Court of Justice, C-469/15 P, 27 April 2017.

> *Google has systematically given prominent placement to its own comparison shopping service: when a consumer enters a query into the Google search engine in relation to which Google's comparison shopping service wants to show results, these are displayed at or near the top of the search results.*
>
> *Google has demoted rival comparison shopping services in its search results: rival comparison shopping services appear in Google's search results on the basis of Google's generic search algorithms. Google has included a number of criteria in these algorithms, as a result of which rival comparison shopping services are demoted. Evidence shows that even the most highly ranked rival service appears on average only on page four of Google's search results, and others appear even further down. Google's own comparison shopping service is not subject to Google's generic search algorithms, including such demotions."*

This means that by giving prominent placement exclusively to its own comparison shopping service and by demoting competitors, Google has given its own comparison shopping service a significant advantage compared to rivals.[23]

• On 21 June 2017, the European Commission fined three producers of car lighting systems a total of € 26.744.000,-. The companies, Automotive Lighting, Hella and Valeo (whistleblower) participated in a cartel. The companies coordinated the supply of spare parts of manufacturers of passenger and commercial vehicles after the end of mass production of a car model.[24]

• On 16 June 2017, the European Commission re-imposed a fine on Printeos, an envelope manufacturer. In 2014, Printeos and four other manufacturers agreed to settle the case. However, the General Court cancelled the fine the European Commission imposed on Printeos as the decision lacked sufficient reasoning concerning discretionary fine reductions. The liability of Printeos was not questioned. We discussed the annulment decision of the General Court in Q4 2016. The European Commission has now re-issued the fine which is identical to the former fine. The new decision has not yet been made available.[25]

• On 15 May 2017, the European Commission opened a formal investigation into concerns that Aspen Pharma has engaged in excessive pricing with regard to five life-saving cancer medicines.[26]

23. European Commission press release, Antitrust: Commission fines Google €2.42 billion for abusing dominance as search engine by giving illegal advantage to own comparison shopping service, Brussels 27 June 2017.
24. European Commission press release, Antitrust: Commission fines three car lighting system producers €27 million in cartel settlement, Brussels 21 June 2017.
25. European Commission Daily news, Antitrust: Commission re-imposes €4.7 million fine on envelopes manufacturer Printeos for price-fixing cartel, 16 June 2017.
26. European Commission press release, Antitrust: Commission opens formal investigation into Aspen Pharma's pricing practices for cancer medicines, Brussels 15 May 2017.

4

Final remarks

Up until now the Air Cargo case has always had a prominent place in this quarterly summary but gradually, there is also an increase in the number of lawsuits involving the largest cartel case to date, the trucks cartel case. Lawsuits are expected, and some have already commenced, in the three largest cartel damages jurisdictions which are the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. The Google case is also likely to capture everyone's attention in the coming period. The first decision of the European Commission in which it imposed a record fine has been rendered in the meantime but another two decisions are anticipated. We do not have any information regarding potential follow-on claims of injured parties in the Google matter but that is probably linked to the fact that for follow-on cases involving the misuse of a dominant economic position, the directive does not provide the same favourable regime for the injured parties as the one that applies for cartel cases. There is a presumption that a cartel causes harm (Article 17.2 of the Directive) whereas such an evidentiary presumption does not apply in 102 TFEU cases.

Finally, we will be paying attention in the upcoming numbers of Q to the consequences of Brexit on the cartel damages practice. In the market there is already some hesitation about bringing cases with a European dimension before the English courts because it cannot be said with any certainty at this stage whether judgments from English courts will still be enforceable in Europe in the future. It is important that certainty regarding this is obtained as quickly as possible in the coming months.

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Sophie van Everdingen is experienced in litigation with a focus on competition law. Before joining bureau Brandeis in September 2016, Sophie worked at the competition law department of an international law firm in Brussels, where she advised manufacturers and dealers in the automotive sector and litigated against the Belgian competition authority (BMA) and the Dutch competition authority (ACM). At bureau Brandeis, Sophie is involved in civil litigation at plaintiff's side against the members of the truck cartel. In addition, she advises several national and international clients on competition issues.

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