

EFTA: Surveillance Authority Concerned about Norway's Telecoms Regulatory System

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The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Surveillance Authority has sent a letter of formal notice to the Norwegian government in which it questions the dual role of the Norwegian Transport and Communications Ministry with regard to the dominant Norwegian telecoms operator Telenor. The EFTA Surveillance Authority is disturbed by the fact that the Ministry is the sole owner of Telenor and that it functions as the appeals body for decisions taken by the national regulatory authority for postal services and telecommunications. The EFTA Surveillance Authority calls on Norway, as a member to the European Economic Area, to introduce a structural separation between ownership and regulatory functions in the Norwegian telecoms system as foreseen by the rules of the EC Directive on telecommunications services (90/388/EEC) and the framework Directive on the open network provision (90/387/EEC). Furthermore, Norway shall provide for the possibility of appeal to an independent body in cases of conflict.

The Norwegian government can respond to the letter within two months before the EFTA Surveillance Authority will decide whether to follow up the matter.

