

**International Competition Network**  
**Advocacy Working Group**  
**Proposed 2010-2011 Work Plan**

**Mission and organisation**

The current mission of the Advocacy Working Group (AWG) is to develop practical tools and guidance, and to facilitate experience sharing between ICN member agencies, in order to improve the effectiveness of ICN members' advocacy activities.<sup>1</sup>

The AWG's original mandate was to undertake projects with a view to recommending best practices and to provide information to members in support of their advocacy functions. This work took place from 2001 to 2003. The AWG prepared a report on advocacy and competition policy which was presented to the ICN's first annual conference in 2002 and is available at [www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/uploads/library/doc358.pdf](http://www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/uploads/library/doc358.pdf).

In 2008, the AWG was reconvened and a revised work plan reflecting developments in the field, including the increased use of market studies, was approved by the Steering Group. In 2008-9, the AWG engaged in a review and update of existing ICN advocacy work, and examined in greater detail members' experiences conducting market studies as part of their advocacy efforts. Two reports were presented at the ICN's 8<sup>th</sup> annual conference in 2009: a report on the assessment of ICN members' requirements and recommendations on further ICN work on competition advocacy (available at [www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/uploads/library/doc362.pdf](http://www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/uploads/library/doc362.pdf)), and a report on market studies practice among ICN members (available at [www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/uploads/library/doc363.pdf](http://www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/uploads/library/doc363.pdf)).

The AWG engaged in two projects in 2009-10:

1. Competition Advocacy Experience Sharing Project (Subgroup 1). Following the recommendations of the 2008-9 Review and Update Project Report, the project group conducted a series of five

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<sup>1</sup> Working group members agreed to add the reference to facilitating experience sharing between ICN member agencies to the mission statement in March 2010.



teleseminars whereby ICN member agencies shared their experience in advocating competition in certain institutional and sectoral areas where competition advocacy efforts are most frequently engaged or required. The topics covered were: building relationships between a competition authority and the private bar; government involvement in markets; the role of international organizations in advocacy; competition in the financial markets; and evaluation of certain agencies' competition advocacy programmes.

2. Market Studies Project (Subgroup 2). Building on the wealth of experience collected during the survey in 2008-9 and the recommendations of the Market Studies Report presented at the ICN's 8<sup>th</sup> annual conference, the project group prepared a draft Market Studies Good Practice Handbook, outlining good practice for the process of conducting market studies and gathering together accumulated experience and learning of member agencies. The project group also prepared a Market Studies Information Store, an online information store of market studies conducted by ICN member agencies within the last five years.

In March 2010, working group members agreed that following the ICN's 9<sup>th</sup> annual conference in 2010 the AWG would operate as a single working group, no longer divided into two subgroups.

The working group has identified the following high level goals in order to fulfil its mission from 2010 to 2012:

- to provide a forum for ICN members to share their experience and specific practices in the area of competition advocacy;
- to provide practical tools and guidance in order to improve the effectiveness of members' advocacy activities; and
- to promote use of the ICN's existing work products in the area of competition advocacy, including the Competition Advocacy Toolkit, the Market Studies Good Practice Handbook and the Market Studies Information Store.



The working group is co-chaired by the United Kingdom's Office of Fair Trading and the Russian Federal Antimonopoly Service. Agencies from over 35 jurisdictions participate in the working group together with non-governmental advisers (NGAs) representing the legal, economic and academic communities and consumer organisations. ICN members and NGAs interested in participating in the projects described below are encouraged to contact the working group co-chairs.

## **Projects for 2010-2011**

### *Priority projects*

- **Update the Competition Advocacy Toolkit.**

**Projected timeline:** Discuss format and handling with ICN Secretariat in May 2010. In June-July 2010, identify volunteer agency advocacy experts and NGAs to contribute to the review of the toolkit and set a detailed work plan and timetable for completing the work.

**Deliverables:** a functioning and updated toolkit, as well as a publicity teleseminar on relevant sections of the toolkit with a selection of agency advocacy experts and NGAs.

- **Provide a competition advocacy postings facility on the ICN website as part of the Competition Advocacy Toolkit.** This will enable member agencies and participating NGAs to post information on their recent advocacy activities, relevant speeches and articles, and any advocacy issues they may wish to discuss.

**Projected timeline:** Discuss format and handling with ICN Secretariat in May 2010.

Place the summaries and slides from AWG teleseminars held from 2008 to 2010, together with the report on AWG teleseminars held in 2009-10, on the ICN website in May-June 2010 to facilitate follow-up postings by ICN members and NGAs.

Advocacy postings section of the toolkit to go live, together with guidance for users and a description of its purpose, by July 2010.



Post relevant materials arising from advocacy support provided to ICN members through the Advocacy and Implementation Support Program (detailed below) on an ongoing basis.

Monitor use of the postings section of the toolkit and report back in time for the ICN's 11<sup>th</sup> annual conference in May 2012.

**Deliverables:** Competition advocacy postings facility on the ICN website. Report on usage for presentation at the ICN's 11<sup>th</sup> annual conference.

- **'Road test' the Market Studies Good Practice Handbook.** Member agencies which are planning to set up a market studies regime, carry out market studies or review their regimes in 2010-11 will be asked to report on their experience of referring to the handbook in the context of setting up a market studies regime, reviewing existing regimes and/or the carrying out of market studies, and to suggest any necessary revisions in light of their experience. ICN member agencies and NGAs (including those not participating directly in the AWG) will be invited to post further comments, queries and suggestions via the ICN website throughout the 2010-11 ICN year.

**Projected timeline:** Identify volunteer agencies to contribute to the road testing in May-June 2010. Volunteer agencies to report back between July and December 2010. Feedback facility available on the ICN website by end June 2010. Compile a report on road testing and other feedback received in January-March 2011.

**Deliverables:** Report on road testing of the Market Studies Good Practice Handbook for presentation at the ICN's 11<sup>th</sup> annual conference.

- **Update, monitor use of, and invite feedback on, the Market Studies Information Store.**

**Projected timeline:** Feedback facility available on the ICN website by end June 2010. ICN Secretariat to monitor 'hits' on the information store section of the ICN website and report back in January 2011.



Compile a report on usage and feedback received January-March 2011. Calls for updates to be sent to ICN members in August 2010 and January 2011.

**Deliverables:** Report on usage of, and feedback on, the Market Studies Information Store for presentation at the ICN's 11<sup>th</sup> annual conference. Updated information store available on the ICN website.

*Other proposed projects*

- **Conduct a series of teleseminars on particular types of advocacy or particular categories of markets or market problems** (e.g. former state monopolies, self regulated markets, after markets, public procurement). The seminars will take the form of panel discussions involving member agencies and NGAs from diverse geographies and backgrounds.

**Projected timeline:** Invite member and NGA suggestions for seminar topics in May 2010. Identify volunteer agency advocacy experts and NGAs to present specific seminars, and agree the schedule of the seminars, in June-July 2010.

**Deliverables:** Three teleseminars presented by volunteer agencies and NGAs.

- **Liaise with the ICN Advocacy and Implementation Network (responsible for the Advocacy and Implementation Support Project (AISUP)) on competition advocacy experience sharing issues.** AIN supporting agencies (those providing advisory assistance to the beneficiary agencies) will examine the needs of the beneficiary agencies in recommendations on competition advocacy issues and prepare such recommendations jointly with the AWG: the AWG will participate in drafting and/or reviewing these recommendations.

**Projected timeline:** Liaise with AIN supporting agencies regarding the needs of beneficiary agencies: the request to be made in May 2010 and feedback requested by the end of July 2010. Assist AIN supporting agencies in preparing recommendations between



September 2010 and March 2011. Post relevant materials and recommendations on the advocacy toolkit (see above).

**Deliverables:** Sets of country specific recommendations meeting the needs of AIN beneficiary agencies in competition advocacy, to be made available to other ICN members by posting them on the advocacy toolkit.