



**ICN Steering Group Meeting
Wednesday, January 13, 2016, 14:00 (CET)**

Attendees

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Brazilian Administrative Council for Economic Defense
Competition Bureau Canada
European Commission DG Competition
Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority
French Autorité de la concurrence
German Bundeskartellamt
Japan Fair Trade Commission
Italian Autorità Garante della Concorrenza e del Mercato
Korean Fair Trade Commission
Mexican Federal Economic Competition Commission
Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets
Portuguese Competition Authority
Russian Federal Antimonopoly Service
Competition Commission of Singapore
Competition Commission of South Africa
Turkish Competition Authority
United Kingdom Competition and Markets Authority
United States Department of Justice
United States Federal Trade Commission

Item 1: Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The Chair Andreas Mundt welcomed the Steering Group (SG) members.

The SG approved the proposed agenda and the minutes of the SG meeting on 16 December 2015.

The Chair reminded the SG members that the SG's Town Hall Teleconference series will start on 3 February 2016 at 2:30pm (CET). Alejandra Palacios Prieto, President of the Mexican Federal Economic Competition Commission, Hardin Ratshisusu, Deputy Commissioner and Head of the Mergers Division of the Competition Commission of South Africa, and Alex Chisholm, Chief Executive of the UK Competition and Markets Authority will discuss public interest considerations in merger cases.

The Chair announced the second Town Hall Teleconference will take place on 8 March 2016 at 2pm CET and it will deal with industrial policy considerations. Francis Kariuki, Director General of the Competition Authority of Kenya, Randolph Tritell, Director of the US FTC's Office of International Affairs, and Henk Don, Member of the Board of the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets, will be the speakers of this ICN event.

Item 2: Working Group Structure

The Chair provided an update on the discussion on the ICN's future working group structure. The Chair summarized that in the last year the SG agreed that certain topics should be covered by ICN work during its second decade, particularly vertical restraints in the digital economy, online platforms and two-sided markets, non hardcore horizontal restraints and joint ventures. The SG balanced the pros and cons of different options where to best place these topics as they do not fit thematically in any of the existing working groups. The options included either broadening the mandate of existing working groups or creating a new working group. The SG members expressed broad support for taking an evolutionary approach. The Unilateral Working Group (UCWG) may address vertical restraints and might continue to work on online platforms and two-sided markets. The UCWG will consider the best structure to take on the additional work, for example, as a project under the roof of the working group provided that there will be more manpower. The SG will review the progress and will then consider whether to develop the project team into a new working group or transform it into a permanent structure within UCWG.

Item 3: Work Products

The Agency Effectiveness Working Group (AEWG) reported on the status of its projects. AEWG has two ongoing projects examining Agency Evaluation and Agency Ethics. The working group sent surveys to members on each topic and will use that input to draft reports on each topic in time for the Annual Conference in April. The reports will emphasize common approaches, in an informative-style format. The AEWG hosted two expert calls in 2015. The first expert call, OECD representatives presented their experiences of the most topical themes for young competition agencies. The second expert call dealt with 'Good Agency Principles' for a competition authority. The ICN's Training on Demand project has four modules currently in production. These new modules cover: (i) state restraints, (ii) challenges in setting up a new competition agency, (iii) prioritization and project selection, and (iv) raids in cartel cases.

The Advocacy Working Group (AWG) reported on the Market Study project which consists of an update of the 2012 Market Studies Good Practices Handbook as well as the 2010 Market Studies Information Store. The OECD is also doing work on market studies and AWG and the OECD have engaged in a productive dialogue. The OECD spoke about its market studies work during a teleseminar hosted by the AWG in September 2015. The topic of the 2016 edition of the Competition Advocacy Contest is "How to Build a Culture of Competition for Private Sector Development and Economic Growth". The deadline for submissions was 31 January 2016. The winners will be announced at the ICN Annual Conference in Singapore. The winners of the latest edition presented their advocacy stories during a teleseminar in November 2015 with panelists from all continents and approximately 50 people attending. The Benefits Project is seeking to provide ICN members with knowledge, strategies and arguments when explaining the benefits of competition and supporting competition agencies' advocacy efforts. It consists of an online interactive platform. AWG is currently working on the new section of the project entitled "Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Business".

Item 4: Work Plans

The Horizontal Coordinator reminded SG members of the timeline for the submission of work plans and asked that the 2016-19 short form work plans be provided by 29 January 2016, which has now been extended to 22 February 2016.

Item 5: Capacity Building

The Chair invited SG members to consider how to best accommodate the interests of younger agencies at ICN events. The Chair highlighted that it will be one of his key priorities in the coming years to better include young authorities and the topics relevant to them in the ICN. He pointed out that the Second Decade Follow-up Survey replies indicate that younger agencies are interested in real life seminars on cases. The Chair encouraged the working groups to reach out to their younger members, to discuss what matters for them and to ask for cases that can be used as a basis for hypothetical case studies in BOS. Ideally every working group should dedicate at least one BOS in Singapore to the special interests of young agencies. Based on their content these BOS could be labeled “capacity building” to address all agencies who are interested in a very practical approach whether they qualify as “younger” or not.

Item 6: 2016 Annual Conference

The Competition Commission of Singapore provided an update on the 2016 Annual Conference.

Item 5: Other Business

The Portuguese Competition Authority informed the SG that the 2017 ICN Annual Conference will be held from 10-12 May 2017 in Porto, Portugal.

Item 7: Future SG Meetings

The next SG meeting will be held on February 17, 2016.