



Antitrust Policy

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1. Antitrust statement

The GSMA's policy is that all of its business dealings are carried out in full compliance with applicable antitrust legislation. The GSMA is fully committed to ensuring that the antitrust compliance rules set forth through this policy are adhered to and to implement procedures to educate and monitor compliance with it.

The [GSMA Legal Team](#) advises both staff and members on a wide range of competition and antitrust issues related to GSMA activities, including information exchange, programme governance, project scoping and interface with competition authorities.

2. Scope

Anyone working on behalf of the GSMA including all employees, contractors, consultants and elected representatives/officials of the GSMA are under an obligation to conduct all business dealings in accordance with any applicable antitrust legislation and are bound by this Antitrust Policy.

The same obligation applies to all GSMA members and activity contributors when participating to GSMA meetings, working groups' activities, etc.

3. Principles

Due to the nature of its activities, the GSMA brings together competitors and may be found to facilitate restrictive agreements between its members. Therefore, it is important that the below principles are adhered to, to avoid any infringement of antitrust laws:

3.1 Cooperation vs. Competition

Members, particularly Operator Members, are only permitted to cooperate:

- on projects or programmes that set out a pro-competitive objective and are for consumer benefit (e.g. technology innovation, environmental, social or development goals);
- when this objective can only be achieved if operators join forces (e.g. because of interconnection / interoperability requirements); AND
- the action is not aimed at or results in eliminating competition or competitors (a "joint boycott" or an action targeted at harming a specific company, or a specific group of competitors, or a horizontal agreement limiting competition beyond what needed to achieve the specific pro-competitive objective).

3.2 Inclusiveness

The GSMA has an open and transparent approach to membership and participation in working groups, committees and other member groups¹. Where GSMA is involved in standardisation-type activities (such as drafting of technical specifications):

¹ For further information on membership criteria see [here](#) and for selection criteria for GSMA Committees and Advisory Groups, please see [AA.16 \(Articles of Association\)](#) and [AA.41 \(GSMA Regulations\)](#).

- participation must be open to all affected parties, including, where appropriate, Industry Members and non-Members;
- non-Members are granted the opportunity to participate meaningfully in developing Industry Specifications;
- GSMA process to define and adopt Industry Specifications includes due safeguards that avoid any restriction of competition on the merits in the selection of the relevant technologies and technical features²;
- active participation may only be restricted where necessary, on the basis of an objective criteria and must be approved by the Legal Team;
- the announcement, progress and output of all such activities must be communicated to all potential participants and affected parties; and
- parties who do not participate must have an opportunity to review and comment on output.

3.3 Anti-competitive decisions

The GSMA must not take any decisions – directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly – which could lead to a restriction of competition. This includes any recommendations which may result in anticompetitive behaviour of GSMA members, such as pricing recommendations. This also includes the adoption of standards and/or specifications aimed at favouring or discriminating the interests of one component of the standard-setting constituency and which result in some form of consumers’ harm.

3.4 Information Exchange

Certain information cannot be exchanged between competitors. This includes “commercially sensitive” information that may influence competitors’ strategic behaviour, such as forward-looking pricing, pricing policy, product launch dates and planned mergers/acquisitions.

Ground rules when handling any Member information are:

- **Any information that could be considered sensitive should be sent from individual members to GSMA staff, not directly to other members.** GSMA staff act as the gatekeeper and decide a) whether the information is sensitive or not; b) whether it can be distributed to other Members with / without changes and c) whether legal review is required before distribution. This applies to all types of information including emails, presentations and uploads. Members are however advised to consult with their own counsel before sharing any sensitive information with the GSMA.
- **Meetings / calls must have GSMA staff presence.** All Board and Board Committee meetings/calls and selected C-level meetings have mandatory legal presence. Heads of Region and/or any other staff involved in the organisation of C-level meetings should flag them to the Legal Team as soon as the meeting is confirmed. All other meetings and calls should be attended by at least one GSMA person, responsible for antitrust compliance at that meeting.

Note that:

- First meetings at the launch of new projects require an antitrust briefing.
- The Legal Team must be informed in due course (and in any case before the first meeting is held or the first document is drafted) of the creation of new projects involving the participation of GSMA Members.

² For further information on the Industry Specifications process within GSMA, please see [AA.35 \(Provisions for Policy and Procedures in relation to Industry Specifications\)](#)

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- Meetings involving commercially sensitive topics may require the presence of an antitrust lawyer from the [Legal](#) Team. The Legal Team must therefore be timely informed of such meetings so to evaluate the actual risk and organize the adequate attendance.
 - It is advisable to include the standard GSMA Antitrust slides available to all GSMA staff in the presentation materials.
 - If Members engage in illegal information exchange at meetings, the GSMA person in charge must intervene and, if necessary, close the meeting.
 - **Any commercially sensitive information or information which could be seen to harm competitors, consumers or suppliers** should not be distributed via any communication channels.
 - **Sensitive information must be sufficiently anonymised/aggregated while benchmarking.** That is, data must be collected from Members individually and aggregated before it is shared with other Members. Aggregations require at least five sources of input, e.g. benchmarking by country would be allowed only when at least 5 operators participate.

3.5 Document Review

All official documents and C-level meeting documents require legal review. Other documents, presentations and minutes may require legal review if they contain commercially sensitive information, or anything that may be considered to trigger an antitrust compliance risk.

As stated above, the Legal Team must be informed of the creation of new projects involving the participation of GSMA Members.

Additionally, all GSMA communications and publications, such as the weekly CEO Newsletter, are subject to legal review to ensure that they do not contain any 'commercially sensitive' information or anticompetitive recommendations.

4. Training

All GSMA staff must pass an antitrust training within three months of joining the GSMA and a refresher training every two years. Bespoke antitrust training is also given to the GSMA Leadership, to the Extended Leadership Team members and to selected GSMA staff who are in positions implying a higher antitrust risk. The Legal Team constantly assesses the need for and provides additional bespoke trainings (e.g. dawn raids).

Board members and members joining leadership groups receive a bespoke antitrust training.

5. Your obligations

- Act with integrity and to ensure that you understand and comply with this policy.
- If you receive a request for information or notification of an inspection concerning GSMA activities from a Competition Authority, immediately refer the issue to the [Legal](#) Team.
- Complete all training sessions you are nominated for.
- Follow up carefully the training sessions you have attended by:
 - Periodically revising the relevant trainings material
 - Carrying out a preliminary antitrust screening of any activity or project you are involved in
- In case of doubt, always seek legal advice from [Legal](#).
- If you suspect or observe anything in contravention of this policy, please ["Speak Up"](#).



If the GSMA becomes aware of any conduct by any representatives of Members which may breach the Antitrust Policy, the relevant Member(s) will be advised. The GSMA will work with the Member(s) in question to investigate and rectify the situation. If this is not possible, or, in the unlikely event that a Member does not co-operate with the GSMA in such circumstances, the Association may consider suspension or termination of membership.

If the GSMA becomes aware of any conduct by any employees which might breach the Antitrust Policy, the relevant employee will be heard, requested to immediately stop the relevant conduct and will be given specific instructions by the Legal Team.

In case the employee will not stop the conduct in question and, in any case, if the conduct in question clearly contradicts the instructions received (in the antitrust trainings or in a previous ad hoc legal advice), the employee will be subject to disciplinary scrutiny. Disciplinary scrutiny can activate the application of disciplinary sanctions proportioned to the gravity, duration and consequences of the relevant conduct, including termination of employment.



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