

Factsheet

Membership options for chambers of commerce

Who can become a member

- All local chambers of commerce, covering a territory of any size from a city to a whole country;
- Bilateral chambers of commerce, dealing with companies in one country who have a particular interest in doing business with another country;
- National associations of chambers. However, in this case, the membership will not extend to the chambers forming part of the association.

How to join

There are two possible ways of becoming a member of ICC:

- Through affiliation with an ICC national committee or group;
- By direct membership with the ICC International Secretariat **when a national committee/group has not yet been established in your country/territory.**

When applying for direct membership of ICC, chambers of commerce have two options:

1. Membership of the World Chambers Federation (WCF), ICC's specialized division dealing in chamber affairs; or
2. Full membership of ICC, which incorporates WCF membership.

Direct Membership

WCF-only (*Option 1*)

What is WCF and how it works for you

The World Chambers Federation (WCF) is ICC's specialized division for its chamber of commerce members worldwide. WCF takes over from the International Bureau of Chambers of Commerce (IBCC). Please visit www.worldchambersfederation.org for more information.

Through its extensive global support network, WCF provides mechanisms where chambers from all over the world exchange experiences in order to improve their performance in areas such as finance, management and the development and promotion of services.



WCF enlists the expertise of long-established chambers in advising newcomers on possible structure and service activities.

WCF works closely with multilateral aid organizations, like the World Bank Group and United Nations Development Program (UNDP), on capacity building projects, under which chambers from developing countries can develop sustainable business services, ensuring their role in the economic development of their country by better supporting and servicing their member companies.

WCF organizes the World Chambers Congress every two years in a different region of the world. The Congress is the only international forum for chamber leaders and executives worldwide to share best-practice experience, develop networks and learn about new areas of innovation from other chambers. The 6th World Chambers Congress, held in June 2009, in Kuala Lumpur gathered over 1,000 delegates from 105 countries. In 2011 the Congress will return to the Americas, taking place in Mexico City, Mexico. The highlight of the Congress is the World Chambers Competition. The Competition is the only global awards programme to recognize the most innovative projects undertaken by chambers of commerce and industry from around the world. The Competition has produced an array of case studies demonstrating entrepreneurial diversity and inspiring other chambers. At the 6th World Chambers Congress it attracted an impressive 48 entries from over 31 countries.

For more information of the 6th WCC, please visit: www.kl2009.com

More than ever before, chambers of commerce must work closely together to help their members take advantage of new market opportunities worldwide. WCF's World Chambers Network (www.worldchambers.com) Business Opportunity Service provides chambers the opportunity to place their members business services online. Via the WCN WCF maintains a complete listing of chambers around the world, allowing your chamber to better network with your colleagues worldwide.

Through such initiatives and programmes, WCF not only helps individual chambers become more productive, but also strengthens links between them.

WCF objectives

- to encourage cooperation between chambers throughout the world;
- to provide a forum where leaders of chambers can communicate with each other and collaborate on matters of mutual interest, whether in solving problems or realizing opportunities;
- to promote the concept of chambers as essential intermediaries between business and government, and between business and the general public;
- to facilitate the role of chambers as local business support agencies;
- to promote collaboration between chambers so as to extend the range and improve the effectiveness of the services that chambers provide;
- to ensure the administration of the international customs guarantee chains set up for the operation of the **ATA Carnet System** functioning under the ATA Convention and/or the Istanbul Convention of the World Customs Organization (WCO)
- to ensure the administration of the CPD/China Taiwan Carnet System operating according to the ATA Carnet rules, on a bilateral basis, between Chinese-Taipei and a certain number of countries throughout the world including the European Union Member States, Australia, Canada, Israel, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Switzerland and the United States.
- to assist upon request, the establishment of chambers or the strengthening of existing chambers, especially in developing countries and emerging economies;
- to encourage chambers and their members to cooperate in activities of ICC.

Services

In addition to existing services like the ATA Carnet, WCN and Chambers Congress and Competition, WCF is readily investigating other services designed to support chambers in their daily activities. These include export documentation, electronic commerce and connectivity enhancement, as well as the fostering and development of programmes of assistance and training for chambers to enhance their management and service capabilities, enabling them to stimulate and foster entrepreneurial development.

Our newest work programs include designing Certificates of Origin and SMEs. Your chamber as a member is able to participate.



Information Sources

- A regular e-newsletter, *WCF Newsletter*, presents a series of articles updating members on upcoming events, ICC policy statements, new publications and worldwide chamber news
- The *ICC in the News Email Service* supplies a compilation of a selection of stories featuring ICC and IMB from media around the world to give an idea of the areas of ICC's work which regularly attract media attention.
- WCF, working with organizations like the International Trade Centre have produced a series of publications that can guide chambers in the development of their daily activities. Titles include:
 - *The preparation of publications and publicity materials for chambers;*
 - *Chambers of commerce: services to small and medium-sized enterprises.*
 - *Organization and structure of chambers of commerce;*
 - *The role of chambers of commerce in import management;*
 - *Chambers of commerce under public and private law;*
 - *Income-generating activities of chambers of commerce;*
 - *The role of chambers of commerce in trade facilitation;*
 - *Trade information services of chambers of commerce;*

A full range of other titles available to chambers is available from WCF. Please see full list of Chamber guides at:

<http://www.iccwbo.org/wcf/id3875/index.html>

For further information

Please contact:

Anthony Parkes

Director, World Chambers Federation:

Tel: + 33 1 49 53 29 44; Fax: + 33 1 49 53 30 79 Email: wcf@iccwbo.org



ICC full membership (*Option 2*)

Who can become a member

- Corporations and companies in all sectors;
- National professional and sectoral associations;
- Business and employers federations;
- Law firms and consultancies;
- Chambers of commerce;
- Individuals involved in international business.

How ICC membership works for you

ICC members belong to an organization representing businesses from all sectors all over the world. ICC is the only world business organization. It promotes business enterprise and investment as the most effective way of raising living standards and creating wealth. ICC works for the liberalization of trade and investment within the multilateral trading system.

As a member of ICC, your chamber can take part in the work of ICC's commissions and special working groups, composed of a total of more than 500 business experts who regularly meet to scrutinize proposed international and government initiatives affecting their subject areas. These specialized working bodies prepare all ICC policy statements, standards, rules and other instruments, which are respected throughout the world. Members of ICC learn what really matters for their companies at an early stage and win time to make the right decisions.

Through ICC's many working bodies, members shape ICC's policy and elaborate its rules. ICC gives priority to the issues that most urgently concern its members. It is the members who set ICC's agenda.

ICC members are at the forefront of business self-regulation. ICC is world leader in setting voluntary rules, standards and codes for the conduct of international trade that are accepted by all business sectors and observed in thousands of transactions every day.

Member companies and business associations are instrumental in the development of such key international trading instruments as Incoterms, the Uniform Customs and Practice for Documentary Credit (UCP 500) and GUIDEC (a set of guidelines for ensuring trustworthy digital transactions over the Internet).

ICC publications are available to chamber members at preferential rates (30-40% discount on many titles). Many chambers often re-sell these publications to their member companies at recommended retail price (RRP), reinforcing the chamber's important work in trade development by promoting recognized international standards.



ICC's privileged links with major international organizations, including the UN and its specialized agencies and the World Trade Organization, allow the organization to effectively represent the interests of its members in international fora. ICC members prepare business positions for submission to international organizations and also, through ICC's global network of national committees, to governments.

By being part of ICC, members gain influence both at national and international level.

ICC's programme of conferences and seminars is an essential channel for passing on the world business organization's expertise to a wider audience. ICC conferences are held in all parts of the world. ICC experts travel the world to stage seminars and courses on subjects in which the organization has unique expertise. These include Incoterms, the Uniform Customs and Practice for Documentary Credits and ICC arbitration.

The ICC Institute of World Business Law runs courses and seminars for legal practitioners and company executives on subjects ranging from investment protection and negotiation of contracts to international arbitration and audiovisual law.

ICC offers members many of the advantages of belonging to a prestigious club and the chance to forge business relationships at the highest level at exclusive ICC events. ICC opens doors. Membership allows your chamber to participate in these events at a "members" fee.

The ICC International Court of Arbitration ("the Court") is the world's foremost institution in the resolution of international business disputes. While most arbitration institutions are regional or national in scope, the ICC Court is truly international. Composed of members from some 60 countries and every continent, the ICC Court is the world's most widely representative dispute resolution institution.

Established in 1923 as the arbitration body of ICC, the International Court of Arbitration has pioneered international commercial arbitration as it is known today. The Court took the lead in securing the worldwide acceptance of arbitration as the most effective way of resolving international commercial disputes. Since its creation, the Court has administered well over 10 000 international arbitration cases involving parties and arbitrators from more than 170 countries and territories. Demand for its services grows year by year in line with the expansion of international trade and the rapid globalization of the world economy.

The ICC Court is not a "court" in the ordinary sense. As the ICC arbitration body, the Court ensures the application of the Rules of Arbitration of the



International Chamber of Commerce. Although its members do not decide the matters submitted to ICC arbitration - this is the task of the arbitrators appointed under the ICC Rules - the Court oversees the ICC arbitration process and, among other things, is responsible for: appointing arbitrators; confirming, as the case may be, arbitrators nominated by the parties; deciding upon challenges of arbitrators; scrutinizing and approving all arbitral awards; and fixing the arbitrators' fees. In exercising its functions, the Court is able to draw upon the collective experience of distinguished jurists from a diversity of backgrounds and legal cultures as varied as that of the participants in the arbitral process.

ICC promotes an open international trade and investment system and the market economy. Its conviction that trade is a powerful force for peace and prosperity dates from the organization's origins in 1919. The small group of far-sighted business leaders who founded ICC called themselves "the merchants of peace".

Today it groups thousands of member companies and associations from over 140 countries. National committees in the world's major capitals coordinate with their membership to address the concerns of the business community and to convey to their governments the business views formulated by ICC.

For further information

Please contact:

Anthony Parkes

Director, World Chambers Federation:

Tel: + 33 1 49 53 29 44; Fax: + 33 1 49 53 30 79

Email: wcf@iccwbo.org

How to become a member

Please return the application form for ICC direct membership, indicating: ICC full membership or WCF only membership.

Please [click here](#) to download the application form.

Note:

Membership is based upon the month of the year joined to the same time, 12 months later. Depending upon local circumstances, chambers may change their membership category upon membership renewal. A change of membership category may be due to economic or social conditions within the country, or perhaps to the chamber's own priorities and access to ICC WCF different portfolios.

At any time, please consult with WCF concerning any difficulties your chamber may have.