OECD ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER POLICY (CCP)

MISSION

The CCP is the only intergovernmental forum addressing a broad range of consumer issues. It aims to help public authorities enhance the development of effective consumer policies. It does so by *i)* carrying out research and analysis, and developing policy guidelines on topics of common interest; *ii)* exchanging information on current and emerging issues and trends; and *iii)* examining ways to strengthen policy outcomes, both among governments and with other stakeholders.

The committee, which includes senior consumer policy and enforcement officials from OECD governments, works closely with experts from civil society and the business community. In addition to its semi-annual meetings, the CCP organises workshops on specific issues in which stakeholders from non-member economies often take part. Some of these non-members - India and Egypt, participate in the committee as regular observers.

CURRENT WORK

E-COMMERCE The Internet is providing consumers with opportunities to purchase an expanding range of products from a larger number of suppliers, often at lower prices. Enhancing the benefits to consumers requires development and maintenance of a transparent and secure environment for transactions, which consumers can trust. In support of this objective, in 2009, the CCP launched a review of the effects and effectiveness of the OECD 1999 *Guidelines for Consumer Protection in the Context of Electronic Commerce*. Ongoing and new consumer challenges in e-commerce were identified by stakeholders in December 2009 at an OECD conference on empowering e-consumer. In light of discussions at the event, attention is currently focusing on online and mobile payments, digital content products, and the commercial aspects of the participative web. Payments issues were discussed at an expert workshop in April 2011; digital content issues were discussed at a roundtable in April 2011 and at a workshop in April 2012.

CONSUMER ECONOMICS In 2010, the committee completed work on a *Consumer Policy Toolkit*. The toolkit provides policy makers with a framework to help assess the conditions under which policy interventions may be most effective, and the types of measures they may want to consider to address issues. It shows how what has been learned through the study of information and behavioural economics can be used to enrich understanding of how markets work, thereby improving decision making. Ways that the principles in the toolkit can be implemented in the communications services area were discussed at a workshop in October 2011; how such principles may be implemented in the enforcement area will be discussed by consumer protection law enforcement agencies at an October 2012 Conference organised by the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network. Other work on consumer economics include analysis of how consumer surveys and consumer complaints information can be used to enhance policy making, and the role that industry self regulation can play.

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY In 2008, the committee initiated work on consumer product safety, to examine how governments could co-operate more effectively to address emerging issues. A ten-point action plan is now being implemented aimed, in particular at improving information sharing. On 19 October 2012, the CCP's Working Party on Consumer Product Safety will launch *GlobalRecalls*, which is a web portal that has been designed to gather together information on unsafe products from around the world in a timely and multilingual fashion. A related portal became operational in November 2011, providing stakeholders with information on global and domestic policy and regulatory developments.

OTHER RECENT WORK The CCP has been involved in recent OECD horizontal work on sustainable consumption and green growth, and the review of the *OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*, which contains a chapter on consumer interests. It was also involved in the 2011 review of the OECD Spam Task Force developed the *OECD Recommendation on Cross-border Co-operation in the Enforcement of Laws against Spam*, which includes principles on the establishment of a domestic and cross-border enforcement co-operation scheme against spam.

》 OECD GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2010 Environmental Claims: Findings and Conclusions of the Committee on Consumer Policy. Provides stakeholders with a series of recommendations on ways to enhance the value and effectiveness of claims.

2009 Committee on Consumer Policy Recommendations on Consumer Education. Provides a set of principles to promote and improve consumer education; special attention paid to sustainable consumption and digital competence.

2008 Policy Guidance on Online Identity Theft. Explores ways that theft can be prevented through education and awareness.

2008 Policy Guidance for Addressing Emerging Consumer Protection and Empowerment Issues in Mobile Commerce. Addresses *i)* limited information disclosure on mobile devices; *ii)* protection of minors; *iii)* unauthorised use of mobile devices.

2008 Policy Guidance for Protecting and Empowering Consumers in Communication Services. Provides a set of principles to help ensure that these markets are fair and transparent for consumers.

2007 Recommendation on Consumer Dispute Resolution and Redress. Provides framework for facilitating domestic and cross-border consumer dispute resolution and redress. Sets out principles for ensuring effective consumer dispute resolution and redress mechanisms for consumers acting both individually and collectively.

2006 Recommendation on Cross-border Co-operation in the Enforcement of Laws Against Spam. Calls on governments to develop frameworks for improving co-operation among enforcement authorities.

2003 Guidelines for Protecting Consumers from Fraudulent and Deceptive Commercial Practices Across Borders. Establishes framework for countries to combat fraudulent commercial practices through closer, faster and more efficient co-operation among their enforcement agencies.

1999 Guidelines for Consumer Protection in the Context of Electronic Commerce. Helps ensure that consumers are just as protected when shopping online as when buying from local stores or ordering from a catalogue. Set out the characteristics of effective protection for online business-to-consumer transactions.

》 RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Report on Consumer Protection in Online and Mobile Payments (2012).

Consumer Policy Toolkit (2010).

Conference on Empowering E-Consumers: Strengthening Consumer Protection in the Internet Economy, background report (2009).

Promoting Consumer Education. Trends, Policies and Good Practices (2009).

Analytic Report on Consumer Product Safety (2008).

Telecommunications and the Internet: Report on Mobile commerce (2007), Scoping Paper on Online Identity Theft (2007), Report on Enhancing Competition in Telecommunications: Protecting and Empowering Consumers (2008).

Economics for Consumer Policy: Reports on the Roundtables on Economics for Consumer Policy (2005 and 2006).

Good Practices for Consumer Policy: Report on the Effectiveness of Enforcement Regimes (2006); Report on OECD Member Countries' Approaches to Consumer Contracts (2006); Report on Consumer Information Campaigns Concerning Scams (2006).

Copy Control and Digital Rights Management: Report on Disclosure Issues related to the use of Copy Control and Digital Rights Management Technologies (2006).

Alternative Dispute Resolution and Redress: Report on Consumer Dispute Resolution and Redress in the Global Marketplace (2005).

Payment Cardholder Protections: Report on Consumer Protections for Payment Cardholders (2002).

⦿》 UPCOMING EVENTS

Working Party on Consumer Product Safety, 28 February-1 March 2013, Washington DC

Committee on Consumer Policy, 22-23 April 2013, Paris