

STOP CARTEL

THE GLOBAL ANTITRUST GATE

HOW COMPETITION AFFECTS YOUR LIFE... WHAT YOU SHOULD DO TO PROTECT YOUR INTERESTS

As a consumer, tax-payer and small / mid-size businessman, you have the undisputed right to enjoy the benefits of the free and open Competition which is the acquisition of the best goods and services in the best possible prices.

Consumers, private enterprises, public Organisations and through them all tax-payers, depend on competitive offers so that can obtain the above desired result.

The Competition procedure is a true act, when the different competitors set their prices honestly and independently. When the competitors come to an agreement, prices increase and the consumer loses.

The horizontal price agreements and collusive tendering, the abuse of economic power which is detrimental to the small/ mid-size business and the mergers of big companies, when a significant part of the business profit is not passed on to the consumer, along with other types of agreements, are illegal acts that are prohibited and punished by the Anti-Monopoly Legislations.

The Anti-Monopoly Legislation, constitutes for every Country the Constitution of its Economy and application and circumvention of it, affects your daily life directly.

The application of the Constitutional map of Economy- that concerns your life in every expression and detail, since it affects your financial situation directly, it is not something theoretical or indifferent □ it depends on you, as is with your Constitutional and Political Rights.

With this text, the STOP CARTEL Organisation, describes in a simple way, using simple terminology, the most common violations of the Antimonopoly Laws, the conditions and the events that refer to violation practices.

These illegal practices that are causing direct damage to you as a consumer or small/mid-size businessman and in any case as a tax-payer, must come forward with Antitrust complaints, as every Antitrust complaint does not only lead to punishment or suppression but in prevention as well.

LAW VIOLATIONS

1. Agreed price setting (Horizontal price fixing)

Price setting is an agreement between competitors, to increase, nail down or in any form, maintain the price in which they sell their products or services. It is not necessary for the competitors to agree selling exactly for the same price or that every competitor in a particular sector is part of a conspiracy. The agreed price setting can take many forms in every agreement which restrains the competition price, and violates the Law.

Other forms of illegal price setting agreements are:

- Establishment and persistence in discount policies by the competitors.
- Common maintenance of stable pricing.
- Simultaneous cancellation or decrease of discounts by the competitors .
- Retention of specific prices in different types, sizes or quantities of products which are produced or traded by the competitors.
- Insistence on a minimum price or charging catalogue.
- Same credit terms by competitors.
- Avoidance of price advertising.

Attention should be given to the following practices:

If you are a consumer or small/ mid-size businessman

- Pay attention to competitors who always announce price increases simultaneously for the same amount or follow alternating price increases or follow their turn in price increases that are in progress.
- Pay attention to competitors who decrease or abolish discounts about the same time.
- Generally, be alert in situations ,when all prices seem to be uniform and the suppliers refuse to negotiate them.

All the above cases are causing damage to your interests.

This is why you must come forward with antitrust complaints.

1a. Collusive Tendering. (Bid Rigging)

One of the most common law violations in competition is the practice of collusive tendering. In simple words, collusive tendering (agreed offer) practice is the swindling that concerns an agreement between competitors who submit tenders for the supply of goods, services, the undertaking of big projects etc., with the winner being pre-determined.

The agreed tender practices appear when a buyer is looking for tenders in order to buy goods or services. The competitors agree in advance which tender would prevail.

The buyer who depends on the competition between the companies that submit tenders, in order to get the lowest competitive price, finally gets the lowest tender which is higher than the one a real competitive market would have offered to him.

There are four basic forms on which all agreed practice conspiracies are based on.

-Suppression of tenders. In this form one or more competitors agree not to give offers or withdraw their offer, so the chosen one would be the declared winner of the competition. In return they receive compensation, some contracts for supplies or a commission on services provided.

-Complimentary tenders. In this type, the competitors-conspirators, submit offers as gifts which intentionally are higher or do not abide by the specifications on the competition so they can lose the commission of supplies or services. These □ friendly-offers □ are planned so as to give the false feeling of competition.

-Circular tender alternation. In these cases all the competitors-conspirators submit tenders, but upon agreement they each take turns as winners of specific competitions or series of competitions, where there is profit sharing for all.

-Distribution of customers in the market. In this form, the conspirators upon agreement distribute among themselves the customers in geographical areas in which they submit tenders.

- **If you are a Public Sector Officer who handles the tenders for supply of goods or services to your Sector,**
- If you are an Executive in a State controlled Organization, responsible for the supply of goods or services to your Organization,

Because you are a tax- payer, you, along with all of us, will pay the high cost.

- **If you are a businessman who is looking for tenders in purchasing goods or services,**

Because your business is also suffering financial weakness under the above conditions.

- **If you are simply a tax- payer,**
- Because **you**, along with all of us, will pay the cost.

IF any of the above practices come to your attention in your professional or financial environment,

DO NOT HESITATE TO COME FORWARD WITH YOUR ANTITRUST COMPLAINT

2. Abuse of a financially powerful position. (Abuse of Dominant position)

This form, that is a very serious violation of the most basic principles of the Anti-Monopoly Legislation all over the world, initially concerns:

The small /mid-size businessmen, who

- Find themselves in a relationship of financial dependence on their financially powerful suppliers and in other form, on their financially powerful customers.
- Attempt to enter as new players in a market in which financially powerful companies prevail.
- Face suffocating financing practices.

The above practices concerning abuse of dominant position and financial power, are simultaneously and directly damaging:

A. All the consumers, because

1. Limit the possibilities of free choice of goods and services (less points of supply).
2. Increase the cost of goods and services (through control of the points of supply, its number, location, procedure of distribution and economic function).

B. All the tax-payers, because

Increase the sales tax and or other types of taxes that they pay daily as consumers, due to higher basic cost of goods and services.

If you are a small/ mid-size businessman and you are forced directly or indirectly by your financially powerful supplier or by the financially powerful customer of your products or services you provide,

- To suffer unjustified denial of sales or purchases,
- To have a sudden and unjustified interruption of an existing business relationship,

- To have arbitrary terms imposed upon you,
- To set the market prices , according to his own will,
- To accept the imposition of other unreasonable exchange terms that cause financial suffocation of your business,
- To forcibly restrict your production, consumption and technological development,
- To suffer discriminatory purchase or sale terms so that your business is coming into an inferior position related to other similar businesses in the vertical chain of production or supply of the goods or services,
- To to be supplied with additional products or services in order to be able to buy products and services that you really need,
- To suffer discriminatory practices,

Because all the above practices are illegal according to all the Antitrust Legislations, all over the world,

Because you and your business have:

- the right of existence in the market,
- the right in the development procedure as every one else,
- the equal right in life of this world,

Because

- your business constitutes part of the financial backbone of your country,
- it was not given to you as gift by your suppliers or your powerful customers,

Because

- your business must continue to exist for the benefit of the healthy competition, the entire society, and to develop without obstacles,

Because,

- if you are not already a victim, you are a possible candidate to become the next one,

experiencing the collapse of your business and the following destruction of your life

If you are experiencing one or more of the above conditions,

Do not hesitate to come forward with your Antitrust complaint

If you are a consumer or tax payer

and such practices, come to your attention in your close or wider social or professional environment, because the above practices concern directly your interests:

- by preventing you having multiple and less expensive choices.
- by preventing you paying less taxes.

Do not hesitate to come forward with an Antitrust complaint

3.Mergers

Everyone thinks that mergers between Companies, concern only them, their administrators and their owners.

In real life, a merger concerns all of us.

Whereas the result of any merger between Companies, that produce and trade products and services, is to increase their size, there is a danger of creating Oligopoly and Monopoly conditions and practices in their activity sector.

The Anti-Monopoly Laws, set terms for the approval of the mergers.

The basic principle, that must concern the society, for any approval of a merger between companies, is the protection of the interests of the consumer by transferring a significant part of the created economic benefit to him. As economic benefit is clearly regarded, the expected decrease of the costs of production of goods and services, as result of the merger, that must pass to the consumer.

Also, a basic principle, for such an approval, must be the protection of the society from creating Oligopoly or Monopoly conditions.

For the above reasons,

If you hear that a merger is to be approved or has been approved :

- Evaluate if the benefit has been passed on to you as a consumer and tax payer.

1. Did the products of the new business become less expensive?

2. Did the choice of goods or services by you, as consumer, increase?

3. What is the benefit of the particular merger for you?

If you cannot come up with a persuasive answer to the above questions,

Do not hesitate to come forward with an Antitrust complaint.

The Organization STOP CARTEL is ready to accept your Antitrust complaints. On an International level!

Our experienced Fellows - lawyers, economists, businessmen-members of the Scientific Team of the Organization,

- will investigate the Antitrust complaint.
- will draw up a proposal to STOP CARTEL administration.
- In case STOP CARTEL adopts your Antitrust complaint :
 - will publish it, for the members of the Parliament of your Country
 - will promote it in the Government Authorities of your Country
 - will support it in the Antitrust Authorities in your Country
 - will publish it to the Media in your Country and Internationally,
 - will publish it in its website,
 - will make every effort to solve the problem and terminate the illegal practices.

So do not hesitate to come forward with your Antitrust complaints.

- SEND YOUR ANTITRUST COMPLAINTS NOW! -