



The Advocacy Center: Let Us Work For You

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Exporting today usually requires more than offering superior products or services at competitive prices. Frequently, U.S. companies must navigate complex foreign trade regulations and deal with obscure foreign government agencies or bureaucracies. To assist current and potential U.S. exporters find their way through the sometimes overwhelming challenges associated with marketing abroad, the U.S. government offers the services of the Advocacy Center.

The Advocacy Center located within the U.S. Department of Commerce serves as a one-stop shop, marshaling the resources of U.S. government agencies on behalf of U.S. commercial interests abroad. Its mission is to ensure that U.S. products and services are evaluated fully and fairly against the competition for international commercial opportunities.

How exactly does the Advocacy Center "advocate"?

Depending on the needs of client companies and the particular circumstances surrounding a commercial competition, U.S. advocacy may involve a number of strategies including:

- A timely letter to a foreign government decision-maker from a U.S. government official;
- A phone call to a high-level foreign official from a senior U.S. government official;
- A face-to-face meeting between a foreign government official and a senior U.S. government official (e.g., a U.S. Ambassador, a U.S. Cabinet or sub-Cabinet official);
- Organization of a Cabinet or sub-Cabinet led trade mission to a foreign country.

In order for the Advocacy Center to meet the varied needs of its clients, the staff works very closely with the U.S. Commercial Service contacts at Embassies and Consulates abroad, as well as with colleagues at other government agencies charged with promoting U.S. exports

such as the State Department, the Energy Department, the Transportation Department, the U.S. Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency. With the help of these agencies, among others, the Advocacy Center makes every effort to ensure that companies have the full support of the U.S. government as they pursue commercial opportunities abroad.

Why do I need help from the Advocacy Center?

The Advocacy Center is able to harness the resources of the U.S. government in a variety of ways to help client companies deal with the daunting challenges posed by negotiating with foreign governments and foreign state-owned commercial enterprises. The reasons for coming to the Advocacy Center include but are by no means limited to the following:

- Aggressive foreign government support on behalf of competitor companies;
- Unfair treatment by foreign government decision-makers that either inhibits or prevents U.S. firms from competing;
- Politicized procurement processes that link commercial contract awards to concessionary financing, technology transfers, the provision of development assistance, etc.;
- Tenders tied up in bureaucratic red tape resulting in the competitive disadvantage of U.S. bidders in the competition or the evaporation of any real commercial opportunities.

The Advocacy Center is able to tap the knowledge of the Commercial Service and other U.S. government agencies offering client companies a wealth of experience already acquired in dealing with the varied bargaining and business tactics employed around the world. Whether your company hopes to build on its past commercial successes in a country where it is well-established or hopes to secure a commercial foothold in a new market, the