



Strengthening Rule of Law in the Americas

CWAG Alliance Partnership Backgrounder

Overview

The CWAG Alliance Partnership is a cooperative program involving the Conference of Western Attorneys General (CWAG), Council of State Governments, National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other public and private entities aimed at strengthening the legal systems of both the United States and Mexico.

CWAG Alliance Partnership projects focus on such initiatives as reinforcing court systems with greater efficiency and transparency; running training programs that promote a consistent application of Rule of Law disciplines, such as oral advocacy; and promoting collaboration among state attorneys general from both countries.

Binational exchanges and workshops organized through CWAG – in conjunction with NAAG, Mexico's Federal Attorney General's Office, Mexico's National Conference of Attorneys General and Mexico state attorneys general – help establish and nurture cross-jurisdictional cooperation on many law enforcement issues, from consumer fraud and piracy to drug trafficking and money laundering. The ultimate goal is to ensure that law enforcement and judicial officials are able to work together in ways that apply a consistent Rule of Law focus across jurisdictions in U.S. and Mexican states.

A Track Record of Success

Since its establishment in 2006, the CWAG Alliance Partnership has achieved unprecedented tangible results on both sides of the border. A decade of collaborative efforts between the states of New Mexico and Chihuahua, for example, inspired a promising template for state-to-state skill focused trainings. The cultivation of expanded relationships led to bi-national efforts such as the New Mexico State Legislature enacting legislation aimed at criminalizing human trafficking; Arizona and several other state legislatures are now considering similar legislation. Colorado's training efforts with Mexico led to a joint ICE-Colorado Attorney General's Office apprehension of a murder fugitive and, in a multi-jurisdictional effort led by former Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard, to a \$50 million money laundering settlement.

In 2009-2010, capacity trainings reached an all time participation peak – four programs conducted during that period for prosecutors, investigators, forensic scientists and the Mexican Judiciary educated over 4,000 participants from 36 Mexican states and the Mexican Federal Government. Additionally, the relationships formed during 2009-2010 and previous CWAG Alliance Partnership programming years have resulted in over a dozen new requests for assistance and seminars in Mexican states and by federal entities of the Mexican Government.

Highlights for 2011

This year – backed by a vigorous infusion of \$2.7 million in funding from INL – the CWAG Alliance Partnership has more than 50 training programs scheduled in Mexican and U.S. locations for a variety of law enforcement professionals.