

## Case Example – Export Alabama Alliance

The Export Alabama Alliance, which is comprised of 12 organizations from the federal government (U.S. DOC) and state agencies through local organizations such as the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce and the Port of Huntsville, collaborate closely to provide export promotion support to companies throughout the entire state. Because the state is geographically large but sparsely populated and resources are limited, collaboration is the most effective model for providing services according to Alliance members.

The Alliance establishes a yearly trade strategy, “so that everyone is moving in the same direction,” which includes organizing events and trade missions, which are cross-promoted and mutually supported. Frequent communications ensure that there is no redundancy of effort and allows this small community of service providers to share in “each other’s insight.” Moreover, services such as market research are delegated to the organization that can best provide it, allowing Alliance members to stretch their resources to fill the most gaps in serving their community.

As stated by Christina Stimpson, Director of International Trade at the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, Alabama is a “prime example” of the value of collaboration: [Individually] we don’t have the financial resources to do this on our own. We don’t want to be redundant. We need to work together to be the most successful...There’s just me (working on exports in her organization) ... That’s why the Alliance is critical. The support of the Alliance makes it possible for me to do my job.”

*Sources:* Interviews with Christina Stimpson, Director of International Trade, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce (1/2017); Robert Stackpole, USEAC, Alabama (1/2015); Hilda Lockhart, Division Director, Alabama DOC, International Trade Division (2/2015)