

Chapter-16

CITIZEN'S CHARTER, PUBLIC REDRESSAL MECHANISM, RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI), OFFICIAL LANGUAGE, INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

I. Citizen Charter

Our Mission

We function to enhance external trade by increasing economic and commercial engagement with other countries, through enactment and implementation of export promotion measures and through trade facilitation measures.

Our Values

We are committed to act with integrity and judiciousness, transparency and accountability and with courtesy and understanding in our dealings with the trade and the public. All the services and commitments will be honored, without the citizen having to pay any bribe.

Our Commitment

We will continuously strive to evolve procedures in foreign trade policy that would be of maximum benefit to the public. We are committed to simplify various requirements necessary under rules in force, in the context of a globalised and liberalised economy.

We shall continuously consult our client groups and shall give timely publicity to all changes in law or procedures relevant to the Department.

II. Grievances Cell

A Grievances Cell is functioning in the Department. Grievances submitted to the cell will be acknowledged within a week. Appropriate action will be completed within one month for grievances relating to the Department, and within two months, with respect to grievances relating to Export Promotion Councils, Commodity Boards and Public Sector Undertakings etc. under the Department. A Grievances Box has been provided at the Information and Facilitation Counter (IFC). In the event of the person wanting to take up the matter personally, he or she may contact the Director, Staff & Public Grievances. All Thursdays are observed as meeting less days in the Department and officers, will make themselves available to the public without insisting upon prior appointment, between 3.00 and 4.00 PM on those days.

Appellate Committee

A Quasi Judicial Appellate Committee has been constituted in the Department. The Committee is responsible for taking expeditious action on appeals preferred against statutory orders passed by the DGFT/Addl. DGFT/Development Commissioners of Special Economic Zones and 100% Export Oriented Units under provisions of Foreign Trade Development and Regulation Act, 1992.

Grievance Redressal Committee

A Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) headed by the Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce has been set up to handle grievances of exporters relating to Foreign Trade Policy. The Exporters need to send their grievances to the Committee in Electronic form, besides all other normal modes. Representations to the Committee may be forwarded by post addressed to the Chairman of the Committee. The application of the aggrieved party must contain the name of the applicant, IEC No. address (with contact Nos. and e-mail ID), the details of reference earlier made to DGFT, if any and the grounds in support of grievances, in brief.

Any decision relating to Foreign Trade Policy i.e. decisions of ALC, EPCG, PIC, PRC, EPZ/EOU etc. i.e. all non- statutory matters relating to Foreign Trade Policy which has caused grievances to the exporter/importer will be heard by the Committee. Grievance Committee functioning in DGFT may be approached in the first instance for redressal of the grievances. The petitioner may thereafter refer the matter to GRC if still aggrieved with the decision of the Grievance Committee of DGFT. During the period April 2008 – March 2009, the GRC met 7 times wherein 89 cases were considered and disposed off. Decisions of GRC are made available on the website of Department of Commerce.

Trade Finance Division is responsible for coordinating the redressal of public grievances pertaining to Department of Commerce. During the calendar year 2008, Trade Finance Division electronically disposed off 110 public grievances received from DARPG & Individuals. In addition, 57 grievances received manually were also processed.

As a new initiative, Trade Finance Division has started sending all grievances electronically to the

concerned organizations under the administrative control of Department of Commerce. User names and I.Ds have been generated/e-mailed to all the organizations under the administrative control of this Department to deal with public grievances and submit the action taken reports electronically.

III. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Cell in Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)

An FTA Cell has been constituted in the DGFT. FTA Cell will work under the overall directions of a committee which will comprise of representatives of Department of Revenue (Customs), RMTR Division of the Department of Commerce and Administrative Ministries/Department concerned.

In the terms of the reference of the Committee will involve monitoring any circumvention in the Rules of Origin, consultations with domestic industry and RPA partners before initiating safeguard action, harmonization of custom duties and monitoring trade under FTAs/PTAs. The FTA Cell is also monitoring any surge in imports on account of tariff preferences under PTAs/FTAs.

The Trade and Industry is requested to forward representations to the FTA Cell regarding any of the issues listed above for necessary action by the DGFT.

IV. Vigilance Unit

The Vigilance Unit dealt with the work relating to implementation of Conduct Rules, processing of Annual Property Returns, completion of Annual Confidential Report of the officers in the Department, furnishing of CVO's monthly report on vigilance activities to CVC, compiling Quarterly Statistical Reports of Vigilance Cases for sending to the Department of Personnel, work relating to granting permission under the provision

of the Conduct Rules, conducting regular and surprise inspections of sensitive spots, review and streamlining of procedures, which appear to afford scope for corruption or misconduct and for initiating other measures for the prevention, detection of corruption and other malpractices and punishment to the corrupt in the Department as well as its attached and subordinate offices and Public Sector Undertakings, keeping a watch on the movement/visits of undesirable persons in the Department and preparation of a list of officers of "Doubtful Integrity"/ Agreed list and their postings to non sensitive areas.

The Vigilance Unit also deals with the disciplinary cases of Board level appointees working in various Public Sector Undertakings, Autonomous Bodies and Commodity Boards functioning under the administrative control of the Department, while the cases of non Board level appointees of the various PSUs, Autonomous Bodies and Commodity Boards are looked after by the respective CVO/Heads of the Organisation.

The complaints received from individuals and other organizations like CBI/CVC/PMO etc. are examined on the basis of the factual report obtained from the concerned administrative divisions/ organizations. If necessary, preliminary inquiries are made to look into the merit of the complaint. If the complaints have any substance then a regular departmental action is initiated.

During the year 2008-2009, about 155 (tentative) investigations/inquiries were conducted (as per information available up to 31.03.2009). On the basis of these inquiry proceedings, major/minor penalties were imposed in 46 (tentative) cases in attached and subordinate offices, PSUs, Autonomous Bodies and Commodity Boards and the Department of Commerce.

Vigilance Awareness Week was observed during the period 3rd November, 2008 to 11th November, 2008 to create awareness amongst officers and staff.

V. Right to Information

The Department of Commerce has implemented the Right to Information Act, 2005 and has put in place all necessary systems and procedures on the Website of the Department. The Department has appointed 32 Central Public Information Officers (CPIOs) from different Divisions. Similarly, 29 organizations under the administrative control of this Department have been treated as public authority under the Right to Information Act. The Department has also set up a mechanism of appeal as has been provided in the Act. During the period April, 2008 to March, 2009, 346 applications were received by different CPIOs of this Department. During the same period, 25 appeals have been received by the Appellate Committee set up in this Department and all of them were disposed off.

VI. Official Language

The Official Language Division monitors the progressive use of Hindi and implements the Official Language Policy in the official work of the Department. Necessary action has been taken to achieve the targets set out in the Annual Programme for the year 2008-09.

Hindi Salahakar Samiti

Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce presided over the meeting of the Hindi Salahakar Samiti held on March 12, 2008 wherein the progressive use of Hindi in the official work of the Department as well as various organisations under its administrative control was reviewed. The Samiti reviewed in detail the achievements of PEC Ltd., New Delhi; Tobacco Board, Guntur and Marine Products

Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Cochin vis-a-vis targets set out in the Annual programme.

Official Language Implementation Committee

Meetings of Official Language Implementation Committee (OLIC) were held on 17.10.2008 and 12.03.2009 under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (O.L.) in which the progressive use of Official Language in the official work of various Sections/Divisions under of the Department was reviewed. Decisions taken at these meetings were promptly implemented.

Hindi Fortnight

A Hindi Fortnight was organized in the Department during 14-28 September, 2008. Four competitions viz. Translation from English to Hindi and vice versa, Noting and Drafting in Hindi, Dictation in Hindi and Hindi Quiz were organized for Hindi speaking and Non-Hindi speaking employees separately. Cash prizes and certificates were given to the winners.

Incentive Schemes

To enhance the use of Hindi in their official work by the staff, the following incentive schemes have been introduced in the Department.

- “Vanijya Granth Puraskar Yojna” aimed at encouraging the writing of original books in Hindi on subjects pertaining to the Department of Commerce is in place. Under the scheme, cash prizes of Rs. 25,000/-, Rs. 18,000/-, Rs. 12,000/- and Rs. 6,000/- are awarded as first, second, third and consolation prize respectively.
- A bi-annual incentive scheme for Assistants and dealing hands using Hindi in their official work has also been continued during the year. In view of the popularity and impact of the

scheme in promoting the use of Hindi in the official work of the Department, the amount of individual award of Rs. 600/- has been increased to Rs. 1000/-. During the first half of the year 39 employees have been awarded cash prizes.

- In order to encourage the officers/employees to do their entire official work in Hindi a “Special Incentive Scheme” has been introduced during the year 2008-09, wherein a cash award of Rs. 5000/- were given to 19 officers/employees (10 Hindi speaking and 9 Non-Hindi speaking).
- The status of various organizations under the Department of Commerce in which 80% of more employees have acquired working knowledge of Hindi for doing their official work is being reviewed regularly.
- During the year, 17 Regional/Sub-offices, under the Attached/Subordinate offices/ Undertakings of the Department of Commerce have been notified in the Gazette of India under Rule 10 (4) of the Official Language Rules, 1976. Apart from this, 10 sections in the Department have already been specified under rule 8(4) for doing their entire official work in Hindi.
- In compliance with the instructions issued by the Department of Official Language, the website of the Department is also available in Hindi and is being updated from time to time.

Checking/Inspections

Department ensures the compliance of Section 3(3) of the Official Language Act wherein all papers/documents are issued bilingually (Hindi & English). In compliance of Rule 5 of the Official Language Rules, letters received in Hindi are invariably replied to in Hindi. Letters received from

the Members of parliament from Region 'A' and 'B' are also replied to in Hindi. The progress made in promoting the use of Hindi in the organizations under the control of the Department is monitored and reviewed through their Quarterly Progress Reports and inspections.

Committee of Parliament on Official Language

During the year 2008-09 the committee of Parliament on official Language inspected 11 organizations under DOC wherein a representative of the Department was present and the assurances given during these meetings were communicated to the concerned organization for their early fulfillment.

VII. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Department has integrated the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and its tools in its day to day functioning order to have efficient and effective administration, delivery of services, information dissemination and trade facilitation. Various ICT based systems, applications and packages have been developed and implemented to facilitate the necessary support in decision support, monitoring, analysis and e-governance. The electronic interface with community partners for trade facilitation, Electronic Payment through Net Banking and Digital Signature have been integrated with the systems.

In order to have ICT based back-end operations, the ICT infrastructure in the Department is being regularly reviewed and upgraded with the latest technology. All work places in the Department are connected on Local Area Network (LAN) managed by the ICT professionals from the National Informatics Centre (NIC). It is providing round the clock facilities for E-mail, intranet / internet and database access operations. NIC is also providing

necessary technical support and consultancy to the department in the development, implementation and maintenance of various e-governance applications/ systems for office automation, management information systems (MIS) and applications and databases for data analysis.

An Intranet Portal has been developed, implemented and maintained by NIC on the LAN facilitating information dissemination to the users in the Department and provide integrated access to various e-governance applications/ systems, management information systems and databases.

The Department's web site (<http://commerce.gov.in>) is the major source of information dissemination and Government-to-Citizen (G2C) and Government-to-Business (G2B) interfaces for electronic delivery of services, trade facilitation and monitoring various applications. The website contains information on the various programmes/ schemes being implemented by the Department. The performance of the schemes in terms of Outcome Budget is being monitored on quarterly basis and the results of the exercise are hosted on the website. The website is maintained by the NIC for daily/regular updates.

As part of e-governance initiatives taken by Government of India, an Executive Video Conference System (EVCS) has been installed in the chamber of Commerce Secretary. Through NICNET, it connects seventy four Secretaries to Government of India and all Chief Secretaries/ Administrators of States/UTs to facilitate inter-ministerial consultations. A studio based video conference facility is also being setup in the Department to facilitate national and international video conferences.

The basic computer training has been imparted to all working level staff in the Department. The

subject/application specific training programmes are being organized from time to time in the Department to promote the usages of ICT among the staff. The details of all forthcoming training programmes organized by various government organizations like Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM), National Informatics Centre (NIC), Department of Personnel and Training (DOPT) etc. are being regularly made available in the Intranet Portal for wide publicity in the Department and to enable employees to attend these programmes.

VIII. Guidance and Help

Information and Facilitation Counter (IFC) and Public Relation Office of the Department is situated near Gate No. 14, Udyog Bhavan, New Delhi. Phone calls on Telephone No. 23063486 from the public are welcome.

In addition to the above, dissemination of information about our latest policies, major decisions taken and procedures is also done through internet website at the address: (<http://commerce.nic.in>).