

Chapter 16

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

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.

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, 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.

During the year, 24 grievance complaints and 15 appeals have been received of which 22 complaints have been closed and 17 appeals have been disposed off.

Grievance Redressal Committee

A Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) headed by the Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce has since been set up to handle grievances of exporters against decisions of the DGFT relating to Trade and Policy. The Exporters shall 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 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. Thereafter, 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.

The Committee would also afford a personal hearing to the petitioner to redress the grievance by considering applications in its meetings. The petitioners would be able to see the minutes of the meeting on the website of the Department of Commerce (<http://commerce.gov.in>).

During the period April-December 2007, the Grievance Redressal Committee met 6 (six) times

wherein 85 cases were considered and disposed off.

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.

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, 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 2007-2008, about 133 (tentative) investigations/inquiries were conducted (as per information available upto 31.12.2007) and on the basis of these inquiry proceedings, in 72 (tentative) cases major/minor penalties were imposed in attached and subordinate offices, PSUs, Autonomous Bodies and Commodity Boards and the Department of Commerce. Vigilance Awareness Week was observed during 12-16 November, 2007 to create awareness amongst officers and staff.

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 also appointed a number of 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. Any citizen of India can seek information from the CPIO concerned under the Act. During the period April -December 2007, 103 applications were received by different CPIOs of this Department of which 101 cases have been disposed off. During the same period, 15 appeals have been received by the Appellate Committee set up in this Department and all of them were disposed off.

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 actions have been taken to achieve the targets set out in the Annual Programme for the year 2007-08.

Hindi Salahakar Samiti

The Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce presided over the meeting of the Hindi Salahakar Samiti held on May 25, 2007 wherein the progressive use of Hindi in the official work of the Department as well as various organisations under its administrative control was reviewed. Ten organisations have been awarded the Rajbhasha

Shields/Trophies for their commendable work in promoting the use of Hindi in their official work during 2005-06 & 2006-07.

Official Language Implementation Committee

Meetings of Official Language Implementation Committee (OLIC) were held regularly under the Chairmanship of Commerce Secretary to assess the use of Official Language by the various Divisions/ Sections/ Organizations of the Department. Action points and decisions taken at these meetings were promptly implemented.

Training Programme

The Hindi Shorthand & Typewriting Training Centre in the Department imparts training on Hindi Shorthand and Hindi Typing to the Stenographers and Lower/Upper Division Clerks. Besides, Hindi software has been loaded in all the computers and significant progress has been made in the use of the Official Language through computers.

Rajbhasha Sammelan

“Rajbhasha Sammelan” was organized in the Department on April 20, 2007. Hindi officers, as well as other officials concerned with the implementation of the Official Language policy in Attached/Subordinate offices of the Dept. situated in and around Delhi participated in the Conference. Officials from 5 organisations i.e. MMTC Ltd, Agriculture & Processed Food Products Export Development Organisation (APEDA), India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), and State Trading Corporation of India (STC) gave an impressive presentation on the programmes and activities proposed to be carried out during 2007-08 to promote the use of Hindi

in the official work of their respective organizations.

A similar conference of the Rajbhasha officials of the Organisations under the Department situated outside Delhi was also held on May 24, 2007 in which Hindi officers from (i) Coffee Board, Bangalore (ii) Marine Products Export Development Authority, Cochin, (iii) Rubber Board, Kottayam, (iv) Spices Board, Cochin; and (v) Gems & Jewellery Export Promotion Council, Mumbai gave a presentation on their achievements of the previous year and the activities proposed to be undertaken during 2007-08.

Hindi Fortnight

A Hindi Fortnight was organised in the Department during 14-28 September, 2007. Four competitions viz. Translation from English to Hindi and vice versa, Noting and Drafting in Hindi, Extempore Speech 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 attractive 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 prizes respectively.
- A bi-annual incentive scheme for the Assistants and dealing hands using Hindi in

their official work has also been continued during the year with an individual award of Rs.600/-. During the first half of the year 35 employees have been awarded cash prizes.

- A new annual scheme called “Special Incentive Scheme” has also been introduced during the year wherein a cash award of Rs. 5000/- were given to 20 officers/employees (10 Hindi Speaking and 10 non-Hindi speaking) doing their entire official work in Hindi. The Scheme has been made operational from the financial year 2007-08.
- The status of the various organizations under the Department of Commerce whose employees have acquired 80 per cent or more working knowledge of Hindi for doing their official work is being reviewed regularly.
- During the year, 28 Regional 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 Official Language Rules, 1976 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

Checking / Inspections

Check points have been further strengthened to ensure effective implementation of Section 3(3) of the Official Language Act wherein all papers/ documents are issued in bilingual (Hindi & English) form and that the letters signed or received in Hindi are invariably replied to in

Hindi. The progress made in promoting the use of Hindi in the organisations under the control of the Department is monitored and reviewed through their Quarterly Progress Reports and inspections.

Committee of Parliament on Official Language

With a view to assess the progress made in the implementation of the Official Language Policy of the Government, the Committee of Parliament on Official Language inspected the State Trading Corporation of India (STC), New Delhi; Coffee Board, Bangalore; Offices of Jt. DGFT at Cochin, Pondicherry and Ahmedabad; Tea Board, Kolkata; DGS&D, New Delhi and Gems & Jewellery Export Promotion Council, Mumbai during the year.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

In order to have efficient and effective administration, delivery of services, information dissemination and facilitating Government-to-Government (G2G), Government-to-Business (G2B) and Government-to-Citizen (G2C) interfaces for information exchange, the Department has integrated the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and its tools in its day to day functioning. Various ICT based systems, applications and packages have been developed and implemented to facilitate the necessary support in decision making, 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.

The ICT infrastructure in the department is being regularly reviewed and upgraded with the latest

available peripherals. The Local Area Network (LAN) connecting all work places in the department with computer communication link and providing facilities for round the clock E-mail, intranet / internet and database access operations is being managed by the ICT professionals from the National Informatics Centre (NIC) who also facilitate the development, implementation and maintenance of various E-governance systems/ applications for office automation, management information systems (MIS) and applications for decision support and databases for data analysis.

The Department's web site (<http://commerce.gov.in>) maintained by the NIC 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 training programmes are being organized in the Department to promote the usages of ICT

among the staff. The basic computer training has been imparted to working level staff in the Department. The details of all forthcoming training programmes organized by various government organizations like Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM), NIC, DOPT etc. are being made available in the Intranet Portal to provide access to the staff in the Department.

Guidance and Help

Our Information and Facilitation Counter (IFC) and the Public Relation Office is situated near Gate No. 14, Udyog Bhavan, New Delhi, in the Department and welcomes your phone calls on Telephone No. 23063486.

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 following address: (<http://commerce.gov.in>).