



## INTRODUCTION

### CITIZEN'S / CLIENT'S CHARTER

#### A. What is Citizen's/Client's Charter ?

The Citizen's / Client's Charter (CCC) is a written declaration by a Government Department / Organization that highlights the standards of service delivery that it subscribes to, avenue for grievance redress and other related information. In other words, it is a set of commitments made by a Department to the Citizen's / Client's groups with respect to standards of service which it delivers. Though not enforceable in the court of law, the CCC is intended to empower citizens and clients so that they can demand committed standard of service and avail remedies in case of non-compliance by service provider organization. This exercise, if appropriately conceived and carried out can enthuse and enable organizations to tune their planning, policy and performance to the needs and concerns of citizens / stakeholders / users / clients.

#### B. When was it introduced by Government of India ?

Over the years, with India making significant economic progress and with substantial increase in the literacy rate, citizens have increasingly become aware of their rights and expect the administration not merely to respond to their demands but also to anticipate them. Since 1996, a consensus has evolved in the Government on effective and responsive administration. It was with this background that in the Conference of Chief Ministers of States and UTs held on 24, 1997, and presided over by the then Prime Minister, an Action Plan for effective and responsive Government at the Center and State levels was adopted. One of the major decisions taken in the Conference was that Departments would



formulate Citizen's Charters starting with those sectors that have large public interface. Since then various Government Departments / organizations have made their CCCs. In the Central Government, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has been entrusted with the task of coordinating and operationalizing the CCC.

Ability to deliver promised results is a necessary condition for improving the perception of a Government, but it is not necessarily a sufficient one. Citizens and clients also expect that results should be delivered with courtesy within a reasonable time frame. Towards this end, in its meeting of January 28, 2010, it was decided by the High Power Committee on Government Performance to include Citizen's / Client's Charter in the Results Framework Documents (RFDs) of all 62 departments for the year 2010-2011.

The RFD provides a summary of the most important results that a department expects to achieve during the financial year. The document has two objectives:

- (a) To move the emphasis of the department from process-orientation to result-orientation, and
- (b) To provide an objective and fair basis to evaluate the department's overall performance at the end of the year. It means that departments set their own targets consistent with those agreed with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance. These RFDs are vetted by an independent body of non-government experts and are placed on the respective website of the departments. RFD is part of the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (PMES), approved by the then Prime Minister in 2009. For further details visit : [www.performance.gov.in](http://www.performance.gov.in)

### **C. What has been the progress in implementation of CCC ?**

While Government of India introduced the idea of Citizen's / Client's Charter way back in 1997, the track record of implementation in the beginning was less



than satisfactory. In spite of strong endorsement by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, only a handful of departments in the State and Central Government drafted CCCs. The quality of CCC drafts was also not very satisfactory and most of them were drafted as a mere formality without any rigorous quality control over the commitments. As a result, these CCC drafts were neither useful for measuring performance of departments with respect to this important aspect nor were there any actions specified for failing to meet the commitments listed in CCCs.

**D. Why were CCCs included as a mandatory indicator in RFD ?**

The then Cabinet Secretary, in the year 2009, asked the Performance Management Division (PMD) to look into the ways of improving implementation record with respect to CCCs. It was observed that departments were not taking the CCC exercise seriously as there was no action for non-compliance. In view of the above findings, it was decided by the High Power Committee on Government Performance to include development and implementation of Citizen's / Client's Charter (CCC) and Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) as mandatory indicators in the RFDs for 2013-14 of all 62 departments.

**C. Recent implementation efforts :**

With the above decision, the Performance Management Division (PMD), Cabinet Secretary, has worked closely with the DARPG to develop a set of user-friendly Guidelines for implementing Sevottam Compliant Citizen's / Client's Charter and Grievance Redress Mechanism. These Guidelines have been further refined after getting stakeholders' feedback. PMD also collaborated with DARPG to organize series of workshops on designing and implementing Citizen's / Client's Charters and Grievance Redress Mechanism in Government departments.

PMD in collaboration with National Informatics Centre (NIC) designed a software



to enable departments covered under the RFD Policy to create on-line Citizen's / Client's Charter (CCC). This is the first of its kind software which has greatly improved the quality and made CCCs more meaningful as it lays accountability for implementing them. To ensure effective implementation and usage of this software, PMD organized several trainings / workshops in collaboration with NIC.

Keeping with the motto "what gets measured gets done", PMD organized several meetings with departments to review progress in implementing the Citizen's / Client's Charter and to get feedback on functioning of respective department's CCCs. These meetings were organized for all 62 departments who were requested to present their progress to the members of the Ad-Hoc Task Force (ATF) dealing with their department.

ATF members represent a body of non-Government experts consisting of distinguished academicians from leading management institutes, former Secretaries to Government of India, Chief Secretaries, private sector management experts and former Chiefs of public enterprises. In addition to reviews by PMD and ATF, these CCCs were also reviewed by a team from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore (IIMB). The feedback on each CCC was conveyed to respective departments and revised CCCs were incorporated accordingly.

Source: *Adapted from Government of India Citizen's & Client's Charter.*