

**DR. MCR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE OF ANDHRA PRADESH HYDERABAD**



**CITIZEN'S
CHARTER**



Dear Participant,

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has launched a major Training and Human Resource Development initiative. For effective and efficient implementation of various programmes taken up by the Government, well-trained and well-informed official machinery is a must. The Government has been introducing a large number of training programmes and launched a series of measures aiming at bringing the Government closer to the citizen who is the intimate stakeholder.

No initiative of any organization can be successfully implemented, if the functionaries are not fully involved in the programme. The best way to involve them would be to make each functionary aware of his/her role functions and responsibilities and making him/her fully conscious that he/she is accountable to its stakeholder, the Citizen. With this in view the Government of Andhra Pradesh has adopted SMART model of Governance, which is SIMPLE, an acronym that stands for, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent.

The accountability of staff of each department in the state government is rendered possible through a commitment given to the people, the primary stakeholders, in the form of Citizens Charter. It is a promisory note assuring the citizens the best quality of services, hospitable treatment, attending to their complaints, right to information, redressal to their grievance etc. Before implementing the Charter it becomes necessary on the part of the employees to understand fully the philosophy behind this and become fully aware of their commitment, their role and responsibility in its implementation in letter and spirit, so that the charter really becomes a meaningful and worthwhile document that reflects the government's aspirations in the service of the people. This booklet gives details of the inputs that go into the preparation of the Citizens' Charter, its parameters, ways and means of its implementation, machinery and systems to handle/redress the complaints, methods and necessity to obtain the feedback from the stakeholders etc. The purpose of this booklet is to make every employee of the state govt.

undersand the commitment given to the citizen who is the primary stakeholder. This institute is endeavouring to sensitize and train the employees in making the Govt. Citizen friendly and enable in delivering the quality services, rising up to the expectations of the citizens.

The Institute acknowledges the cotribution of Sri. Vasanth Kumar Parigi, consultant, Center for Good Governance who compiled this booklet in a capsular for comprising various aspects of the Citizens Charter.

After going through the material if you have any suggestion, please send them directly to this institute.

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Director General

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&

Ex-officio Spl. Chief Secretary to Government
(HRD)

**A WORK BOOK
&
A MANUAL
ON CITIZEN'S CHARTER**

“What we need is more people who specialize in the impossible”

Dr. M.C.R. HRD INSTITUTE OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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HYDERABAD – 500 033 (Andhra Pradesh)

A work book and a Manual on "Citizen's Charter". By V.K. Parigi, (Founder Chairman, Center for Transparency and Accountability, Bangalore, and Managing Trustee, Consumer Education Centre, 2/27, 47th Cross, 8th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore – 560 082. Karnataka, INDIA), produced for :

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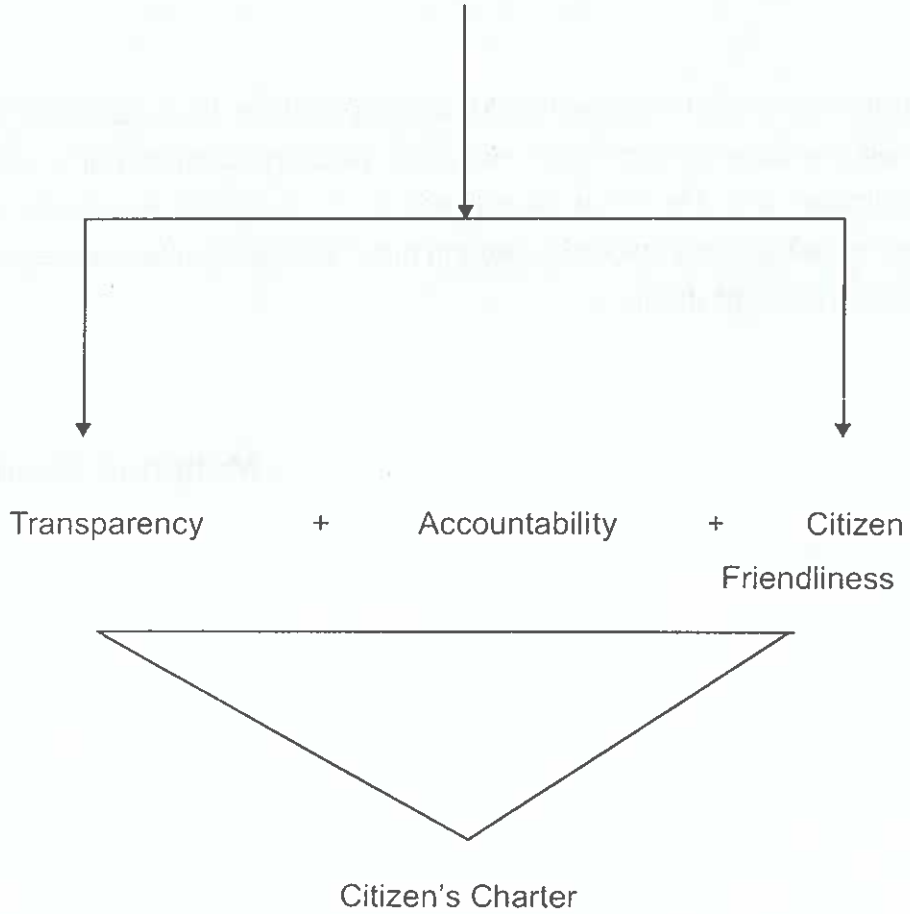
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The spirit behind the Citizen's Charter ———

A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us; we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption on our work; he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider on our business; he is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him; he is doing a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so.

- **Mahatma Gandhi**

GOOD GOVERNANCE



Good Governance is the Technology, Citizen's Charter is the tool.

CONTENTS

1.	Citizen's Charter – Its history	1
2.	What is a Citizen Charter	4
3.	Preparation of citizen's charter	6
4.	Launching the Citizen's Charter	7
5.	How to make Citizen's Charters a success	8
6.	Basic steps for effective complaint management and how to get feedback ?	10
7.	Complaint redressal Procedures	11
8.	Evaluating the implementation of Citizen's Charters	16
9.	A check list for drawing a Citizen's Charter	19
10.	A model format for Citizen's Charter	27
11.	The Charter Mark System	30
12.	Citizen's Charter assessment parameters	31
13.	Service first – the new charter programme of the Govt of U.K. (Executive Summary)	33
14.	Towards a service society	50
15.	Qualities of good managers who are service oriented	51
16.	Annexures – Proforma of Questionnaire for conducting survey. A model Charter on Municipal Services- Govt of A.P.	52

CHAPTER - I

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

What is its History?

In 1991 John Major, the then British Prime Minister established the concept of citizen's charter to shift the balance of change into the hands of ordinary people. He set the citizen's charter as a ten year Programme.

In January 1994 at a meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council held in Delhi, its representatives raised the issue of preparing citizen's charters for Govt. departments to improve the standard of Public Utilities. The then Minister of Civil Supplies, Public Distribution System and Consumer Affairs, Mr. A.K. Antony suggested that Health Services may be taken up first. Accordingly, a committee was formed to bring out a draft Charter for Health Services.

In August 1996 in his Independence Day speech, the then Prime Minister of India Sri. H.Deve Gowda announced the Govt's decision to introduce the concept of citizen's charters in all Government departments.

In November 1996, at the Conference of Chief Secretaries and Union Territories on "Effective & Responsive Administrations it was agreed by all that the subject of citizen's charters should be given top priority to improve the services to the people of India.

In May 1997, the Conference of Chief Ministers which considered measures to tone up administration and services decided to adopt citizen's charters.

Several countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, have citizen's charters.

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

The various departments of the Govt. of India, the Nationalized banks, the Reserve Bank of India, the Life Insurance Corporation of India have published citizen's charters. In all, nearly 60 Charters have been released by these organizations and Departments up to Dec. 2001.

Several State Govt. and Union Territories have also published citizen's charters.

A compendium of citizen's charters brought out by the Central Govt. has been published by the Ministry of Consumers Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Dept. of Consumer Affairs) , Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi-110 001. (Ref. UPABHOKTA JAGARAN, VOL. 11, NOS.2 & 3, JUNE – SEPT 2001). Those who need more details may visit the web site (<http://persmin.nic.in/arpq>) of the Dept of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. (Sardar Patel Bhavan, 5th Floor, Parliament Street, New Delhi. Telefax-3362325, 3742133, 3742548)

The Govt. of Andhra Pradesh has taken up the preparation of citizen's charters in a systematic manner through consultation with stakeholders, training of staff, involved in the implementation of charters and awareness generation.

A 3- hour interactive DVD has been produced by the Dr. MCR- HRD Institute Govt. of Andhra Pradesh on citizen's charters for training and publicity purposes.

The following Depts. of the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh are implementing citizen's charter:

1. Road Transport Authority
2. Dept. of Registration and Stamps
3. Commercial Taxes
4. Municipal Administration
5. Employment and Training
6. A.P.TRANSCO (APSEB)
7. Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Sanitation Board

Draft Charters have been prepared for the following Depts.

1. Revenue
2. Police
3. Drug Control Administration
4. Animal Husbandry

The A.P. Govt. proposes to extend the concept of citizen's charters to all Govt. Depts. having public interface.

In the **Vision 2020** document, citizen's charters have been conceived as effective means towards achieving the goal of Good Governance.

The strategy paper on Good Governance published by the Govt. of A.P. and the report of the Task Force on Good Governance (January 2000) headed by Shri. Madhav Godbole have recommended the effective implementation of citizen's charters in all Govt. Depts.

All limits are self imposed. There are no limits to excellence -

Tom Peters

CHAPTER - II

WHAT IS A CITIZEN'S CHARTER?

The citizen's charter is a document prepared by the service provider in a clear and precise manner about the quality and method of delivery of services to the users of the service.

The purpose of the citizen's charter is to:

- a. Improve the quality of service to the public,
- b. Give people more choice,
- c. Tell people what kind of service to expect from the Govt. departments,
- d. Make sure people know what to do if something goes wrong in the process of service delivery.

Six Important Areas to be covered in every Citizen's Charter

The Six Principles of citizen's charters:

- ✎ Published Standards,
- ✎ Openness and Information,
- ✎ Choice and Consultation,
- ✎ Courtesy and Helpfulness,
- ✎ Redress when things go wrong,
- ✎ Value for money.

Standards

Explicit standards, or quality parameters are to be published and monitored, which individual users can reasonably expect for each service. Actual performance against these standards need to be published. Standards also refer to specific time frames within which the work relating to the citizens related works will be completed.

Information and Openness

Full, accurate information should be readily available in plain language about how public services are run, what do they cost, how well they perform and who is in charge. i.e. The name, designation and

telephone numbers (Office and Residential) of the Officers concerned and timings of their availability etc.

Choice and Consultation

The provision of choice is to be made wherever practicable. There should be regular and systematic consultation with those who use a service. User's views about services, and their priorities for improving them, to be taken into account in final decisions on standards or quality or time frames.

Courtesy and Helpfulness

Courteous and helpful service to be rendered by public servants who should normally wear name badges. Services are to be made available equally to all who are entitled and not to suit their convenience

Putting Things Right / Redressal

If things go wrong, an apology, a full explanation and a swift and effective remedy, has to be offered. Well published and easy-to-use complaints procedures with independent review wherever possible have to be followed.

Value for Money

Efficient and economic delivery of public services has to be handed within the resources that the nation can afford. Independent validation of performance is to be made against the published standards. Best quality service should be delivered incurring lowest cost.

Expenditure control and review of costs including manpower costs and administrative overheads should be undertaken periodically and published for public review.

“In good and successful organizations, people provide solutions. In poor and unsuccessful organizations people are the problem”

CHAPTER - III

PREPARATION OF CITIZEN'S CHARTER

Before preparing a citizen's charter the following process must be completed.

1. Consultation – with service users, staff, voluntary organisations.
2. Survey to know what is the present perception of the citizens and what their expectations are. The survey may be through informal discussions with a small group or a structured survey through a questionnaire. (A sample questionnaire for Municipal service is enclosed at Annexure I. Similar ones may be prepared for other depts.)
3. Draft Charter has to be jointly prepared by a small committee of 3 or 4 persons. The charter should be written in a clear, simple and concise language and easily understood by citizens who read them.

What citizens expect from Govt Departments / service providers

1. Reliability i.e. consistency in performance.
2. Responsiveness i.e. timely service.
3. Credibility i.e. having customer interest at heart.
4. Empathy i.e. attention to customer's needs.
5. Courtesy and care i.e. physical evidence of willingness to serve.

CHAPTER - IV

LAUNCHING CITIZEN'S CHARTER

various phases in launching citizen's charter that follow one another

1. The Policy Phase – the decision to go for a citizen's charter
2. Motivation and Awareness – Marketing the idea to the staff and other stakeholders.
3. Identification of a core group.
4. Consultation with the stake holders
5. Preparation of the citizen's charter.
6. Publicity and launching of the Charter
7. Continuous measures to create awareness about the citizen's charter among the public.
8. Implementation plan with details.
9. Feedback from staff and the public
10. Review of the feedback
11. Using the feedback data for review of the Charter with the stake holders to improve/bring changes in the charter.
12. Further improvements in the charter – Preparation of Revised Charter.

Steps needed for an effective and efficient implementation of citizen charter.

1. Formation of a citizen's charter advisory committee.
2. Staff training/motivation at all levels upto District/Taluk/Village.
3. Review of procedures.
4. Exhibit charter at all important places.
5. Clearly specify who will do (a) what (b) when and (c) How?

HOW TO MAKE CITIZEN'S CHARTER A SUCCESS?

To make the Citizen's Charter a success the following are needed

1. A sense of urgency
2. Owning the Charter by the Head of the Dept and the entire staff.
3. A committee headed by the Chief Minister to oversee the implementation and progress of the Citizen's charter.
4. Constant interaction with the stakeholders.
5. Motivating the staff and performance review of the staff based on the criteria outlined in the Charter.
6. Taking corrective measures
7. Simplification of procedures and systems.
8. Reducing hierarchy, and going for decentralization.

Citizen's Charters Should be seen as

1. A partnership between the people and the Govt.
2. Citizen's charter is not a concept, it is a programme of action.
3. It is a part of democratic reforms.
4. Citizen's charter gives "people orientation" and "customer focus"
5. Citizen's charter is a pro-active approach to a good governance
6. Political Parties, Administrators and even Judiciary must encourage citizen's charter.

What are the dimensions of Quality service?

1. appropriate and relevant (to meet individual and community preferences, needs and wishes)
2. available and accessible (to everyone or those groups/individuals given explicit priority)
3. equitable (fair in the treatment of individual or groups of people in similar circumstances).
4. Acceptable (in terms of quality and manner of provision) – including whether services are approachable, convenient, pleasant to use, reliable, timely, prompt, responsive and humane)

5. Economic and efficient (from the viewpoint of service users, tax-payers and community at large)
6. Effective (in terms of the benefits they bring to users and the community).

Everyone has two jobs.

1. doing the job.
2. improving the job.

CHAPTER - VI

BASIC STEPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

1. Acknowledge Complaints
 - a. Personalize the response
 - b. Talk to customer if possible
 - c. Use letters.
2. Designate a location to receive complaints
 - Accessible, Visible to Customers
3. Develop a System for Record Keeping.
4. Process and Record complaints.
5. Investigate & Analyze the Complaints.
6. Keep the customer informed of the progress.
7. Periodically analyze the complaints and improve the process.

How to get Feedback?

1. Over the counter at the service outlets.
2. By toll - free telephone number.
3. Through Post/ e-mail
4. By Fax
5. Via Community/Consumer Organisations
6. Consultative Committees.
7. Internet
8. Telephone

CITIZEN'S CHARTER & EFFICIENT "COMPLAINTS REDRESSAL SYSTEM"

Without a good complaint redressal system, citizen's charter has no effect. Departments should establish highly credible & responsive complaints procedures and redressal systems.

Basic Principles of effective complaints system

Complaint system should be

- easily accessible and well publicized
- simple to understand and use
- speedy, with established time limits for action and keeping people informed of progress
- fair , with a full and impartial investigation.
- Confidential, to maintain the confidentiality of both staff and the complainant.
- Informative, providing information to top management so that services can be improved.
- Set out clearly the volume of complaints, broken down into different categories.
- Include an analysis of response time.
- Proposed action to be informed to the complainant.

Publishing Complaints Information

1. Publishing complaints information is in line with the principle of general public service accountability and transparency.
2. demonstrates to the public that complaints are taken seriously and it is worthwhile to complain.

What is the definition of a complaint?

Any expression of dissatisfaction which needs a response.

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

Complaint systems should be easily accessible and well-publicised. A truly successful complaints system will ensure that people know how to complain and feel, it is worthwhile to do so.

Before anyone makes a complaint, they need to have certain information. This includes rights and responsibilities. People should be told not only what their rights are as receivers of public service, but their responsibilities too. This can be done best through a clear statement given in the citizen's charter.

The department must publish information on complaints received (at least on yearly basis) and should include.

1. numbers and types/categories of complaints.
2. speed of response to the complaints received.
3. action taken as a result of complaints being reported to improve services.

How to complain?

* Display the names, addresses and phone numbers of the members of staff or secretaries of the top officers to contact to register any complaint.

* Give time targets for responding, i.e. target times should be stated for

1. acknowledging complaints
2. responding to complaints
3. keeping people informed if the response target will not be met and explaining why it is so.
4. The possible outcome- the information should state what redress people can expect when they have a complaint.

The role of I.T. – Computerization of Data

1. to record & track complaints
2. to respond quickly.
3. to produce reports
4. to measure satisfaction through analysis of questionnaire given to users.

Review of the redressals :

Complainants should be given the opportunity to have the redressal reviewed, if they are dissatisfied with the response. Each department should determine the best arrangement to suit to their position.

Govt. departments should make it easy for the public to lodge complaints. They could do this by:

- a. Pamphlets and posters
- b. Booklets
- c. The media – radio, T.V. local press
- d. Telephone directory
- e. Contact – Helplines i.e. Telephone numbers..

People will complain only when they feel that the organization is responsive to their complaints and acts on them. They will not do so if they think that the department does not show any response to the complaints. The Departments therefore must make it clear to the public that complaints are welcomed and they will be attended to, promptly and besides, the information carried in the complaint will be used to improve services further.

Removing fear

People may not complain if they fear that they will be subjected to vindictive treatment by the service provider for the complaint. This is particularly true, in case of service providers in Departments like lodging electricity, water, telephones etc.,

Handling complaints within the organization:

Each department should have procedure for dealing the complaints which are clearly understood and followed by the staff. The procedures should be simple and enable speedy solutions to the complaints received.

Redressal on a complaint can be in the following manner

- an apology
- an explanation
- an assurance that the lapse pointed out will not happen again
- action taken and things are put right,
- financial compensation.

Attitude

If a complaint system ought to be effective, just having procedures may not be enough. It is important that staff have the "right attitude" towards complaints. This involves

1. listening sympathetically to the people who have felt a cause to complain.
2. recognize that complaints handling is an integral part both of good service and customer care and not a nuisance.
3. Understanding the benefits of good handling and consequences of poor handling of complaints,
4. Welcome complaints as an opportunity offered to put things right for the citizen and to learn the lesson to improve services.

Complaints systems are unlikely to be fully effective if they are not supported and supervised at higher levels. Senior officials should regularly review complaints information and ensure that complaints handling is considered is one of the criteria in all performance reports of the department.

Each dept may consider displaying their **Pledge** to welcome complaints on a Board prominently.

Recording Information

Organisations must decide for themselves the level of detail to be recorded about complaints received, but minimum data should include:-

1. name, address and telephone number of the complainant
2. date of receipt
3. details of the complaint, subject or issue
4. what redressal the complainant wants
5. immediate action to be taken on the complaint

Analysing Information

Information about complaints should be submitted to the senior officers and policy makers on a regular basis.

RULE NO.1

THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT!

RULE NO.2

**IF YOU FIND THE CUSTOMER IS WRONG
THEN RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO RULE NO.1**

- Stew Leonard

CHAPTER - VIII

HOW TO ASSESS/MEASURE/ EVALUATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CITIZEN'S CHARTERS

A survey may be done with the help of voluntary organizations or by directly distributing a questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of the public/users of the service. About 500 samples in a District and 100 at taluk level may be sufficient for survey at initial stages. Once such surveys become regular, the sample size can be increased.

Surveys may also be conducted as below:

1. By personal interviews,
2. Through telephone contacts,
3. By placing survey forms at the service delivery counters,
4. Through Bills served on consumers,
5. Through volunteers.

A model Survey form which has the assessment parameters is enclosed at **Annexure**.

The charter mark system is another way to evaluate the citizen's charters.

Evaluation, Monitoring and review of Charter

1. Evaluation must be both internal and external
2. Evaluation and monitoring are necessary for improving standards of services

3. Regular evaluation and monitoring of the performance standards builds confidence among the users of the service and standards may be made more acceptable.
4. Evaluation can be quarterly, half-yearly or yearly. Atleast once in a year evaluation must be done.
5. Evaluation report must be widely publicized within and outside the organization.
6. Evaluation enables process review and re-engineering of services provided by Govt. Depts.
7. Evaluation and monitoring is better done through computerization. It helps the top management in decision making online.
8. Evaluation must provide a reward system for services of staff who provide excellent service.

External Evaluation has the following advantages

1. Improves transparency.
2. Validates Internal Evaluation.
3. Helps comparison with International Standards.
4. Know customer expectations.
5. Helps in fixing correct user charges and to measure willingness to pay.
6. Can be undertaken by NGOs, professional bodies, Consumer activists, academic bodies, research institutions etc.,
7. Voluntary channel including newspaper columns as sources.
8. Report Card system.

Evaluation - Review

1. Sound Evaluation should lead to retraining of staff.
2. Annual revision of standards through internal and external evaluation is desirable.
3. For owning citizens charter, a reward system must be in place.

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

4. Annual reports of organization must contain implementation of citizens charter.
5. Implementation of citizens charter to be a part of staff appraisal systems.
6. Commitment of Government to citizens to better the standards must be 'visible'.
7. Government reviews of public utility must be on the basis of implementation of citizens charter.
8. External agency for rating of public utilities is 'Good Governance'.

“Accountability is a call from your conscience , ultimately accountability is generated from within your heart”.

CHAPTER - IX

THE CHECK- LIST

Are you responsible for drawing up a citizen's charter or reviewing an existing one? This is a check list for you.

Charters in general

Charter documents should be written for consumers and their needs are to be taken into account. They should describe initiatives to provide a quality service.

Is it really for the consumers?

- 1.1. Does the title of the charter document indicate that public services are there to serve the individual citizen or consumer and that the charter is for the consumer?

For example, the Municipal charter or the PDS Charter.

2. Does the charter say that the consumers were consulted about its form or contents?

- If not, does it describe how the department consults the consumers about its charter initiatives?
- Does it cover the issues which matter most to the consumers?
- Does it reflect their priorities?

- 2.1. Does the charter invite readers to comment on its form or contents? If so, how?

- Does it give an address or telephone number for making comments?
- Does it name someone to whom to send the comments?

3. Does it name names?

- 3.1 Does the charter promote the principle that providing public services should involve individual accountability? For example

- Does it say that staff who are in contact with the public will identify themselves (by wearing name-tags or giving their names on the phone or through letters)?
- Is it clear about who authorizes the charter and takes responsibility for it? For e.g. many charters are

introduced by the Minister concerned or The Chief Executive.

- Does the charter give the name, address or telephone numbers of relevant officials (for e.g. someone to whom consumers can comment about the charter, or a designated complaints officer)?

3.2 Does the charter contain any other initiatives to make the services more personalized?

- Ex. May I help you counters, e-mail.

3.3 For whose convenience?

Some charters promise that services will be organized for the convenience of the consumer (rather than the organization)

Does the charter contain any other specific initiatives to make the service more user-friendly? For e.g.:

- Does it extend or adapt office opening hours to suit the convenience of the public, or does it promise to do so?
- Often the services provided by one government agency involve other agencies. Does the charter say that this service provider has negotiated with other public services on consumer's behalf to ensure they get an agreed standard of service?

3.4 Does it take account of special needs?

Does the charter contain a commitment to the principle that public service should be designed to meet the needs of all current or potential consumers- including individuals with special needs or concerns such as the old, disabled, children, women?

3.5 The obligation to consult

Consulting consumers is essential to develop a quality service. A comprehensive charter document will indicate a commitment to consultation. Does the charter promote the principle that the public service should consult their consumers and use that information to help them better.

Does it make any practical commitments to consult consumers and to change the service for good in the light of the views and demands of consumers?

Does the charter promise to publish the results of surveys and other forms of consultation?

Does the charter promise to consult consumers in any of the following ways:

- In carrying out independent opinion surveys? (If so, how, when and on what)?
- In consulting relevant consumer or voluntary groups on, or involving them in, the design or interpretation of opinion surveys?
- In setting up, support resourcing or convening consumer meetings, consultation bodies or other advisory groups?
- In appointing or seconding consumers to management bodies?
- In monitoring complaints?
- In consulting MPs, MLAs about the concerns of consumers?
- In consulting staff, especially those in regular contact with consumers, about consumers concerns?
- In consulting local councilors about the concerns of consumers?
- In consulting other relevant government agencies or organizations which may have information about the concerns of consumers?

3.6 The obligation to inform and be accountable

Does the charter promote the principle that public service should provide information for, and make themselves accountable to, their consumers? If so, what do they do about it?

3.7 Practising what it preaches

How readable and user-friendly is the charter document? For example

- Is it easy to handle?
- Is it well laid out?
- Does it have enough headings and are they relevant?
- If it is more than a few pages long, does it have a table of contents?
- Does it have an index, if not would one have been helpful?
- Does it have a readable type size?
- Is it written in plain language?

Does the charter tell consumers how to have a say in the way the service is provided or how to participate in formal consultation process?

Does the charter explain how to complain?

3.8 How the service is working

All charters say something about how the public service is going about its business. Charters may provide information ranging from ideals which are not necessarily achievable- at least in the short term, to practical information about the standard of service consumers have a right to expect. This section of the checklist covers the various ways in which Charters can and do account for how the services are working.

Does the charter describe the services the organization provides?

In general, to what extent does the charter provide information about how the service is useful to the Citizen. In particular, to what extent does it provide information in the areas set out below?

3.9 Long-term plans, aspirations and service philosophy

Does the charter describe the department's or agency's long-term plans and aspirations ?

Does the Charter describe the department's or agency's service philosophy? For example 'We are committed to achieving these high standards of service through a professional, efficient and quality service, which provides prompt and accurate help and information which is clear and accessible.

3.10 Monitoring and reporting performance

Charter documents often tell readers how well the department or agency has been working. They can only do this if the organization has been monitoring its own performance for some time. Consequently, some charters are only able to promise that they are about to start monitoring and reporting their performance.

Does the charter promise that the department or agency will monitor how well it is performing and report this to its users?

Which particular aspects of the service's performance were chosen for monitoring and why? How will they be monitored and how will the results be published?

Does the charter say how performance is to be monitored (if at all)? For example- (a) in-house, (b) by statutory inspectors or auditors or (c) by some other independent organization (like a market research company)

Does it say how regularly performance is to be monitored (e.g. half yearly, yearly)

- Does it say which aspects of the service's performance are monitored and the result reported? (for instance, how long it takes to process a claim, the quality of drinking water supplied)
- Does it say why those aspects of the service's performance were chosen? For example(a) We have always collected this information, (b) they are the only readily measurable aspects of the service;
- Does it say how and where the service will report its performance to the public (e.g. in posters ,at the office or the Press, Radio, TV etc.,

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

Does the charter say whether performance is getting better or worse (for example, by comparing this year's performance with last year's)

Does the charter set or promise to set specific standards for the level of service the consumers can expect?

If so, how and why were these set? For example: (a) are they new standards, based on the level of service the consumers expect; (b) are they the same as last year's; or (c) are they based on last year's standard but raised?

Does each standard or target apply to the individual user or consumer? For example, a standard that is meaningful to an individual consumer might say that the service processes each person's claim within 21 days. A generalized or corporate standard might say that the service will process 80 percent of all claims within 14 days only. It is often desirable to set both sorts of standards.

3.11 Rights and guarantees

Having set a performance standard or target for, say, how long consumers have to wait for a claim to be processed. Consumers want to know if they have a right to that level of service and what happens if the standard is not met.

A standard should be enforceable. A mere target may be a level of service the organization hopes to achieve but cannot guarantee.

To what extent does the charter guarantee that consumers will receive specific standards of service, or states that they have a right to that level of service?

3.12 The obligation to provide redressal

Virtually all charters involve a commitment to put things right if they go wrong. The main way they do so is by promising a proper procedure for dealing with complaints in the first place. Some, but not all, charters also promise to provide a specific

remedy, such as cash compensation, when things go wrong.

3.13 Complaint Procedures

Does the charter say that it has established, or soon will establish a procedure for dealing with complaints?

If so, does the complaints procedure contain the following features?

- Does it say that consumers can complain informally to any member of staff with whom they have contact, and that they will try to resolve the problem on the spot.
- Does it say that consumers can make a formal complaint?
- Does it say that there is a complaints officer, give his or her name and explain how to make contact?
- Does it guarantee that they will carry out a full investigation of a complaint and provide a full reply?
- Does it specify target times within which they will: (a) acknowledge the complaint, (b) provide a full response; or (c) give an interim reply, explaining when they will provide a full response?
- Does it set out a procedure by which, if consumers are dissatisfied with the initial response, can take the matter further?
- To what extent is the complaints procedure, or any stage in that procedure, 'independent'? (for example, some organizations set up an independent complaints officer or 'Ombudsman'?)
- If there are separate procedures for dealing with different types of complaints (such as complaints about medical negligence as distinct from complaints about hospital food) does it explain this clearly? Does it explain how to make such complaints?
- Does it insist or imply that all formal complaints must be in writing? Or does it allow complaints to be made in person or over the telephone?

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

- Does it invite consumers to make constructive comments and suggestions in addition to complaints and does it suggest how to do so?
- Does it say that if consumers are dissatisfied with the organization's complaints procedure, they can take up external and fully independent avenues the issue further with agencies such as Lok Adalat, Ombudsman, Regulatory Commission and so on.
- Does the charter tell consumers how to get independent advice on, or assistance with, their complaint (for instance, from a consumer group or facilitation counter etc.,)?

3.14 Compensation and other remedies

- Does the charter specify any circumstances in which they will provide redress or compensation or other remedies if things go wrong ?

- Most dissatisfied customers do not complain. The average business does not hear from 96% of its unhappy customers.
- For every complaint received there will be another 26 customers with problems, at least 6 of these will be serious.
- Complaints are not lodged because people think it's not worth the time and effort; they don't know how or where to complain, or they believe the department would be indifferent to them.

CHAPTER - X

A MODEL FORMAT FOR CITIZEN'S CHARTER

1. The Aim/purpose of this charter is to work for better quality in public service

2. (Enumeration of services delivered by the department) We deliver the following services :-

a)

b)

c)

d)

3. Our aim is to achieve the following service delivery/quality parameters

Nature of Service	Service Delivery Standard Time limit (days/hours/minutes)	Remarks
-------------------	--	---------

a)

b)

c)

4. Availability of Information: Information on the following subjects can be obtained from our officers listed below

1. Information relating to	2. Name of the officer	3. Designation	4. Located at	5. Telephone /Fax / e-mail
a.				
b.				
c.				

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

5. For information outside Office hours, please contact

Availability of prescribed forms

Title of the Form	Fee to be paid	Whom to contact
a)		
b)		
c)		

Forms are also available in the web at www (where applicable) and can be downloaded

6. Complaint redressal systems

Courteous and helpful service will be extended by all the staff. If you have any complaints to make in the delivery of the above standards you are welcome to register your complaints with the following officers

Name	Designation	Located at	Telephone / Fax/ e-mail
a)			
b)			
c)			

- We have also created a web site for registering complaints at www And you are welcome to use this facility

7. A centralized customer care center/grievance redressal center is also available at _____ where you can lodge your complaint.

8. All complaints will be acknowledged by us within _____ days and final reply on the action taken will be communicated within _____ days.

- Compensation in case of failure of service delivery, will be paid as shown below

<u>Nature of Service</u>	<u>Compensation per day</u>
1. -----	Rs.-----
2. -----	Rs-----
3.-----	Rs. -----

9. Consultation with our users/stakeholders

- We welcome suggestions from our users.
- We conduct _____ polls
- We hold periodical _____ meetings with users/user representatives and if you wish to be associated with this please contact _____ at _____.
- Please also enter your details at our web site www..... indicating your willingness to be available for consultation, survey on the points enlisted in the Charter.

10. We seek your co-operation on the following

Citizens Charter is a joint effort between you and the dept. to improve the quality of service provided by us and we request you to help us in the following way (Give details relevant to the concerned Departments)

- a)
- b)

11. Guide Book/Hand book/Consumer Helpline

We have published a Handbook for the guidance of our customers. Please contact _____ Officer for more details.

Our helpline number is _____

Our customer information center is located at _____ Phone No. _____

Other information

- a)
- b)

We are committed to constantly revise and improve the services being offered under the Charter.

Let us Join in making this Charter a success

CHAPTER - XI

CHARTER MARK

The Charter Mark System is adopted in U.K. to evaluate and reward Depts. offering best service through the Citizen's Charters. The following criteria are taken into account and marks are awarded to each aspect to decide the best performance.

The nine criteria are:

- Standards
- Information and Openness
- Choice and Helpfulness
- Putting Things Right
- Value for Money
- Customer Satisfaction
- Measurable Improvements in Quality of Services
- Innovative Enhancement to Services at no Additional Cost.

Commit yourself to performing one 'ten-minute' act of exceptional citizen courtesy per day and induce your colleagues to do the same. If there are 100 persons in your office you would have 24000 new courteous acts per year.

Plan for small wins.

CHAPTER - XII

CHARTER ASSESSMENT PARAMETERS

CHARTER IN GENERAL		
* Title	2	
* Context (Preamble/Background)	5	
* Covers core and critical areas	6	
* Initiatives	4	
* Takes account of special needs	3	
SUB TOTAL	20	

OBLIGATION TO CONSULT		
* Mechanism of feedback on forms and contents	6	
* Consult in future	4	
* Methods of Consultation	5	
SUB TOTAL	15	

OBLIGATION TO INFORM		
* Specifies names of relevant officials	4	
* Seeking further information	5	
* Monitoring and Reporting performance	6	
SUB TOTAL	15	

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

SETTING OF STANDARDS		
* Fixing time limits	6	
* Targets and standards of service	6	
* Rights and guarantees	8	
SUB TOTAL	20	

OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE REDRESS & BE ACCOUNTABLE		
* Complaints procedure	10	
* Compensation or Remedies	10	
SUB TOTAL	20	

COHESIVENESS	10	
---------------------	----	--

OVERALL ASSESSMENT		
Charter in General	20	
Obligation to Consult	15	
Obligation to Inform	15	
Setting of Standards	20	
Obligation to Provide redress & be accountable	20	
Cohesiveness	10	
TOTAL MARKS	100	

Comments:

CHAPTER - XIII
EXTRACT FROM
"SERVICE FIRST – THE NEW CHARTER
PROGRAMME"
GOVT. OF UNITED KINGDOM
CABINET OFFICE
JUNE 1998

Executive Summary

The Charter idea was pioneered in local government by Labour-run local authorities. We believe in it. We think it right that all public services, nationally and locally – should set out clear standards of service, and report on their performance, should consult and involve their users in carrying out these tasks, and should provide effective remedies when things go wrong. We want a programme that is driven by the needs of users, and whose aims are shared by all staff, particularly those on the front line. A programme based on true partnership, both between users and providers, and between different parts of government. In short, a programme that works.

'SERVICE FIRST- THE NEW CHARTER PROGRAMME' aims at improved service delivery across the public sector. It is an integral part of the Better Government initiative. It builds on what has already been achieved throughout the country, but gives a new emphasis to promoting responsiveness, quality, effectiveness and cross-sectoral working.

We are:

- i. Developing nine new principles of public service delivery, highlighting the importance of accessibility, co-operation and innovation;

Responsiveness

- ii. Launching the People's Panel of 5000 – a world ' first' - to research the public's views on improving services;

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

- iii. Creating a new legal basis to underpin people's right to know about public services;
- iv. Improving access to information on the performance of key public services by making such information available on the Internet in a clear and user-friendly way.
- v. Encouraging greater participation and involvement of front-line staff in improving services through better consultation schemes and a nationwide programme of ministerial workshops;

Quality

- vi. Publishing for the first time comprehensive new guides on drawing up national and local charters to improve their quality and consistency.
- vii. Instituting a review of all main charters, so that they better meet the needs and wishes of users, beginning with new charters for the NHS and court users.
- viii. Developing new charters where they can help to improve services, such as a new Long-Term Care Charter, and one covering the work of the immigration and nationality services;
- ix. Creating new best practice guides and using new technology to help services improve performance in key areas, such as handling complaints and consulting users;
- x. Developing best practice quality networks around the UK, so as to encourage services to work together to improve performance;

Effectiveness

- xi. Expanding and developing the successful Charter Mark programme to encourage and reward excellent customer services. We will
 - Introduce updated criteria to develop the scheme and reflect our new priorities.
 - Improve links between Charter Mark and other quality schemes.

- Develop a new self-assessment framework to enable further services improvement and
- Improve the way we organize the scheme to prepare for continuing expansion;

Working across sectors

- xii. Launching, in a broad-ranging partnership, a major new programme- Better Government for Older People- to improve services for older people and give them more say;
- xiii. Publishing a booklet, in partnership with the Citizenship Foundation and others, setting out new information on older people's legal rights and charter entitlements;
- xiv. Working with local government and the voluntary sector to promote effective partnership and tackle the obstacles to closer working so as to make public services easier to use,
- xv. Developing the Charter Mark scheme to encourage partnership between service providers.

This represents a major refocusing of the programme. In the coming years in consultation with users and staff, we will continue to evaluate its effectiveness. Our interest is not in new initiatives for their own sake, nor in bits of paper, but in helping public services deliver a better society for our citizens. We believe the new programme will do this.

CHAPTER I – Introduction

This Government believes that high quality and effective public services are a vital part of a modern state. People are entitled to expect that services which are often central to their lives should be responsive to their needs, easy-to use, flexible and efficient.

The Consultation Exercise

In June 1997, therefore, we decided that we should find out from people

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

with an interest in the programme how it might be refocused, so as to deliver the better, simpler services to which this Government is committed. We issued a consultation paper to a wide range of organizations and individuals. We also made it available on the internet,

The new name

We have decided to rename the programme, Service First – the new charter programme. We believe, this better reflects the programme's emphasis on providing responsive public services that meet people's real needs. It will be broader than its predecessor (Citizen's charter), and will encompass not only charters and the Charter Mark award scheme, but also some innovative new projects, such as the People's Panel and the Better Government for Older People, Programme.

CHAPTER 2- The Old and the new - The new Programme

Our aim in putting together the new programme has been to build on the strengths of the old, while tackling the weakness that we and others have identified. Key themes of the new programmes are:

- Putting users first, consulting and involving them not only in the way that services are delivered, but also in what is delivered;
- Involving front-line staff in finding ways to improve the standard of service delivered to users;
- Improving the quality and consistency of charters and ensuring that standards focus on quality of output, and not simply on process;
- Finding new ways to encourage the spread of best practice, and to bring services that are not performing up to the level best,
- Laying greater emphasis on innovation, as a way of improving service delivery; and
- Encouraging public services to work together, to provide the seamless services that people want and need.

Principle of public service delivery:

Six principles have underpinned the Charter programme almost since it began:

Every citizen is entitled to expect:

1. Published Standards of service
2. Greater openness and information
3. Choice and consultation where possible
4. Courteous and helpful services
5. Redress when things go wrong.
6. Value for money

These principles have played an important role in focusing the programme and in helping providers and users alike to understand what is meant by excellent service delivery. But they need to be updated and broadened. On the basis of views expressed during the consultation exercise, we have revised and added to them.

The **Nine new principles of public service delivery** represent this Government's vision of what every public service should be striving to achieve. Given below is the thinking behind them.

Every public service should:

1. Set standards of service

Set clear standards of service that users can expect; monitor and review performance; and publish the results, following independent validation wherever possible.

We believe it is important that all public services should develop, in consultation with their users, standards for the services they provide. These

need to be meaningful, measurable, and address those issues that are most important to users, focusing wherever possible, on the outcome to the people who use the service. Standards should be published, performance against them monitored and reviewed, and performance information published in a way that is accessible to users. The public needs to have confidence in such information, so it should be independently validated wherever possible.

2. Be open and provide full information

Be open and communicate clearly and effectively in plain language, to help people using public services and provide full information about services, their cost and how well they perform.

This Government is committed to introducing a Freedom of Information Act. This will give people legal rights in many areas for the first time. We believe that public services must be active in explaining their work. They should make available clear and concise information in plain language to everyone with an interest in their service. A charter, or similar document, should set out what the service provides, a contact for more information, standards of services, and the organisation's complaints procedures.

3. Consult and involve

Consult and involve present and potential users of public services, as well as those who work in them; and use their views to improve the service provided.

We want to see wider and more meaningful consultation. We believe it is important that on issues affecting service delivery, everyone with an interest should be consulted- users, staff, other relevant services, and the wider community. They should be listened to, and have the opportunity to become involved in the development of the service. Organisations should respond to the particular needs of women and other groups in society.

4. Encourage access and the promotion of choice

Make services easily available to everyone who needs them, including using technology to the full, and offering choice wherever possible.

It is essential that public services should be customer-focused: this means simple to use and accessible to those who need to use them. In practice, this includes, for example:

- Promoting physical access to buildings and vehicles for those with physical disabilities: this Government is committed to meeting our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- Where ever possible, providing documents in braille or large print or on tape, or signers, for those with visual or hearing impairments
- Having flexible openings hours;
- Meeting the particular needs of women, who may, for example, be accompanied by young children;
- Making use of the telephone both to answer queries and to deliver services.
- Making use of new technology (such as kiosks in public places, interactive television, and the Internet) so that people can avoid having to travel long distances, or waiting for opening hours, to obtain services – we have pledged that 25% of Government services will be available electronically by 2002;
- Providing, where there is a demand, information in Welsh and other languages; and
- Giving people a choice, wherever possible of provider and means of using the service provided.

5. Treat all fairly

Treat all people fairly; respect their privacy and dignity; be helpful and courteous; and pay particular attention to those with special needs.

This Government is firmly committed to creating a fairer, more equal society by, for example, ensuring that the interest of women and minority groups are taken into account in the policy-making process and are built into the design of government services. We have therefore introduced a new principle, which states that public services should be available to all, regardless of race, sex, age or ability. People's privacy and dignity should also be respected. And they should be treated with courtesy and helpfulness

6. Put things right when they go wrong

Put things right quickly and effectively; learn from complaints; and have a clear, well publicized, and easy-to-use complaints procedure, with independent review wherever possible.

Even in good services, things sometimes go wrong. When they do, it is essential that they be put right quickly and the lessons should be learnt from mistakes. Thus public services must have systems in place that enable them to do this. There should be arrangements for independent review wherever possible. Complaints provide a valuable source of information on how an organization is performing and in identifying potential weakness and problems. We therefore see them as something to be encouraged, not feared.

7. Use resources effectively

Use resources effectively to provide best value for tax payers and users.

We believe there needs to be a better balance between efficiency and effectiveness. Quality must not be sacrificed in a short-term dash for savings. We have therefore rewarded the old 'Value for money' principle to make this clear. This principle provides a direct link to the 'Best Value' initiative in local government, and reflects the wide range of considerations that public sector managers need to take into account to achieve first-class, environmentally sustainable services that provide value for money for the taxpayer.

8. Innovate and improve

Always look for ways to improve the services and facilities offered.

Innovation and continuous improvement are essential to achieving excellence. We think it is important to recognize that services can always do better, however good they are. And that by using new technology to the full, we can revolutionise the way we do business, to everyone's benefit. We will develop a culture that encourages creativity and the pursuit of excellence.

9. Work with other providers

Work with other providers to ensure that services are simple to use, effective and co-ordinate and deliver a better service to the user.

If public services are to meet an individual's need, it is vital that the various service providers work together to provide a seamless service. We must break down artificial boundaries so as to offer a simple, efficient service. We shall therefore be encouraging service providers to work with other providers to co-ordinate their activities, both through sharing information, through single access, and in many other ways.

CHAPTER- 3 Responding to people - The People's panel

By far the most important project we are running to research people's views about public services is the People's Panel. This is the first national initiative of its kind anywhere in the world. It will consist of 5,000 people, randomly selected from across the UK, who will help us to see public services from the point of view of the citizen.

The make-up of the Panel will include many people who have in the past been excluded from involvement in the services that affect their day-to-day lives. The establishment of the Panel is thus part of our commitment to a fairer, more equal, society.

The Panel will look at a wide range of issues, from the ways in which services are currently delivered, to the most effective use of new technology. It will use different techniques for gathering people's views, including surveys, workshops and citizens' juries.

The Panel will be available for use by all Government Departments and agencies, and by other public bodies. The Panel will not dictate policy, but it will be used to inform policy-making. The Panel will be run, on behalf of the Cabinet Office, by MORI and the School of Public Policy at the University of Birmingham.

Providing information

A key feature of a good public service is that it provides the right information, at the time when it is needed. The Charter programme has played a major role in ensuring that such information is provided.

We also believe in the importance of publishing information about how well organisations are performing.

But providing performance information is not a sufficient answer to the people's right to know. That is why the Government is committed to

transforming the culture in which our public services operate. The Government's proposed Freedom of Information Act will, for the first time, establish a legal basis to underpin some of the key public-service principles. This will require public authorities to make public information available on:

- How they are run
- The services they provide
- Standards of service and performance
- Complaints procedure

Proposals to this effect were included in the Freedom of Information White Paper. Necessary provisions will be made in the Freedom of Information Bill to be published later in the year.

CHAPTER 4 – Quality: Charters and continuous improvement

A quality public service is one in which it is easy for the ordinary citizen to deal with the government.

We believe that charters, or equivalent documents, still have an important role to play in delivering better services to the public. They should be living documents – tools for achieving improvement – and we want them to be used as such by providers and users alike. But charters have in the past not always been of the highest quality themselves. They are often too long, inconsistent with one another, and do not always address the issues that are most important to users. We are taking a number of steps to put this right.

Better guidance

First, we have produced two comprehensive new guides to drawing up charters. These put together in one place, for the first time, advise on the content of charters, how to set standards, how to consult users and front-line staff, how to set up effective complaints procedures, and how to go

about designing, publicizing and distributing charters. Examples of best practice are included. The publications are:

(i) National charters: a new guide

The first guide 'How to draw up a national charter – a guide to preparing national charters' looks at how to produce a charter that covers national services, for example, the NHS, or the Passport Agency.

(ii) local charters: a new guide

Local charters relate to individual services, such as a Local Benefit office, Hospital or Local Authority Department. We want to encourage them. Since they deal with a specific service, they can reflect more closely on the local circumstances and local people's views. They reflect our desire to see a bottom-up programme. The second guide is 'How to draw up a local charter – an introduction for public services.' This is designed to promote best practice and to encourage more services to produce their own charters.

A key message of both national and local guides is the importance of setting meaningful standards in charters. The following chart gives a checklist for drawing up standards.

Standards

Standards should be:

- Relevant – they should clearly relate to the needs of users, and should focus on key issues of interest to them..
- Meaningful – they should look at the service from the user's viewpoint and avoid management-style targets.
- Challenging – they should be challenging but realistic
- Simple – written in plain language
- Measurable – they should be measurable either directly as part of

normal procedures, or by a customer survey

- Monitored – systems should be in place to support regular monitoring
- Published – performance against standards should be published, following wherever possible, independent validation
- Reviewed – their effectiveness should be regularly reviewed, and standards updated.

CHAPTER 5 – Quality: spreading best practice

As public services, place increasing emphasis on quality, we need to offer them practical help in achieving this. If every organization is not to re-invent the wheel, it is important that knowledge of innovations and best practice should be communicated between service providers. The Cabinet Office has traditionally played an important role in acting as a focal point for spreading best practice. We intend to continue and strengthen this role.

Better practice guides

The first is called 'How to conduct written consultation exercise – An introduction for central government' and is designed to make written consultation exercises more effective.

Effective consultation: five guiding principles

- Build consultation into plans
- Consult early
- Write documents in simple language
- Give consultees time to reply
- Report back on results

Secondly, we are revising and updating the short guide produced in 1995 jointly with the National Consumer Council and Consumer Congress called 'Asking Your Users'. The new guide will set out the most commonly

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

used methods of consulting users and explain the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. It will cover the various methods available, from public meetings to citizens' juries, setting out examples of best practice from across the public sector.

Thirdly, we have revised, updated and brought together into a new guide 'How to deal with complaints', all previous guidelines on the handling of complaints. The new guide will describe the key principles of an effective complaints system, give advice on providing remedies, and look at how to establish proper systems for complaints review.

Fourthly, we are developing a guide on how to set up a successful partnership, drawing on the experience of Charter Mark winning services.

Quality Networks

We are planning to expand and develop the role of the Quality Networks. These provide a ready means of communicating and consulting with local services of identifying and spreading best practice between sectors, and of promoting and developing the Service First programme. We want to build on these.

The six service standards for Central Government

The nine principles of public service delivery apply across the public sector. In addition, in April 1997, six new standards were laid down in an attempt, specifically to improve the quality of central government services. These are often referred to as the Whitehall standards.

The six Whitehall standards: In serving you, every central government department and agency will aim to do the following:

1. Answer your letters quickly and clearly. Each department and agency will set a target for answering letters and will publish its performance against this target.
2. See you within 10 minutes of any appointment you have made at its office.

3. Provide clear and straightforward information about its services and at least one number for telephone enquiries to help you or to put you in touch with someone else.
4. Consult its users regularly about the services it provides and report on the results
5. Have at least one complaint procedure for the services it provides, and send you information about a procedure if you ask.
6. Do everything that is reasonably possible to make its services available to everyone, including people with special needs.

CHAPTER 6 – Effectiveness: Charter Mark – recognizing and encouraging excellence

Charter Mark is the Government's Award Scheme for recognizing and encouraging excellence in public service.

Charter Mark's strengths are

- its focus on service delivery to the user, and not simply a process
- its flexibility and low cost for all sorts of public services
- its application across the public sector
- its relevance for very small units as well as larger organisations; and
- the staff motivation and recognition that underpin it

We now want to develop Charter Mark, building on its strengths while addressing the concerns that have been raised. We want an effective but a sustainable scheme, which has a secure future, reaching as many public services as possible while providing good value for money to the taxpayer.

CHAPTER – 7 – Working Together

Making it easier to deal with the government is not just about making information simpler to obtain. There are occasions in people's lives when they need a range of services at the same time. Major events – for example,

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

having a baby, moving house, falling seriously ill, losing a job, or bereavement – may mean dealing with several organizations at once. Many people experience duplication, red tape and unnecessary complexity. Especially at these times, it is vital that different public sector bodies work together to provide a co-ordinated service.

Quality service delivery can only be achieved when services work together. Considerable improvements are necessary on this front, as our consultation exercise, and Government's Comprehensive Spending Reviews, have shown. That is why we have included a principle on co-operating with others in the revised principles of public service delivery. Applicants for the new Charter Mark award scheme will need to show from 1999 how they are delivering this principle on the ground.

Better government for older people

We know that some users have particular problems in dealing with public services. Many older people, for example, see them as remote and intimidating and have difficulty finding their way around the maze, especially at their moments of greatest need. We have therefore set up a two-phase programme, in partnership with organizations in the public, private and voluntary sectors, to improve the services delivered to older people and give them more say.

Conclusion

We believe that the "**Service First**" programme will play an important role in achieving the better public services that this Government is committed to deliver. But it is only a start. An effective partnership is crucial to its success; a partnership between users, potential users and providers; between all levels of government; and between providers and their staff. Over the next few years we shall be working to develop this partnership. And we shall continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the new programme in helping public services deliver better services to all of us.

**EXCELLENT SERVICE IS NOT
ABOUT BEING 1000% BETTER AT ONE THING
BUT 1% BETTER AT A THOUSAND THINGS**

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"ACTION IS SUPERIOR TO KNOWLEDGE "
- EMERSON

CHAPTER - XIV

TOWARDS A SERVICE SOCIETY

Making a difference with style and integrity

Implementing service management programmes will empower individuals and make organizations more humane, motivating, creative and exciting places .

If we recall that giving good service involves:

- Treating other people with dignity and respect;
- Being sensitive to the needs of others;
- Being honest;
- A commitment to learn and to develop;
- Accepting and rejoicing in the knowledge that each of us is unique;
- Believing that people respond best to quality treatment;
- Looking for the positive in people;
- Encouraging people to create their own visions and to grow and develop;

Then those working for quality service are well on the way to bring about a more caring, committed and communicative society.

And it all starts with such small beginnings – such as how we address our families, customers, colleagues and strangers each day.

How well have you done today?

Whatever the answer, tomorrow can be even better!

**-Dr. Barrie Hopson & Mike Scally
LIFE SKILLS MANAGEMENT GROUP**

QUALITIES OF GOOD MANAGERS WHO ARE SERVICE ORIENTED

- APPROACHABLE
- HONEST
- RESPONSIVE
- CAPABLE and EXPERT
- WELL ORGANISED
- PRESENTABLE
- CREATIVE
- ABLE TO SOLVE PROBLEMS
- GOOD LISTENERS
- GOOD COMMUNICATORS

“The best way to counter stress is the ability to go home in the evening knowing you have done a good job for the day”

QUESTIONNAIRE

* Survey of Municipal Services (Sanitation and Building), Consumers Problems and Expectations for designing Citizens' Charter.

1. Name of the Town/City covered under Municipal services along with the address of the municipal / NAC Office :

2. What are the major problems with your Municipal Services (Sanitation and Building)? (Please rank in importance) :

	Service	Nature of Problem
a.	_____	_____
b.	_____	_____
c.	_____	_____
d.	_____	_____
e.	_____	_____

3. How would you rate the Municipal Services (Sanitation and Building) available? (Tick on the following scale)

	V.Good	Good	O.K.	Poor	V.Poor
a. Removal of Garbage
b. Cleanliness of locality
c. Maintenance of Parks
d. Maintenance of Markets
e. Revoval of Encroachments
f. Town planning
g. Provision of Footpaths

* Conducted by Consumer Coordination Council, 62, Qutab View Apartments, Shaheed Jitsingh Marg, New Delhi - 110016 Phone & Fax : 6960545 in collaboration with Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung, New Delhi.

- h. Provision for vehicle parking
- i. Facility of Schools
- j. Facilities for health
 Care Clinics / Hospitals
 k. Ambulance facility
- l. Enquiry / Information Services
- m. Supply of safe drinking water
- n. Sewage disposal
- o. Availability of Public
 convenience outlets
- p. Maintenance of Public
 Convenience outlets
- q. Approval of building plan
- r. Complaints handling

4. What type of deficiencies in Municipal Services have you experienced as a citizen? (rank as per frequency, i.e., delay in days / months).
- a) Approval of Building Plan ()
 - b) Restoration of water supply ()
 - c) Raising of bills towards Municipal Services Tax ()
 - d) Any other () _____

5. Normally after how many calls are you able to register a complaint with the concerned officer?

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| | Please Tick |
| a) once | () |
| b) 2 to 5 calls | () |
| c) 6 to 10 calls | () |
| d) any other, specify () | _____ |

6. Normally after how many days the complaint is registered, does the deficiency get rectified?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| | Please Tick |
| a) One day | () |
| b) 2 to 5 days | () |
| c) 6 to 10 days | () |
| d) any other, specify | () |

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

7. Do you have to pay the municipal staff / officials for providing the service?

- a) Yes (Tick) ()
- b) No ()
- c) Occasionally ()
- d) If Yes, ()
- e) How much ? ()
- f) Why ? _____

8. Have you suffered inconvenience at the time of lodging complaints?
(yes/no) if yes? long queues _____

- a) long procedures ()
- b) indifferent attitude ()
- c) any other, specify _____

9. Normally how many days before the "Pay by date" does your Municipal Services bill arrive?

- a) 1-3 days ()
- b) 4-7 days ()
- c) 8-15 days ()
- d) any other, specify ()

10. Have you had inflated bills in the past?

yes/no.

If yes, give details _____

11. Were you denied proper receipt for the amount paid towards the bill amount? (yes/no).

Give details _____

12. Have you suffered inconvenience in paying bills? yes/no.
 If yes? long queues.....
 Late receipt of bill
 any other.

13. Should the Municipal Service provider charge tax / service charges for the service which it did not perform. Yes / No
 Give examples _____

14. Have you ever made a written complaint regarding Municipal Services ? yes/no
 If yes, to whom and to what result?

15. How many days has it taken for the redressal of the written complaint?
 _____ days months
 Why ? _____

16. Do you think you are provided the value for money you are paying to the Municipal Service provider? yes / no
 why? _____

17. What do you feel about the Municipal Charges? (Please tick)

	Very High	High	O.K.	Low	Very Low
Building plan approval
Water Charges
Municipal Charges

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

Development charges
Building Valuation
Charges
Any other charges
specify.....

18. Should the Municipal Service consumers / their associations be consulted before fixing charges? yes/no.
any other _____

19. Are you provided with all the information about the Municipal Services (Sanitation and Building) at the time of becoming eligible as their consumer (Yes/no)
how ? _____
 written /
 verbal

20. Should private investments be allowed in the Municipal Service sector?
 (Yes/No)

21. What in your opinion will be the impact of entry of private companies in the Municipal Service Sector?

22. On what occasions do you normally have to pay money to get work done regarding Municipal Services? _____

23. Do you receive accurate informations on any issue regarding Municipal Services as and when you seek? yes/no.....

- 24. Are all the records and datas pertaining to your property/ownership rights of other properties made available to you as and when you desire? (yes/no)
- 25. Do the various counters and facilities function as per the designated time and days? (yes/no).
- 26. Do you feel the existing laws / regulations are enough to protect the rights of citizens and providers? (Yes/No)
- 27. How do you feel Municipal Service providers can improve their services towards the citizens?

Respondent :

Interviewer :

Name Name

Address Name

age sex :m/f occupation date of filing

Remarks by supervisors (in different ink)

Name & Address

QUESTIONNAIRE

* Survey of Electricity/Power Consumers Problems and Expectations for Designing Citizens' Charter.

1. What is your consumer No. _____ How long have you had it? _____
(Years and type of connection) :
2. What are the major problems with your electricity/power services?
(Please rank in importance) :

Service	Nature of Problem
a. _____	_____
b. _____	_____
c. _____	_____
d. _____	_____
e. _____	_____

3. How would you rate your electricity/power service? (Tick on the following scale)

	V.Good	Good	O.K.	Poor	V.Poor
a. Filing related Service
b. Fault repair service
c. Counter service
d. Grievance redressal
e. General attitude of staff

* Conducted by Consumer Coordination Council, 62, Qutab View Apartments, Shaheed Jitsingh Marg, New Delhi - 110016 Phone & Fax : 6960545 in collaboration with Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung, New Delhi.

4. What type of electricity/power faults have you experienced? (rank as per frequency i.e., instances per month)
- Load shedding Low/High Voltage
- Breakdowns Transformer fault
- Cable fault Any other fault
5. Normally after how many calls are you able to register a complaint with an operator?
- Tick
- a) once ()
- b) 2 to 5 calls ()
- c) 6 to 10 calls ()
- d) any other, specify () _____
6. Normally how many days after the complaint is the fault normally repaired? Please
- Tick
- a) One day ()
- b) 2 to 5 days ()
- c) 6 to 10 days ()
- d) any other, specify () _____
7. Do you have to pay the electricity/power staff who carry out the repair?
- a) Yes ()
- b) No ()
- c) Occasionally (Tick) ()
- d) If Yes, how much? _____
- e) Why? _____
8. Normally how many days before the "Pay by date" does your electricity/power bill arrive?
- a) 1-3 days ()
- b) 4-7 days ()
- c) 8-15 days ()
- d) any other, specify ()
9. Have you had inflated bills in the past? (yes/no)
- If yes, give details. _____
-

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

10. Have you suffered inconvenience in paying bills? yes/no;
if yes?

- a) long queues ()
- b) Late receipt of bill ()
- c) any other, specify _____

11. Has your electricity/power ever been disconnected for any reason?

yes/no.

If yes, why? _____

12. Should the department charge rental for the period electricity is disconnected or not made available due to the department's inefficiency.? Yes/No.

13. Were you given written notice prior to disconnection? Yes/No.

Give details _____

14. Have you ever made a written complaint regarding electricity/Power service? Yes/no _____

If yes, _____
to whom and what result? _____

15. How many days after payment, the new connection (electricity / power) has been actually provided?
why? _____

16. How many days after payment was electricity connection restored due to non-payment of bills why? _____

17. Do you think the department should charge extra money for reconnection/meter rent/delayed payment? Yes No

18. What do you feel about electricity/power charges? (Please tick)

	Very High	High	O.K.	Low	Very low
Fixed rent
Domestic supply
Commercial supply
Minimum Guarantee
Charges
Service Charge

19. Should electricity/power consumers/their associations be consulted before fixing charges? Yes/No. any other _____

20. Do you receive regular communications other than bills from electricity/power providers? yes/no how? _____

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

21. Should Private operators be allowed in basic electricity/power supply in competition with government like State Electricity Board? Yes/No.

22. What do you feel will be the impact of entry of private service providers?

23. On what occasions do you normally have to pay money to get work done regarding electricity/power services _____

24. How often is your consumption recorded officially?

- a) every month/ ()
- b) quarterly ()
- c) half-yearly/ ()
- d) yearly. ()

25. Do you receive accurate information on any issue regarding electricity/power supplies as and when you seek? yes no.

26. Are all the records and data made available to you as and when you desire? yes no

27. Do the various counters and facilities function as per the designated time and days? yes no.

28. Do you feel the laws/regulationn are enough to protect the electricity/
power consumers and providers? Yes No

29. Do you find power/electricity theft in your area? Yes No
if yes, suggest remedial mesures.....

30. Have you experienced excess billing? yes no
if yes, how long did it take for the service provider to adjust the
amount? _____

CITIZENS' CHARTER OF URBAN LOCAL BODIES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Preamble

All Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in Andhra Pradesh have launched citizens' charter on 14-5-2001. This Charter is a commitment of Urban Local Bodies to provide all residents of urban areas the following services.

- 1.1 Adequate and effective sanitary arrangements
- 1.2 Adequate and safe drinking water
- 1.3 Proper roads and drains
- 1.4 Adequate street lighting
- 1.5 Sufficient No. of parks
- 1.6 Prompt registration of Births and Deaths

2. Our Commitment

Municipalities and Municipal Corporation shall carry out the functions and duties entrusted to them with the following mission :-

- 2.1 Commitment for quality and standard of service
- 2.2 Courteous, time-bound and helpful attitude
- 2.3 Objectivity and transparency
- 2.4 Promptness and efficiency
- 2.5 Leaflets giving the procedure to be followed for, will be provided obtaining various permissions / certificates.

3. Service Centers

Service centers have been opened in all Municipalities and Municipal Corporations with effect from 14.5.2001 as a part of Citizen' Charter to receive applications and dispose them, in a time bound manner as shown hereunder.

Sl.No.	Activity	Time Schedule
1	Assessment of Property tax and allocation of door No.	15 days
2	Disposal of Building Applications	15 days
3	Sanction of Water Supply House service connection	
	a) General Category	30 days
	b) OYT	10 days
4	Issuance of Birth and Death certificates	5 days

4 Mechanism for implementation of the service centers

- 4.1 Every Citizen who wishes to avail the above services has to submit an application at the Service Center duly enclosing required documents between 10:30 am to 1.30 pm.
- 4.2 Pamphlets explaining the procedure for obtaining permissions, certificates/sanctions are made available to the applicants at service centres free of charge.
- 4.3. The Assistants allotted to a service centre have to carefully scrutinize the applications received and they must satisfy themselves that all the documents and information required to be attached to the application are submitted by the applicant
- 4.4. The Assistant incharge of the Service Center shall give an acknowledgement to the applicant duly indicating the date and time on which he can obtain permission / certificate from the Service Center as per the time frame indicated above.

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

- 4.5. Permission letters/certificates shall be issued from the Service Center daily from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm.
- 4.6 The Citizens need not enter various sections in Municipal Office and make enquiries about their applications as time limit is prescribed for each service.
- 4.7. To ensure time schedule in providing the above services, ULBs were directed to pay a compensation of Rs. 50/- per day to the applicants if the time schedule is not followed by ULBs in according permissions and issuance of certificates for loss of their valuable time.
- 4.8 This amount has to be collected by ULBs from the persons responsible for the delay in rendering the services. This step will definitely go a long way in adhering to the time schedule by all Urban Local Bodies.

5. Monitoring the Functioning of Service Centres

- 5.1 Separate registers have to be maintained for various services to be rendered from the service centre.
- 5.2 The section head should review the register daily and satisfy himself that the time frame fixed is followed strictly in issuance of permissions, certificates and sanctions.
- 5.3 Municipal Commissioner shall review the register once in five days.
- 5.4 The Compensation payable to the applicants has to be met in the first instance from the contingent amount of the office and afterwards recovered from the salary of the employee found responsible for the delay
- 5.5. Feedback from applicants shall be gathered after handing over permission / certificate in the format prescribed about the functioning of the service centre.
- 5.6. Monthly progress report shall be furnished to the head of the department about the functioning of service centre.

6. Statement Showing Disposal of Applications within the Prescribed time in service centres set up in ULBs in the state from 14-5-2001 to 31-7-2001

S.No.	Nature of Service	Total No. of Applications received	Total No. of Applications Disposed	Balance	Percentage of Disposal
1	Assessment of Property Tax	1724	1670	54	96.87
2	Building applications	3476	3127	349	89.96
3	Water tap connections	2341	1787	554	76.30
4	Birth and Death Certificates	19586	18905	681	96.52
5	Total	27127	25489	1638	93.96

7. Compensation paid by urban local bodies for the delay occurred in disposal of applications from 14.5.2001 to 31.7.2001.

Sl. No.	Name of the Municipality	No. of applications where delay occurred	Amount of compensation paid to Citizen's (Rs.)
1	2	3	4
1	Pithapuram	2	800
2	Bhimavaram	8	400
3	Tadipatri	2	400
4	Suryapet	4	800
5	Chilakaluripet	1	100
	Total	17	2500

8. Grievance Redressal

Public grievances relating to the following services will be redressed as shown hereunder.

Sl.No.	Item of work	Time frame
1	Garbage clearance	1 day
2	Clearing of drains	2 days
3	Anit-larval operations	Once in two weeks
4	Provision of dust bins	2 weeks
5	Repairs to pipe line leakages	1 day
6	Replacement of Street lights	5 days
7	Repairs to road cuttings	7 days

9. We expect citizens

- 9.1 To be prompt in payment of property tax, water charges, trade licence fee
- 9.2 To use dust bins for depositing garbage and not to throw it in drains
- 9.3 To use drinking water without any wastage
- 9.4 To avoid open defecation
- 9.5 To construct buildings in approved layouts
- 9.6 To construct buildings as per approved plan
- 9.7 To avoid un-authorized constructions and deviations to sanctioned plans
- 9.8 To help city administration in rendering services in an efficient manner

10. How to get House number allotted and property tax assessed in municipalities within 15 days?

- 10.1 Property Tax Assessment Return can be obtained from the Service Centre of the Municipal Office by paying a fee of Rs. 10/-
- 10.2 After filling the above Return it has to be handed over in the said Service Centre
- 10.3 The Assistant incharge of Service Centre will give a receipt in token of having received Property Tax Assessment Return duly mentioning the date and time for issuing special notice allotting Door Number.
- 10.4 The special notice indicating the quantum of property tax payable and also the house number allotted will be issued to the applicant within 15 days from the date of filing of Property Tax Assessment Return excluding the date of filing.
- 10.5 The applicant can approach the Municipal Commissioner in the matter if the special notice is not issued as indicated above.
- 10.6 Compensation will be paid @Rs. 50/- per day to the applicant towards loss of their valuable time for the delay caused in this matter

11. How to get building permission within 15 days

- 11.1 Application can be obtained from the Service Centre in the municipal office by paying an amount of Rs. 10.00 to the Municipal Treasurer.
- 11.2 The application form shall be submitted in the Service Centre with the following documents between 10.30 am to 1.30 pm on any working day for buildings upto 10 meters height.

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

- 11.3 6 copies of detailed building plans drawn as per rules and duly signed by the owner and licensed surveyor.
- 11.4 3 copies of Topo detailed plan with extract of Master Plan
- 11.5 6 copies of site plans drawn as per rules duly signed by the owner of the site and licensed surveyor.
- 11.6 Two photo copies of the ownership document attested by a Gazetted Officer.
- 11.7 In respect of patta given by the Revenue Department, photo copy of the patta duly attested by a Gazetted Officer.
- 11.8 A copy of layout plan duly attested by a Gazetted Officer.
- 11.9 A copy of sanctioned plan / Building Regularisation Plan duly attested by a Gazetted Officer, if additions / alteration are proposed.
- 11.10 Bankers cheque / Municipal Challan showing the payment of the following fee as fixed by the Municipal Council.
 - a. Building permission fee
 - b. Betterment charges
 - c. Conversion charges
 - d. Debris removal charges
 - e. Rainwater harvesting fee
 - f. Other Items

- 11.11 Photocopy of Property Tax receipt showing payment of tax upto the current half year.
- 11.12 Photocopy of receipt of payment of Vacant Land Tax duly attested by a Gazetted Officer.
- 11.13 The Assistant In-Charge of the Service Centre will issue a receipt acknowledging the application along with enclosures and indicate the date and time on which the building permit will be handed over to the applicant. The building permit will be issued within 15 days excluding the date of submission of application provided the application satisfies all Rules and Regulations. The applicant can collect the Building Permit or a letter refusing permission duly mentioning reasons from the Service centre on the indicated date between 2.00 PM to 5.00 PM.
- 11.14 In case, the application is not disposed-off within 15 days, the applicant can meet the Municipal Commissioner directly. Compensation will be paid @ Rs. 50.00 per day for any delay caused beyond the stipulated period towards loss of the valuable time of the applicant.
- 11.15 Schedule showing payment of permit fee, betterment charges etc., can be obtained from Service Centre of Municipality.

12. How to get sanction for water tap connection within 30 days/10 days

- 12.1 All arrangements have been made to sanction Water Tap Connection within the time limit specified below, provided, an application is filed with full details.

OYT CATEGORY

(Own your Tap Scheme) : 10 days

General category : 30 days

12.2 Application forms can be obtained from Service Centre on payment of Rs. 10/-

12.3 Following documents are to be enclosed to the filled in application form

- a) Location Plan (Two tracing cloth copies and one ammonia copy)
- b) Photostat copy of tax receipt relating to current half year.
- c) Agreement written on non-judicial stamp paper worth Rs. 20/- or to affix adhesive stamp worth Rs. 20/- on agreement.
- d) Original receipt relating to payment of pipe line service charges in the form of demand draft/banker's cheque or payment in Municipal Treasury.

12.4 Details in this regard can be had from the Service Centre of the Municipal Office.

12.5 The building owners can file the application form with the above details between 10.30 AM and 1.30 PM in the Service Centre of the Municipal Office.

12.6 Immediately on receipt of application form a receipt will be given in token of having received the application duly assigning the priority number. In the said receipt the date of issue of tap connection will be indicated.

12.7 Applications under General Category

1. The applicant will be informed about sanction of water tap and to pay supervision charges, security deposit and repairs to the road cuttings within 15 days from the date of filing the application.
2. The applicant has to give a letter about the payment of above charges through banker's cheque / municipal challan in token of having paid the amount in municipal treasury, and inform about the procurement of required materials and enclose it in original within 3 days from the date of receipt of sanction order.
3. A tap connection will be given within 30 days from the date of receipt of application under General Category provided action is taken as indicated above.

12.8 OYT Category (Own you Tap shceme)

1. The applicant will be informed about sanction of tap connection and to pay supervision charges security deposit and repairing charges to the road cutting within 5 days excluding the date of receipt of Sanction letter.
2. The applicant has to give a letter in the service centre of the municipal office duly enclosing challan of municipal treasury in token of having paid the above charges or banker's cheque and inform about the procurement of required materials within 2 days from the date of receipt of orders.
3. Tap connection under OYT will be given within 10 days from the date of filing of application provided action is taken as detailed above.

12.9 Note :

1. The above method is not applicable in respect of multistoreyed buildings.
2. It is not possible to sanction water tap connection to the applicants in areas where there are no water supply pipelines and where the pressure is less. Such applications will be returned within 20 days duly refunding the fee remitted.
3. The applicant can approach the Municipal Commissioner in the matter, if tap connection is not given as indicated above.
4. The applicant will be given compensation, @ Rs. 50/- per day for the delay caused and towards the valuable time lost by the applicant, if tap connection is not given on the lines indicated above.

13. How to get birth / death certificate within 5 days

- 13.1 Application form and Challan can be obtained free of cost from Service Center of the Municipal Office.
- 13.2 After filling up the challan, the fees prescribed by the Municipality has to be remitted into the Municipal Treasury.
- 13.3 The filled in application and challan can be handed over in the Service Centre between 10.30 A.M. and 1.30 P.M. on every working day.
- 13.4 The Assistant of Service Centre while giving receipt in token of having received the application will indicate the time and date of issue of certificate.

- 13.5 The certificate sought for will be issued within 5 days excluding the date of filing of application provided the Birth or Death is registered in the records of the Municipality.
- 13.6 The certificate sought can be obtained between 3.00 P.M. and 5.00 P.M. on the date mentioned in the receipt from service centre by showing the receipt.
- 13.7 The Municipal Commissioner can be contacted if any difficulty is experienced in getting the certificate from the service centre as stated above.
- 13.8 Compensation will be given at the rate of Rs. 50/- per day for the delay caused and towards valuable time lost by the applicant if certificate is not given as indicated above.

14. Guidelines for registration of Births and Deaths

- 14.1 Registration of Births and Deaths is to be done in the office of the Sub Registrar of Births and Deaths (Sanitary Inspector) of the concerned ward or Municipal office as detailed below.
- (i) Birth of Child within 21 days.
- (ii) Death of person within 21 days.
- 14.2 Births and Deaths can be got registered, within a month by paying the requisite fee into the Municipal Treasury if they are not registered as stated above.
- 14.3 Registration of Births and Deaths after one month and below one year can be done with the permission of Registrar of Births and Deaths/Municipal Commissioner by payment of requisite penalty duly enclosing an affidavit attested by Notary (Advocate).

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

- 14.4 Registration of Births and Deaths after one year can be got done after obtaining orders from Revenue Deivisional Officer or First Class Divisional Officer or First Class Executive Magistrate duly remitting the requisite fees through challan.
- 14.5 The name of the child can be got recorded free of cost within one year. After one year it can be done with the Declaration of Father / Mother after payment of requisite fee.
- 14.6 The details of fee payable can be obtained from the Service Centre of the Municipal Office.

From "Business Line" dated April 22, 2002

Will this dream come true?

The Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad has adopted a SMART model to cater to citizen - consumers in a better way. Will the other states come up with similar promises too?

During the last few years, several organizations have published Citizens Charters. This has been initiated by the Consumer Affairs Department, Government of India and executed by the Special Division of the Prime Minister's Office. But there are only a few charters, which are reviewed, updated, and modified every year. The LIC and the Madras Metro Water Sewerage Board are some of them.

Thanks to the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, who personally goes through each charter and suggests changes and improvement, A unique charter of the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH) has been published.

According to the foreword to that charter, the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad has adopted the principle of SMART Civic Administration - Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent (SMART). The purpose behind the Citizen's Charter is to :

- Provide all important information to citizens about the services being delivered by MCH by the concerned departments.
- Generate public awareness regarding the rights and responsibilities of citizens, with regard to the functions discharged and the time-frame in which public grievances will be attended to by various municipal functionaries.
- Create a network of service centers which are close to the people and which can receive and act upon public grievances promptly.

CITIZEN'S CHARTER

- Solicit the co-operation of people in maintenance of green and healthy city in the spirit of self-health, mutual health. Partnership and togetherness.

Expectations of the Administration :

- The civic administration expects citizens' co-operation in the following manner.
- Throwing waste, only at designated places and not on roads and public areas.
- Using garbage / litter bins.
- Not throwing garbage in drains / nallas and catch pits.
- Avoiding occupation of roads and footpaths with unauthorized stacking of materials or by raising structures.
- Avoiding letting waste water on to roads.
- Conserving rainwater and take up rainwater harvesting structures.
- Avoiding leaving of animals on roads and public places.
- Avoiding misuse of parks, green-belts, playground and other public places.
- Planting trees within and in front of premises, water them and help them to grow.
- Not damaging municipal and other government properties.
- Promptly pay Licence Fees/Property Tax/ Charges levied in accordance with municipal laws;
- Constructing and using buildings as per approved plan and the zoning / building regulations in force.

- Not encroaching public places and properties by religious or other structures.
- Adopting universal immunization and family welfare programmes.
- Complaining to the right officer in time and liase with the ward corporator.
- Participating in all civic affairs including Wards Committee Meetings and raise your voice when required.

Every department has given an emergency telephone number of the emergency cell of the corporation. The charter has made many promises with regard to maintenance of civic infrastructure, public health and related areas. But the most outstanding feature of this charter is the compensation awarded to citizen - consumers for delay in service. "MCH undertakes to pay a compensation of Rs. 50 per day to the applicants for licenses / permissions / certificates, who have paid fees / charges to MCH for services."

The objective is to compensate for the loss of their valuable time and inconvenience caused . If the prescribed time schedule is not followed by the officers/departmetns concerned. The amount will first be paid by the corporation and later recouped from the officials responsible for the delay or inefficiency.

For every municipal service, the charter carries the list of three persons or officials whose telephones numbers and address are given. They classify it as.

- Initial contact.
- Second contact, and
- Third contact.

If MCH fufils its charter Commitments, can any city in the country match it?

R. Desikan

The Author is former Chairman, Federation of Consumer Organisations,
Tamilnadu

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with Knowledge, Faith and Devotion,
becomes really effective**

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