

SEVOTTAM – CBEC commitment to deliver quality in Tax payer Services



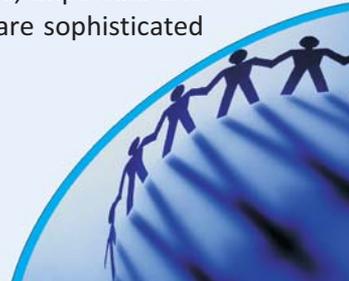
Key features:

- *SEVOTTAM is the CBEC platform for delivering quality in tax payer services*
- *CBEC is IS:15700 certified through an independent audit by Bureau of Indian Standards*
- *CBEC has 11 field offices that are BIS 15700 certified, positioning it as a leading organization committed to delivering promises made in the Citizens' Charter*
- *4 more offices are at BIS audit stage of IS:15700 certification*

SEVOTTAM is a combination of two words, SEVA and UTTAM. It means Service Excellence.

SEVOTTAM symbolizes the Government's intent to move from 'administration' mind set to 'service orientation' in delivery of public services. It emphasizes the relationship between service provider and service receivers. It is a standardized Services Delivery Excellence Model. This system is based on the Indian Standard - IS 15700: 2005 developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards and is popularly known as "SEVOTTAM".

The Central Board of Excise & Customs is committed to excellence in taxpayer services. We have a large taxpayer base of service tax providers, manufacturers, dealers, importers and exporters. While some of our large taxpayers are sophisticated

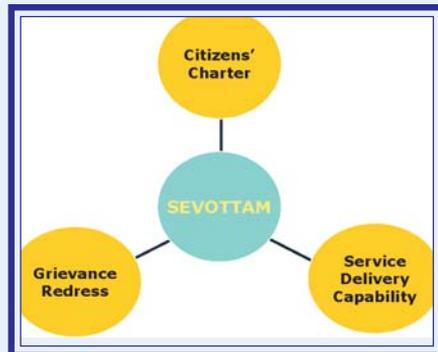


and have access to a dedicated service delivery channel in form of LTU (Large Taxpayer Unit), we need to cater to small service tax providers as well as daily international travellers. This wide range of clientele segmentation necessitates that we have a standard service delivery system that caters to the need of all. The system needs to provide transparency, accountability, reliability, responsiveness and empathy in taxpayer functions of the CBEC.

CBEC has taken concrete steps to improve its public delivery system. We have revised our Citizens' Charter with inputs from key stakeholders for delivery norms for specific services thus aligning it to what taxpayers want. We have adopted CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System) at all India level as a robust grievance redress system. We have developed delivery capability at field offices to meet IS 15700 stringent norms and designed a Service Quality Manual on how to deliver quality in taxpayer services as per the industry best practices. We aim at providing taxpayer services in terms of timeliness in delivery, single window facility, trade facilitation and proactive feedback collection.

Key features of SEVOTTAM:

SEVOTTAM is a Service Delivery Excellence Model which provides an assessment-improvement frame-work to bring about excellence in public service delivery. The model works as an evaluation mechanism to assess the quality of internal



processes and their impact on the quality of service delivery.

The SEVOTTAM model seeks to assess an organization on (i) implementation of the Citizens' Charter, (ii) implementation of grievances redress system and (iii) service delivery capability. This assessment is made through three modules.

The first module requires effective Charter implementation thereby opening up a channel for receiving citizens' inputs into the way in which organizations determine service delivery requirements. Citizens' Charters publicly declare the information on citizens' entitlements thereby making citizens better informed and hence empowering them to demand better services.

The second module requires a good grievance redress system operating in a manner that leaves the citizen more satisfied with how the organization responds to complaints/grievances, irrespective of the final decision.

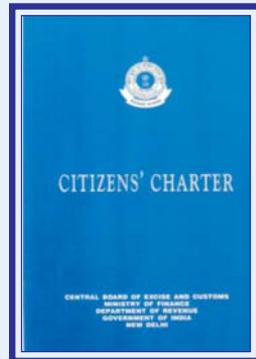
The third module postulates that an organization can have an excellent performance in service delivery only if it is efficiently managing well the key ingredients for good service delivery and building its own capacity to continuously improve service delivery.

CBEC journey towards SEVOTTAM:

CBEC has taken concrete steps towards SEVOTTAM. We have worked on each SEVOTTAM module to assess ourselves, identify gaps and make improvements.

Accordingly we have

- a) **Revised Citizens' Charter:** A key requirement for effective taxpayer services is to design an effective citizens' charter, one that is easy to implement as well as is able to meet the aspirations of our



stakeholders. This is the key question that any organization delivering services needs to answer. How do we balance the stakeholders' expectations with the available resources to deliver?

CBEC has a very knowledgeable taxpayer base consisting of manufacturers, service providers, importers and exporters. They expect us to be very dynamic in policy making as per the changing economic scenario. As an indirect levy that gets passed on to the next consumer, we play a strong role in the product and services price in the market. Any delay on CBEC part could increase the cost of production as well as the cost of supply chain.

In order to meet this expectation we worked with the taxpayer associations like CII, FICCI, PHDCCI, and FIEO, to prioritize top ten service functions where the associations need standards in timeliness of delivery. This selective promise of the priority services allows us to focus our resources in key areas for easy implementation as well as for meeting the priorities of the taxpayers.

We would keep on reviewing our citizens' charter at two year intervals to move in line with the changing taxpayers' needs. The Citizens' Charter has been reviewed in 2010 and 2012.

- b) Implement CPGRAMS as robust grievance redress:** A robust grievance redress system is essential to ensure delivery of promises made in the Citizens' Charter. The system needs to generate accountability as well as to be transparent.

In order to have such a system we adopted CPGRAMS, the grievance redress system of DARPG as our system after having carefully reviewed the existing grievance redress

mechanism. CPGRAMS allows us the in-built benefit of improving grievance redress whenever a new version is released by DARPG. Further CPGRAMS allows us the backward integration with other governmental organizations in case it is required. However CPGRAMS is still an IT system that needs proactive input from field offices to work effectively. So the senior field officers need to be brought on board for the system to be effective in creating accountability. We did this through specific seminars at metros as well as other cities sensitizing the senior officers about our new approach as well as identifying how they need to deliver. We have Public Grievance Officers appointed in each field Commissionerate to attend to grievances.

The grievance redress is monitored at CBEC level on a daily basis. This is monitored at Chief Commissioner/Director General level at field formation.

Norms of acknowledging complaints within 48 hours of receipt and attempting to provide final replies within 30 working days have been set in Citizens' Charter to handle public grievance.

Our public grievance redress system has improved our accessibility to the taxpayer. A taxpayer could redress ones' grievance concerning any of our field office through a common online portal. We have a grievance redress rate of close to 90%. Around 50% grievances are redressed within 30 days. In addition we have appointed Public Grievance Officers at the field offices to look into the taxpayer grievances at personal level.

- c) **Developed service delivery capability at Commissionerate:** Creation of delivery infrastructure to meet Citizens' Charter promises is essential to meet and sustain services.



CBEC decided to do it in phases. Accordingly in phase-I, four formations were identified by the Core Group / Implementation Committee in its meeting held on 16th June, 2009 as Pilot Commissionerates for implementation of Sevottam. Based on pilots performance, the delivery requirements have been standardized through a Service Quality Manual (SQM) approved by CBEC for replicating capability at all field formations.



After Internal assessment of Service delivery with time norms at all the pilot Commissionerates and other parameters of single window, tax payer facilitation, feedback mechanism & grievance redress, BIS awarded the Pilot Commissionerates **Sevottam Certificate License no. CRO/SQSC/L-8000035 as per IS 15700:2005 on 4th November, 2010**

These pilot offices are:

- Office of the Directorate General of Inspection as apex office representing the Central Board of Excise & Customs,
- Office of the Commissioner of Central Excise Delhi I as unit office for Central Excise revenue stream,
- Office of Commissioner of Import & General Delhi as unit office for Customs revenue stream and
- Office of Commissioner of Service Tax Delhi as unit office for Service Tax revenue stream.

