

Service charters formalise benchmarks

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Integral to the way Customs is moving to improve services for its clients has been the development of four service charters addressing travellers, cargo movements, industry support and excise.

Work on a fifth charter aimed at the Diesel Fuel Rebate Scheme is planned to commence in early 1999.

The charters for the first time formalise benchmarks for Customs client standards, standards I must add have been tested by a task force of consumer, business and government representatives.

While there was strong support for the draft charters, suggested improvements were considered and changes made to the final product.

As part of the ongoing assessment of services, a complaints and compliment handling process has also been developed to ensure Customs receives direct feedback from clients and is able to act to improve our services.

Customs is also continuing to improve advice and services to Australian businesses involved in international trade.

In a joint project involving AusIndustry and the Customs Commercial Advisory Service, an internet module called A Guide to Customs was developed and is now on-line through the BizLink home page.

The impetus for its development followed a survey of more than 3000 BizLink subscribers which showed that Customs is an area of significant interest to small business and their advisers.

Another article in this third edition of Manifest looks at the comprehensive reform of Australia's anti-dumping and countervailing administration which was embodied in legislation in July.

These reforms, including vesting the entire investigation function with Customs and abolishing the Anti-Dumping Authority, are aimed at producing a more efficient and consistent anti-dumping administration for Australia.

As Manifest was being finalised, the Australian Quality Council advised that Customs will be recognised at the Business Improvement Level of the Australian Quality Awards for Business Excellence. This is a credit to a very large number of people in Customs and an article on the award is at Page 33.

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