IMPROVING OUR CLIENT SERVICE

You can read our Client Service Charter by going to www.customs.gov.au

Investigation of complaints about Customs has led to many improvements, such as the availability of credit card facilities for clients paying duty on items.

Staff have also received training in client service and conflict management, and processes for clients lodging complaints have been upgraded.

Customs officers at Sydney Airport demonstrated this improvement in quality service when a passenger's mishandled baggage and golf clubs arrived at Sydney rather than Melbourne. With duty owed on the golf clubs the luggage could not be released until payment was made. The Sydney Customs officers liaised with the passenger by phone and faxed a calculated advice. The passenger was able to pay the duty over the phone by using the credit card facility and the luggage was immediately sent on to Melbourne. The process took less than an hour and the passenger was satisfied that her luggage was not delayed further.

Other improvements include the introduction of clear and concise standard written responses, improvements to databases to facilitate legitimate trade, signage at airports to improve queuing processes and passenger flows and the introduction of industry tours of Customs areas to better inform clients about Customs processes.

Lost baggage, freight charges and tariff rates are just some of the inquiries Customs officers receive daily. With the implementation of the new *Client Service Charter* and *Complaints and Compliments* brochure, Customs officers can respond to inquiries with a higher quality of service.

The *Client Service Charter* outlines the service level that the community can expect from Customs. The Charter sets out our standards, the expectations we have of clients, and lets clients know how to comment on our service.

Providing quality service and information to clients is of paramount importance to Customs, but it is the feedback from clients that is vital for the improvement of Customs processes and procedures.