

# DGS Customer Satisfaction Survey

An action plan to improve customer service

One of the Department of General Services' (DGS') primary objectives is to continuously strengthen its culture of customer service. That culture should run in harmony with DGS' statutory responsibility for ensuring that departments adhere to certain standards which are intended to promote accountability, transparency, fairness and fiscal prudence. Ultimately, DGS' client departments should come to DGS, not because they have to, but because they want to.

In an effort to determine how well DGS is doing in that regard, in December of 2011, [DGS distributed a survey to its customers](#) to determine the level of satisfaction with the department's service delivery and identify possible areas for improvement within the department. Of the 10,074 surveys that were distributed, 2,405 customers (24 percent) submitted survey responses. Along with multiple choice satisfaction ratings, respondents submitted 1,121 individual narrative comments.

DGS received an overall satisfaction rate of 71 percent, while 15 percent were dissatisfied and 14 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (the full survey results can be found [here](#)). Although a large majority of DGS' customers find the department's performance satisfactory, and less than two in ten indicated that DGS' overall performance is unsatisfactory, as a department striving for *Excellence in the Business of Government*, DGS can and must do better.

As a follow-up to the customer satisfaction survey, an in-depth review and analysis of the survey results was conducted in early 2012. Additionally, every comment was read by both the Director and Deputy Directors.

DGS' division managers were tasked with using the results of that analysis and the specific comments to develop action plans that will increase customer satisfaction within their divisions while adhering to DGS' oversight responsibilities. These plans identify both those actions that should be continued and perhaps emulated elsewhere in the department, and those actions that will be taken to address concerns that were raised in the individual narrative comments section of the survey as well as the ranking portion of the survey.

## **Changes by Division**

Below is a high level summary of the customer concerns identified in the survey results, and the actions each division will take to correct them. Crosscutting themes for many of the divisions' plans include:

- Improving communication between DGS and its customers by both clarifying the objectives and status of individual projects and issues, *and* by engaging in more outreach to, and conducting more meetings with, customers as a group to identify systemic issues and share ideas for improvements.

- Improving communication among the units of DGS so that the customer departments do not receive inconsistent or conflicting advice and direction from the differing DGS units.
- Improving the timeliness of services.
- Improving the consistency of service quality.

#### **Procurement Division**

- Improve organizational health and make Procurement Division the place to work, leading to satisfied and educated staff that focus on serving our customers.
  - Promote cross-functional collaboration to have staff that are more well-rounded and able to respond to customer concerns with ease.
  - Empower employees to make decisions. Solve problems at the lowest possible level to reduce the amount of time consumed in review and decision-making.
- Focus on both high-risk and enterprise-wide procurements while also supporting customers on more day-to-day procurements.
  - Continue to develop and train procurement staff internally and in customer departments so processes are familiar and more efficient.
  - Develop a succession plan to mitigate operational gaps to avoid backlogs and preserve institutional knowledge.
  - Grant appropriate level of purchasing authority to customer departments in order to expedite certain purchases.
  - Make procurement templates available on the internet to cut down on document searching and mail time.
  - Improve pharmaceutical acquisition processes by leveraging statewide contract strategies and reduce costs to departments that purchase pharmaceuticals.
  - Improve processes by encouraging departments to use statewide contracts to quicken the procurement of goods in state government. Make more statewide contracts available to customers.
- Establish quality standards for each procurement program.
  - Establish a performance measurement system that produces ongoing feedback to determine our success.
  - Implement a systematic process for determining and improving customer satisfaction.
  - Examine a web-based rating system for supplier performance.
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#### **Real Estate Services Division**

- Communication.
  - Develop ongoing survey results dashboard to make survey results easily visible to staff.
  - Managers will follow up with customers on low-scoring project surveys to find ways to improve.
  - Lessons learned and best practices will be shared among staff to identify practices that should be emulated throughout the division, and pitfalls that should be avoided.
  - Improve internal communication to prevent the idling of projects
  - Continue to emphasize communications internally and to customers in order to prevent unexpected obstacles.
- Providing high quality work that is both timely and accurate.
  - Establish goals for project delivery surveys and communicate expectations to all staff.

- Promote and reinforce among staff the importance and expectation of excellent customer service by recognizing project teams and individuals who display exemplary performance.

### **Office of Legal Services**

- Consistency.
  - Implement contract training for customers in order to decrease review times and eliminate mistakes.
  - Implement second level reviews within the office for contracts to ensure consistency for the client.
  - Update the state contracting manual in order to provide accurate and timely guidance to customers.
  - Begin a new attorney mentoring program to provide consistency in reviews and standards.
- Timely Review of projects.
  - Rebalance workloads among staff to avoid backlogs or downtimes.
  - Formulate a process for expedited reviews of contracts.
  - Evaluate contract exemption level and types to ensure that DGS' focus is on higher risk or more complex contracts, or on contracts with unusual or uncommon legal features.
  - Improve contract tracking and status information, potentially through a new IT tool, to improve transparency and provide more information to customers.
- Communications.
  - Implement a client communication policy that highlights timely responses to inquiries and more thorough information sharing between attorney and client.
  - Implement a process that enables contracts that are missing minimal documents or simple items to be held at DGS pending receipt of those items instead of being returned in their entirety to customer departments for correction and resubmission. This will significantly reduce transit time for missed signatures, missed documents, or other minor changes by customers.
- Customer Service.
  - Review contract tracking and billing processes to make them more efficient and publicly available, thus allowing more client interface, leading to more personal service.

### **Division of the State Architect**

- Timely review of projects.
  - Efforts are ongoing to reduce bin time, cross train staff and examine use of contractors for peak workloads. These measures will lead to faster project approvals.
- Information availability and communication.
  - Enhance the online e-tracker system that denotes project status in order to give customers a transparent look at the operations of DSA, as well as and customer training on the system.
  - Implement uniform review procedures at each field office to ensure consistency among project reviewers.

### **Office of Fleet and Asset Management**

- Customer service.
  - Increase training for all employees that engage with customers to make for a more customer friendly environment.

- Call center implementation for garage and fleet information assists customers who are now looking for info on state garage and rental operations.
- Re-start statewide fleet coordinator meetings to foster better communication.
- Vehicle and facility condition is worn or inadequate.
  - Replenish DGS fleet with federal General Services Administration surplus vehicles, saving the customers money while providing an improved quality of vehicle.
  - Formulate an infrastructure investment plan for OFAM parking/garage facilities and deferred maintenance issues.
- Difficulty in using customer service tools for online travel and fleet management.
  - Increase user training for travel system, offer one-on-one trainings to departments so that customers are experts at using the system.
  - Hired two additional staff for Fleet Asset Management System (FAMS) analysis and inspection in order to decrease backlogs and be more responsive.
  - Implement FAMS database improvements to enable better reporting and customer data that will facilitate efficient fleet management.
- Difficulty using or getting needed items from surplus property.
  - Increase user training regarding surplus programs in order to maximize the amount of surplus property the state is able to reuse.
  - Hired additional staff to improve response times on surplus program.

#### **Office of State Publishing**

- **Variable** and raising rates.
  - **Identify** fixed costs and **initiate** ways to reduce expenses, thus lowering rates to customers.
  - **Analyze** cost centers to verify individual elements of rates to provide transparent rate structures to customers.
  - Communicate **rate** modifications prior to **implementation** so departments have the opportunity to plan their budgets accordingly.
- Communication and timeliness.
  - Implement and enforce policies to return customer phone calls and emails within 24 hours of receipt.
  - Implement scripts for voicemail systems and out-of-office replies to indicate our commitment to timely responses.
- Customer partnership of staff.
  - Be more hands-on with departments through their customer service representatives.
  - Attend inter-departmental meetings such as the Partnership Council and the State Contracting Advisory Network to facilitate clear communication about printing issues.
  - Participation in a variety of customer service and professional training classes for staff in order to improve the quality of communications and service.

#### **Office of Public School Construction**

- Staff training and turnover.
  - Undertake both internal staff training and external customer training to improve program knowledge and increase efficiency.
  - Develop training assessments to measure success of different training courses.
  - Further cross train staff and keep minimize turnover by allowing staff to focus on business relationships, better serving clients through established relationships.
- Customer service.

- Provide customer service training to staff.
- Update and interact more closely with the electronic tracking system to keep projects on schedule.
- Timeliness of public information.
  - Update the website quarterly, in addition to ad hoc updates when new information becomes available to ensure customers have timely and accurate information.

### **Office of Administrative Hearings**

- Staff training, courteous and high quality work.
  - Continually update training materials to ensure accurate and uniform knowledge among staff.
  - Participate in customer service training.
- Accurate and reliable information.
  - Continue database audits to ensure database information is accurate and useful.
  - Process and store documents and information electronically to reduce costs and improve efficiency.
- Responsiveness and regular communication.
  - Explore other opportunities to communicate information to parties and increase the level of communication where appropriate.
- Timely service.
  - Continue to monitor late decision reports to keep Administrative Law Judges on a timely calendar and prevent backlogs.

### **Moving Forward**

This is not a one-time effort. The need for, and opportunities to provide, improved customer service will be constantly examined and managed moving forward. The division plans noted above will be monitored to ensure timely implementation. Another customer survey will be administered in 2013, and results will be tracked against the existing survey results. DGS will redouble its efforts to improve any areas that have not yet improved based on the results of this next survey.

All DGS customers are encouraged to contact the department at any time if an issue is not being resolved to their satisfactions. Email the DGS Office of Public Affairs at [dgspublicaffairs@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:dgspublicaffairs@dgs.ca.gov) or call (916) 376-5037 and a member of the DGS public affairs office will assist you.