

## 4.13 CUSTOMER SERVICE

This policy covers the customer service principles and culture to be adopted for external customers i.e. the customers who procure or may procure CSI products and services. The policy is to be applied in conjunction with [section 2.4](#) - Organisational Model and Role of the CSI Total Manager and [section 4.14](#) - Complaints Handling.

CSI participates within the market at large to secure business opportunities from which inmates may be employed and CSI social and commercial objectives achieved. As such, CSI must fulfil the competitive demands of a commercial organisation which includes a strident commitment to customer service. Further, the CSI Marketing Plan recognises that sustaining satisfied customers is the most important element of business development.

The CSI commitment to customer service is encapsulated through a guarantee of service which is to be prominently displayed in CSI locations and publications:

### 4.13.1 CSI Customer Service Guarantee

*"The CSI standards of Customer Service Management provide a total commitment to servicing customer needs.*

*CSI guarantees the supply of products on time and manufactured to quality-accredited specifications. All products are covered by the CSI product warranty.*

*CSI staff at all levels are committed to fulfilling customer needs in a friendly, responsive and professional manner.*

*Serving the customer is the most important part of our business."*

The CSI specific approach to customer service is set out within:

- i) the Staff Practice Code which is to be embraced by all CSI people and prominently displayed at all work stations.
- ii) the CSI Customer Service staff manual which establishes and sets out the *"tune in and tune up program"*. All staff are expected to embrace the contents of the manual and retain a copy for personal reference.

Through the staff practise code and staff manual there are a number of principles of customer service which are to be applied by all CSI people.

- 1) Customer service is not to be viewed merely as conforming to a procedural requirement but rather as developing a culture of operations where customers are treated in a professional, proactive, courteous and responsive manner. The CSI organisational model profiles customer service as a culture where customers are treated in a manner you personally would expect to be treated.
- 2) We are to be absolutely responsive to our customers. This particularly means that during 'ordinary business hours' we are contactable. Telephones in particular, are the lifeline of our business. They must be answered and answered promptly and politely. If you are leaving your station invoke an answering machine and let the Receptionist know where you are going. If you are to be absent on a business day make alternate arrangements for customer contact.
- 3) Present yourself and your organisation professionally. Looking good contributes to feeling good. Be conscious of your dress, grooming, manners and courtesy. Be conscious of the impression you create with others.
- 4) Strive to be regarded as someone who can be relied upon to do what you said you would do. Be responsive and don't make commitments you know cannot be honoured. If there is a 'hiccup' contact the customer, explain the circumstance and renegotiate the arrangements. This represents a critical 'moment of truth'.
- 5) Present CSI products and services professionally as a total package. Be conscious not only of the core products but of all aspects of service delivery e.g. telephone and personal contact, packaging, accounting and delivery arrangements. Remember all CSI people have a customer service responsibility.
- 6) Ensure that all customer expectations are registered, acknowledged and, where applicable, delivery arrangements identified to the customer. This formal tracking commitment is an absolutely critical component of customer service management. Under no circumstances are orders to be accepted without a delivery commitment. Maintain contact with the customer if difficulties arise. Always ensure delivery commitments are based upon anticipated receipt by the customer not when placed on transit.

Customer service excellence relies on CSI people taking a proactive approach to identify customer requirements and following through that those requirements are met. Customer service must be

driven by a culture of service provision through the development and implementation of systems, procedures and controls to ensure expected and committed outcomes are realised.

Whilst customer service responsibility rests with all CSI people, CSI managerial personnel including Officers In Charge, business units, Officers in Charge, service industries, Assistant Superintendent of Industries (inmate employment), Managers of Industries, Regional Business Managers and CSI Corporate Managers have a specific responsibility as Customer Service Managers to drive the program. Each of these personnel have an organisational and personal responsibility to develop a 'customer service plan' for their area.

The customer service plan is, in particular, to include:

- Systems, procedures and controls over all aspects of customer contact.
- Submission of information through monthly returns of service experience (see [section 5.12.7](#) – Customer Service Report)
- Action upon the customer service report published monthly by the Business Development Manager.
- Establishment of customer service focus groups on a programmed basis (co-ordinated by Business Development Manager).
- Adoption of the customer response card system and analysis of return information for process improvements.
- Arrangements for the regular and spontaneous contact of customers to identify their perception of our performance. This represents a proactive opportunity to profile CSI in a positive light and to respond to service issues.

The adoption of the CSI approach to customer service will not only provide satisfied customers but will contribute to the development of an operational environment which is satisfying and rewarding for our people.

#### **4.13.2 CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN - CSI CORPORATE OFFICE**

This section provides for the development of a customer service plan at all locations. The plan for the Corporate Office is particularly important in that I expect this office to provide the lead and inspiration to all other locations. The plan whilst directed to Corporate Office staff is expected to be embraced and to be utilised as the template for implementation at all CSI locations.

I must emphasise that every member of staff has a customer service responsibility. Please view the following as an outline of essential customer service requirements and of the organisational culture to be pursued. I ask that you embrace our approach to customer service conscientiously and

enthusiastically. Effective and real customer service, however, must evolve naturally and responsively from all of us.

The following then constitutes the customer service plan components for the CSI Corporate Office:

1. Please be familiar with [Section 4.14](#) - Complaints Handling in conjunction with this section.
2. Please be familiar with and embrace the CSI Staff Practise Code. I suggest a copy of the code be displayed within your work location.
3. Please be familiar with the contents of the Customer Service staff manual and retain a copy of the manual.
4. Please be familiar with the Customer enquiries. Customer Order Handling and Complaints handling sections of this plan attached.
5. The effective use of our telephone system is an absolutely essential component of customer service. This includes:
  - The CSI Corporate switchboard is resourced during the hours of 8.00 am to 5.00 pm by the Receptionist or Acting Receptionist.
  - Outside these core hours and during attendance by staff members switch calls are to be responded to by available staff members.
  - Outside of core switchboard hours, the Receptionist ensures that the answering machine is activated. Daily test checks of answering machine operation are to be carried out.
  - The Receptionist activates messages when commencing duties each morning and completes message forms for relevant officers. When that officer is not on duty the message is passed to the relevant supervising officer.
  - The Receptionist ensures that the message on hold system is continuously activated and carries out a test check of operation daily.
  - The Receptionist and other staff who take messages ensure that the CSI telephone message form is fully completed and passed personally to the relevant officer.
  - In answering telephones, the Receptionist and all staff might answer as follows:

"Good morning/Good afternoon, CSI, (*your name*) speaking". Please answer telephones promptly and provide a warm and pleasant attitude. There is nothing worse than speaking to someone who conveys that the problems of the world rest on their shoulders.

- Generally, ensure that you embrace the various components of the staff practice code.
6. Seek to go out of your way to assist customers. Impress customers by doing that little extra. You will be amazed by the reaction.
  7. Provide a commitment to the professional presentation of the Corporate Office. Maintain not only your own work area but look particularly to the general areas such as amenities, tea area, meeting room, conference room and showroom. If a visitor is expected, ensure that the name of the visitor and their organisation is included on the electronic signboard. Advise the Receptionist the afternoon prior to the visit.
  8. At the conclusion of the visit or meeting, escort the visitor to the entrance door. Use the walk as an opportunity to create a favourable impression of yourself and CSI.
  9. Provide a commitment to understand more fully the operations of CSI. Share your knowledge and the enthusiasm for our endeavours with our customers. Under no circumstances concern customers with our problems.
  10. Many concerns/complaints are directed to the Corporate Office. Please ensure that you embrace the customer complaints handling policy section and ensure that we honour the grievance handling procedures and commitments included within the customer service brochure.
  11. A complaint from a customer provides a unique opportunity for a win-win situation. Most customers want to provide the opportunity for a supplier to make good. Don't let the customer lose faith in our commitment to meet their needs..
  12. In difficult customer situations, do what you believe is necessary to restore the situation. Within reason, no cost is too much to retrieve a customer. Never lose sight of the resources and costs of developing new customers.

13. Take a proactive approach to customer service. Make a commitment that you will proactively contact at least 3 customers a week to establish that we are meeting their needs. Follow up on feedback. Spread the word where positive feedback is received.
14. Take the opportunity to thank customers for their support. If we receive a particularly important order, ring and thank the customer and let the customer know that their order is receiving personal attention. For example, if a customer has an exemplary debtor payment record, ring and thank the customer. Send a CSI Corporate gift.
15. Arrange periodic customer awareness sessions. Invite a number of customers to the Corporate Office to inspect our facilities and perhaps inspect the Silverwater CSI business units. Provide morning or afternoon tea. Remember, ours is a very unique organisation. Most people, including customers, are intrigued and want to learn more about us.
16. Pride yourself on going out of your way to identify customer needs and to meet them. Be committed to doing what you said you would do. Don't commit yourself simply to memory. Record and/or diarise commitments made and actions required.
17. Be sure to read and analyse the monthly Customer Service Report. Act on issues involving your area. Feel free to make suggestions to enhance our customer service performance.
18. Work as a team. Work to solve problems for customers in a complementary way with other members of our team. In dealing with customers do not assume someone else will take care of an issue. Let your actions leave nothing to chance.

Customer Service is about recognising our responsibilities, personal and organisational, to our most valuable asset - the customer. It is also about developing satisfied customers so we can develop a satisfied workplace. We all have a role. Let us become the best at customer service and be proud of it.

#### **4.13.3 CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN - CUSTOMER ENQUIRIES**

A key component of a proactive customer service program is to professionally and positively respond to customer enquiries. Such an approach represents an investment in our business future.

Our response to customer enquiries must give important recognition to all enquiries including those which will not necessarily bear fruit immediately. This recognises that we are in business for the long term and that a positive and professional response will bear fruit ultimately and will ensure that the enquirer refers well of CSI to others - an essential outcome of good customer service.

If you are in a CSI position which is required to field customer enquiries, it is important that you are aware of information about CSI which may extend beyond your specific position. You need to be conscious of the existence and substance of the CSI Business Plan, CSI Marketing Plan, CSI Customer Service staff manual, the contents of the CSI Policy Manual and the CSI Staff Practise code.

In particular be conscious of the signal to customers when calls are transferred. Do all in your power to resolve enquiries without transfer or be sure when transferred the customer will be assisted.

With the above in mind, enquiries to CSI follow two streams:

1) Community service obligation

Many enquiries are received about the CSI community service or social obligation. This relates to the philosophic reason for CSI existence i.e. to provide development opportunities for inmates as a basis of enhancing post-release employment; to assist effective Correctional Centre management; and to contribute to reducing the cost of corrections. It is important to be able to refer to these objectives as being applied in an optimised form i.e. they are all imperatives.

A range of information is available to assist your understanding of these areas including manuals and the publications referred to earlier together with the CSI Community Awareness and Corporate kits with relevant video.

When you field enquiries about the CSI community service obligation, the following kit is to be provided to customers:

- CSI In Focus magazine
- CSI and Other Businesses brochure
- CSI Customer Service brochure
- CSI bookmark
- Enclosed within the CSI Corporate marketing binder including 'with compliments' slip.

2) Commercial Enquiries

CSI possesses an extremely diverse geographic and technical capacity. A range of publications/brochures are available setting out the scope of the CSI business. The business unit location brochure is a particularly helpful guide.

When fielding enquiries about CSI products/services the following kit is to be provided to customers:

- CSI In Focus Magazine
- CSI Customer Service brochure
- CSI business unit locations sheet
- Specific information in connection with product enquiry
- CSI bookmark
- Enclosed within the CSI Corporate marketing binder including 'with compliments' slip

Reference may also be required to the relevant business division price list where published. Where a quotation is being provided be sure to embrace [section 4.2](#) – Pricing Policy.

All enquiries are to be logged as follows:

- Date of enquiry
- Enquirer
- Contact address and phone number
- Interest
- No further action or resub date for follow-up

It is important that when commitments are made to customers these are followed through and acted upon. The log might provide the system for this expectation.

The level of professionalism with which we deal with enquiries has a significant impact upon the way in which CSI is perceived and, whether a community service or commercial enquiry, the way the enquirer will approach and/or deal with CSI in the future.

#### **4.13.4 CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN - CUSTOMER ORDER HANDLING**

Customer orders are the lifeblood of our business. Without orders CSI cannot generate activity for inmate work programs or sustain our commercial existence.

We must therefore pursue a culture which encourages and values orders received from customers. Further, the manner in which we deal with those orders will determine whether the customer is satisfied and chooses to support CSI in the future.



The following steps set out the principles, systems and procedures that are therefore to be applied in relation to customer order handling.

- 1) This paper is to be considered supplementary to the plan covering customer enquiries.
- 2) Customer orders may be received by telephone, facsimile, mail, contract acceptance or in person. Where received by telephone or in person, the customer is to be requested to submit a formal order.
- 3) CSI Customer Service Managers including Managers of Industries, Regional Business Managers and Corporate customer service staff are to ensure that telephone, facsimile and mail procedures and processes enable the effective and prompt transmission of customer orders. Periodic test checks are to be made to ensure this occurs.
- 4) All customer orders are to be processed in accord with sections [4.11](#) – Acceptance of Customer Orders and [5.1](#) - Sales.
- 5) All customer orders are to be logged in accord with the following:
  - Date of receipt
  - Name of customer
  - Item No. and Item
  - Quantity
  - Supply location e.g. Cooma Cortex
  - Dispatch date
  - Delivery Date
  - Customer Contact Reference and Number
  - Comments and special instructions
- 6) The logging system is to ensure that the customer order is tracked through all phases of production and supply and that the committed delivery date is fulfilled. This system must also include a systemised form of customer order filing to facilitate enquiry response and retrieval.
- 7) All orders received are to be formally acknowledged by letter ([Figure 4.13.4.7](#)) which is to contain the following elements:
  - Our appreciation for the order
  - The location and name of business unit from which manufacture or service will be provided

- The committed delivery date and form of delivery
  - A copy of the customer service guarantee brochure
  - The name and designation of the CSI person to whom further enquiries should be directed.
- 8) Where a particularly valuable order is received, or in other cases, ring the customer personally and express our appreciation. You will be amazed at the reaction and the effect. Make it your business to do this at least twice per week.
- 9) Where orders are subsequently transferred to a different location the sending location is responsible for confirming that the order is actually received by the receiving location. This is a critical control procedure.
- 10) The **\*\*Customer Service Manager** is to review the schedule of outstanding customer orders at least on a weekly basis to ensure that delivery commitments will be made. Where a system glitch is evident, appropriate arrangements are to be made to remedy the situation and the customer so advised. Formal follow-up advice to the customer is to be carried out. This is to contain the following elements:
- Reference to telephone or other form of contact
  - Our apologies and reason for delay
  - Confirmation of the revised arrangements agreed upon.
- 11) On a weekly basis the **\*\*Customer Service Manager** reports action taken in relation to customer service commitments not met or anticipated not to be met together with action proposed and/or taken. Subsequent managerial input is initiated to ensure the CSI commitment to customer service is preserved.
- 12) Customer service information is to be accurately included within the monthly report ([Form 16](#)) referred to in [section 5.12](#) – Monthly Reporting.
- \*\*** Customer Service Managers include OIC business units, OIC service industries, ASI (inmate employment), Manager of Industries, Regional Business Managers and CSI Corporate Managers including customer service personnel.

#### **4.13.5 CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN - COMPLAINTS HANDLING**

The development and implementation of a proactive and responsive approach to complaints handling forms a key component of the CSI customer service program. This paper sets out the key elements of our approach to complaints handling.

- 1) Customer complaints may be made in person or reference and by telephone, fax or mail.
- 2) All CSI people are to be acquainted with sections 4.13 Customer Service and [4.14 Complaints Handling](#), the specific Customer Service Plan together with the CSI Customer Service staff manual and CSI Staff Practice code.
- 3) From the outset, it is important when receiving complaints not to become defensive but to give a clear indicator to the customer that we welcome complaints and that we have a proactive commitment to resolve the specific complaint promptly and to embark upon measures which will identify the causes to prevent a recurrence. Our approach to customer complaints handling embraces the principles set out within Australian Standard AS4269 - 1995 Complaints Handling.
- 4) Upon receipt of a complaint the complaint is to give rise to completion of the customer complaint schedule. This schedule includes the following elements:
  - Date of complaint
  - Name, address and contact number of customer
  - Order No. and CSI reference no.
  - Nature of complaint
  - Information in relation to comments and further action to be taken
- 5) The complaint schedule is serially numbered and retained for further managerial action and inspection as required.
- 6) The information included within the schedules is utilised in assembling information for submission on the Customer Service Monthly Report ([Form 16](#)).

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