

# **CUSTOMER SERVICE ACTION PLAN**

**2017 – 2019**

**The State Laboratory**

**An tSaotharlann Stáit**

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the State Laboratory Customer Service Action Plan 2017-2019  
The core business of the State Laboratory is to provide a comprehensive analytical and advisory service to Government Departments and Offices that supports their policies, regulatory programmes and strategic objectives, particularly in the Revenue, Agriculture and Environment sectors and to provide a toxicological service to Coroners. It does not provide a service to members of the public or undertake work for private clients.

## **Mission Statement**

The State Laboratory is committed to providing a quality analytical and advisory service to Government Departments and Offices that meets the challenges presented by changing regulatory customer needs and new and emerging technologies.

## **Commitment to Customers**

We are committed to establishing excellent working relationships with our customers and meeting the service standards outlined in our Customer Charter.

## **Service Standards**

The State Laboratory will:

1. Provide a quality analytical and advisory service to customers in an efficient and effective manner commensurate with the principle of fitness for purpose. Staff will be polite, courteous and fair in dealing with customers and will respond promptly and efficiently to all enquiries.
2. Establish Service Level Agreements with all of our customers which define the standards of service to be delivered, including specific targets for sample turn around times. At least 95% of the work of the laboratory to be covered.
3. Meet the commitments given in Service Level Agreements and provide advice and information as requested by customers within agreed timescales. When commitments entered into cannot be met due to unforeseen circumstances, the customer will be informed promptly and kept updated at regular intervals until the problem is resolved.
4. Meet with customers on a regular basis, or at their request, to review the quality and timeliness of the service provided and to identify future legislative trends and their impact on customers' requirements and laboratory resources.

5. Operate in accordance with a documented quality system based on the ISO/IEC 17025 standard and monitor compliance with this quality system through internal audits and external assessments.
6. Hold accreditation from the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB), as defined in the laboratory's scope of accreditation (Reg. No. 146T), for specific test procedures where required by the customer or by legislation.
7. Provide customers with expert witnesses in courts of law that are impartial and expert in their field, suitably qualified and trained, properly briefed and capable of defending their work.
8. Ensure that the laboratory's expertise and analytical capability is developed and expanded to take advantage of technical progress and to meet customers' current and future analytical and advisory needs.
9. Remain current with developments in relevant analytical and regulatory areas by attending meetings of EU and other international organisations and by providing representation on relevant scientific working groups.
10. Make the maximum use of information technology in the delivery of our service, in particular by operating a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) to track information on samples received from customers.

## **Evaluation and Reporting**

The State Laboratory is committed to carrying out a meaningful evaluation of our performance on an annual basis and the outcome of this evaluation will be included in the Annual Report. The service delivered will be evaluated as follows:

1. A customer satisfaction survey will be issued to all customers and our service will be evaluated under the following criteria (1) quality of work, (2) range of service, (3) timeliness, (4) advice, (5) helpfulness and (6) flexibility.
2. The % of our work covered by Service Level Agreements will be monitored.
3. The Service Level Agreement targets will be monitored each month and reviewed and reported on annually.
4. Where possible, at least one meeting per year will be held with customers.
5. A comprehensive internal audit program will monitor compliance with the documented quality system and any non-compliances raised during internal or external audits will be discharged promptly.
6. The scope of accreditation will be extended to meet customer requirements and priorities.

7. Scientific evidence given by staff which does not stand up to scrutiny by the courts will be investigated and the procedures followed will be modified as appropriate.
8. New analytical methods will be developed and existing procedures enhanced on an ongoing basis to increase the laboratory's analytical capacity.
9. Staff will provide representation at EU and International meetings and keep customers informed of relevant issues.
10. The use and functionality of the LIMS will be continually expanded to improve the service provided.

## **Feedback**

The State Laboratory is committed to consulting with our customers and considers feedback to be an essential element in our understanding of customer requirements.

We welcome any comments or suggestions our customers would like to make and our staff will listen and respond positively to any feedback given. Where the customer's expectations are considered to be unreasonable, staff will explain the reasons why, treating the customer with respect and courtesy at all times.

We encourage all our customers to help us to improve the service provided by completing and returning our annual customer satisfaction survey forms.

## **Complaints**

Customers are invited to complain if not satisfied with the service or results provided by the laboratory or if the service standards set out in our Customer Charter are not honoured. All such complaints will be investigated properly, fairly and impartially, according to the procedure for resolution of customer complaints documented in our Quality System.

## **Contact Point**

The contact person for processing complaints or suggestions from customers and for queries or comments in relation to this action plan is the QCS Officer.