

Press Release on Passenger Satisfaction Survey at CSI Airport, Mumbai.

In a first of its kind survey, CBEC engaged a reputed Management School, L.N.Welingkar Institute of Management, Mumbai (WE School) to conduct a survey of Passenger Satisfaction levels of customs clearance process at the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai, one of the largest Airport in terms of international passenger traffic in India. The findings of the Survey were released by the Research Team of WE School at a meeting held at Mumbai Customs House on 21st May 2016, in the presence of Chairman, CBEC, Shri Najib Shah.

The scope of the Survey was to assess Passenger Satisfaction levels with the Customs Clearance Process, focusing on three aspects, i.e. Information, Behaviour and Process. A Research Team comprising of Faculty members and Research Associates of WE School conducted the survey over a week from 20th to 26th May on 24x7 basis. The sample size of survey was 731 passengers being the, duly representative of demographics, nationalities, profession, etc.

Survey Findings:

1. Overall Satisfaction level at Mumbai Airport :

Asked to rate their experience of Mumbai Customs vis-a-vis other international Airports across the world, 69% rated their experience with Mumbai airport customs as better or somewhat better than other international airports, 15% rated on par and about 16% felt, it was worse.

2. Other key findings of the Survey are -

- (i) Respondents appreciated the improvements in Customs clearance process over the years. 35% of the respondents mentioned that clearance process has drastically improved while 37% mentioned that there is marginal improvement.
- (ii) Three areas where major improvement is expected by passengers are – (i) access and availability of information, (ii) Speed of process and (iii) Greater transparency of duty assessment process.
- (iii) Customs assessment for TV and jewellery appeared to be less widely known and are two commodities causing maximum discord.
- (iv) The manner of payment of assessed duty amount at the designated bank's counter (SBI) and lack of alternative facility to pay duty by Debit/Credit card/ Cash Card & Foreign exchange rate differential vis-à-vis others exchange operators was another cause of Passenger dissatisfaction.
- (v) The study found that lack of information awareness has a direct bearing on passenger satisfaction levels. Only 27% were 'Fully Aware' of the Indian customs rules and regulations while the vast majority was either partly aware or unaware of the legal requirements. Only 17% of the passengers were found to be accessing Indian Customs website for information, while the rest relied on various other sources,

which may not be fully authentic and reliable. 43% preferred medium of mobile phone for seeking information. Only 50% of passengers were aware that the Baggage Declaration Forms had been withdrawn, which was a major simplification undertaken recently, with 68% welcoming the move, as a positive initiative. The study has identified specific actions to address the information awareness gaps, prominent among them being Web promotion & optimisation, mobile App based information dissemination, and increased use of social media.

- (vi) Verbal and non-verbal behavioural cues of the Customs Officer influences the perception and hence the satisfaction levels of the Passengers. 77% of the passengers said they did not face any difficulty or harassment, however, imparting behavioural skills particularly in the areas of managing crucial conversation, tone of communication, gender sensitisation, emotional intelligence, etc. to the Customs officer which will go a long way in influencing Passenger Satisfaction levels.
- (vii) The study revealed that Passengers are sensitive to the time they spend on the entire Customs Clearance Process. In the case of Green Channel passengers, threshold time is 'up to 15 minutes' while in the case of Red Channel Passengers, threshold time appeared to creep in the 15 to 29 minutes time interval. Pre – arrival self-calculation / assessment and payment of Customs Duty levied, dedicated customs clearance channel for those international passengers who have connecting domestic flights to board, ease of Customs Clearance process at the Airport are important recommendations by the Research team for reduction in process time, which in turn would lead to raising satisfaction levels of Passengers.

Speaking on the occasion, Sri Najib Shah, Chairman CBEC, thanked the L.N.Welingkar Management Institute and its Research team of Professors and students for their efforts. He assured that the Survey findings and recommendations by the Research team will be examined by the Board carefully and suitable action will be taken to improve the passenger satisfaction levels not just at Mumbai but at all the Airports in India. He complimented NACEN, Mumbai and Mumbai Airport for having taken initiative to get this Survey done. He urged Customs at other airports to get similar study done, which will help take targeted action for improving passenger satisfaction levels.

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