
Quality Service Charter

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1. PURPOSE

The services we provide are governed by a Quality Service Charter that serves to inform our customers of the level of service that they should expect to receive. This reflects our commitment, and that of the Malta Public Service, to the delivery of a Service of Excellence by embracing the 4 Pillars of the Quality Model upon which the Public Service is based:

- VOICE:** We listen to the customers' voice and are open to their criticism regarding the service we offer and to their ideas as to how we can improve our service to them. We consider the ideas received from our customers, and strengthen the scheme of ideas forwarded by our employees;
- DESIGN:** We develop policies and processes which reach the levels expected by our customers;
- DELIVERY:** We deliver a service which is timely, of a high standard, easily accessible and which can reach the customer with ease; and
- ACCOUNTABILITY:** This is intrinsic to a service which guarantees honesty towards the customer. Accountability also means loyalty towards the customer making use of our services, which translates into and is manifested in these same basic principles we want to uphold.

2. WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

OUR MISSION

The Plant Protection Directorate safeguards the health and quality of production of plants, seeds, and other plant propagation material, by preventing the introduction and distribution of plant-harmful pests and diseases and guarantees the conservation and sustainable use of local genetic resources of organisms for food and agriculture.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All our actions are guided and bound by the 10 Determinants of Service Quality:

RELIABILITY: Information provided by us can be relied upon and is guaranteed to be accurate at the time it was given. You have the right to request that any information given by us be confirmed in writing.

RESPONSIVENESS: We aim to respect the Once-Only Principle by providing a service which is accurate and timely, whilst providing objective and knowledgeable advice on matters within our competence.

We shall ensure that the customer is supported throughout to receive the service required.

COMPETENCE: Our staff has the necessary skills to deliver services knowledgeably, courteously and impartially.

ACCESS: Our services are easily accessible through convenient opening hours, effective telephone service, and personalised and expedient online services. Our public offices are physically accessible to persons with disabilities.

COURTESY: We ensure that our services are offered in a respectful and polite manner, with full consideration for the customer's property.

COMMUNICATION: We aim to keep you informed in a language which is free from technical terminology, by listening to them, and explaining the service itself including any fees, if and where applicable.

CREDIBILITY: We ensure that our decisions are based on procedures and pre-defined criteria which shall be clearly explained to you. Our staff are bound to act in an ethical manner.

SECURITY: Care is taken to ensure that our public offices are in line with standard physical safety requirements. They are set up with your privacy in mind and any personal information provided will only be used for the purpose that it was collected for, and processed in line with the relevant legislation.

UNDERSTANDING/KNOWING THE CUSTOMER: Our processes are designed to understand and support your needs and create the minimum inconvenience possible to you, without discriminating on grounds of gender, status, age, ability, nationality, religious or political beliefs.

TANGIBLES: Our offices offer a clean and safe environment where our services can be sought conveniently and safely.

4. PLANT PROTECTION DIRECTORATE CUSTOMERS

The Chartered Services are offered to farmers, producers, importers, traders and distributors of plants, plant products as well as other materials, agricultural commodities, commercial centres propagating and selling plants and plant materials (nurseries and garden centres), owners of collective warehouses and dispatch centres, manufacturers of Wood Packaging Material, other business owners engaged in activities related to plants, plant material, and genetic resources of non-human organisms, technical advisors, members of the scientific, research, and academic communities, voluntary organisations, other Ministries and Government entities, and the public at large.

5. SERVICE COMMITMENT

We will ensure that all timeframes that are in our control will be strictly adhered to. When the service requested is dependent on other departments or entities, we are committed to follow up on it ourselves so that you will receive the final reply in time.

ITEM	STANDARD
COMMUNICATION	Specific, straightforward, and free of jargon or technical terms. All information will be provided in both Maltese and English. Correspondence sent to us in Maltese will be answered in Maltese whilst all other correspondence will be answered in English.
PREMISES	Complete access for all abilities and regular safety certification of the premises by competent bodies.
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION THROUGH WEBSITE/EMAIL/ TELEPHONE/SOCIAL MEDIA/ TRADITIONAL MAIL	A final reply within 3 working days.
REQUEST FOR SERVICE	Kindly refer to Appendix 1 for list of services.
PHONE CALLS	Shall be answered within 3 rings on working days.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	1 working day from receipt of request for information or application for service. This may be omitted if service or follow up query is provided/made within the same timeframe.

APPOINTMENTS

Replies to requests for appointments will be provided within 1 working day, with the appointment date being set within 3 working days from date of request. When attending your appointment you should not expect waiting time. We will respect the time allotted to you.

If you arrive late, we reserve the right to reschedule your appointment.

QUEUEING TIME (IF APPLICABLE)

We will greet you on arrival and guide you to your requested service. You will be directed to the officer who will serve you. Waiting time will be of approximately 10 to 15 minutes under normal circumstances.

ONLINE INFORMATION

The information on our communication channels will be kept up-to-date. If you have access to the internet, you can find relevant information on our website:

<https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/phd/Pages/home.aspx>

PAYMENT METHODS

Payments are accepted online through the relevant online application, in cash or by cheques, addressed to the Director, Corporate Services, MAFA.

In addition, the service specific turnaround time (this is the time taken to process an application), eligibility criteria and application requirements as described in Section 10 of this document shall apply.

6. HOW TO REACH US

Once an application or enquiry is lodged with us, we will be responsible to assess, follow it up and keep you updated so as to make sure that you receive a definite reply.

Our assistance may be sought through any of the following channels at the specified time:

A. Our offices:

110, Annibale Preca Street,
Lija, LJA1915

B. Opening Hours:

1st October to 15th June:
Monday to Friday
07:30 – 12:30
and 13:00 – 15:30

16th June to 30th September:
Monday to Friday:
07:30 – 13:00

C. By telephone:

Freephone 8007 2310, Landline
2292 6535 or mobile 79008101
During the above hours

D. Through e-mail:

plantprotection@gov.mt

E. On our website:

<https://agrikultura.gov.mt/en/phd/Pages/home.aspx>

F. Mobile Apps:

Flora and Fauna

7. WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE

Our commitment is to assist you in providing all the necessary information and documents to be given the related service.

We will ensure you:

- Give us information on time, that is both complete and accurate. When an incomplete application is received, we will inform you of what is further required and assist you to obtain all the required documents and complete it correctly;
- Take the time to read applications carefully so that you can help us give you the service on time;
- Provide feedback to us to improve our service. Our service is provided by a dedicated team of professionals. This does not mean that we do not accept your feedback so that we can better our service. You can do this by using the channels indicated in Section 8 below;
- Communicate with us clearly and concisely in either Maltese or English; and
- Treat our staff with the courtesy and respect as they are obliged to treat you.

Our website features all required applications and lists the documents needed with each application.

8. FEEDBACK & COMPLAINTS

We are committed to a Service of Excellence and strive to bring about a continuous improvement of our service to you. We guarantee your anonymity, and your feedback will help us to improve our services.

If you believe that we have made an error and/or that our staff have acted improperly, or without the due level of care and attention, please contact us.

Feedback and complaints may be submitted through the following channels:

Plant Protection Directorate

- In person: from our offices at 110, Annibale Preca Street, Lija LJA1915
- By phone: by calling freephone 8007 2310, landline 2292 6535 or mobile 79008101.
- By post: 110, Annibale Preca Street, Lija LJA1915
- By email: plantprotection@gov.mt
- Rate the Public Service - Downloadable through maltapps directory or web-based on <https://publicservice.gov.mt/en/rtps/Pages/Home.aspx>

servizz.gov

- Online: by accessing the [servizz.gov](https://servizz.gov.mt/en/pages/file-a-complaint/default.aspx) site and clicking on 'File a Complaint' here: <https://servizz.gov.mt/en/pages/file-a-complaint/default.aspx>
- By phone: 153

When making a complaint you should:

- Quote any reference number that you may have been given in relation to the transaction that you are complaining about;
- Specify what the problem/case is; and
- Provide any additional information that may help us resolve your complaint.

When addressing complaints, we will:

- Guarantee your confidentiality;
- Refer your case to the Customer Care Unit and send you an acknowledgement within 1 working day;
- Provide you with a unique reference number so that you can check the status of your complaint at any time.

As a normal procedure, all acknowledgements will be given to the beneficiaries on the same day of the request for information or application for service.

- Carry out an investigation on the problem/case and conclude this as speedily as possible but by not later than:
 - 5 working days (in cases where we can conclude the case ourselves), or
 - 10 working days (in cases where we would need to obtain feedback from other departments or entities),

- from receipt of the complaint and all requested relevant information.
- Inform you in writing, about the outcome of our investigation into your complaint by not later than 2 working days from the conclusion of the investigation.

Following closure of your complaint we commit ourselves to take any remedial action where applicable; and planned corrective action to avoid repetition where necessary so that you will not encounter the same, or similar, experience.

QUALITY OF SERVICE DIRECTORATE WITHIN THE PEOPLE & STANDARDS DIVISION

In the circumstance where the expected level of support was not given through the above channels, you may report to the Quality of Service Directorate within the People & Standards Division by sending an email on qualityofservice-opm@gov.mt

9. COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

With the aim of a Service of Excellence and continuous improvement in mind, this Quality Service Charter will be reviewed as necessary, but in any case at least once every 12 months to measure our performance in terms of the standards set out in this Charter as well as how we meet your expectations.

The review process will be based on:

- Government policy
- Operational data (e.g. services offered, service delivery, etc.)
- Benchmarking
- Feedback
- Complaints
- Surveys
- Quality Service Assessments
- Mystery Shopper Exercises

Quality of service standards relative to the services provided will be monitored and measured. The results of the internal review and the monitoring processes will be used as a basis for improving our service.



APPENDIX

10. APPENDIX 1

Service	Eligibility	Compliance requirements	Application Options	Service Delivery Timeline
Provision of information: queries of a general nature.	General Public.	N/A	Face-to-face at Lija Offices; by phone on 8007 2310/2292 6535; by SMS/WhatsApp on 79008101 or by email on: plantprotection@gov.mt	Queries by telephone or walk-ins are attended to immediately. Queries by email are acknowledged automatically and a reply is provided within 1 working day of request. Queries by SMS/WhatsApp messages are replied to within 1 working day of request. In case of complex queries, a final reply shall be provided within 3 working days of request.
Provision of information: queries of a technical nature.	General Public.	N/A	Face-to-face at Lija Offices; by phone on 8007 2310/2292 6535; by SMS/WhatsApp on 79008101; or by email on: plantquarantine@gov.mt	<p>Where possible, queries by walk-ins or telephone are addressed immediately.</p> <p>Queries by email are acknowledged automatically and where possible, a reply is provided within 1 working day of request. Queries by SMS/WhatsApp messages are replied to within 1 working day of request. In case of complex queries, customers are called back and provided with a reply within 3 working days.</p> <p>When an inspection is required, an appointment will be offered within 1 working day.</p> <p>Any requests for missing information are issued within 1 working day and a final reply is sent within 3 working days from receipt of additional information.</p>
Provision of advice in relation to policy.	General Public.	N/A	Face-to-face at Lija Offices; by phone on 8007 2310/ 2292 6535; or by SMS/WhatsApp on 79008101 or by email on: plantprotection@gov.mt	<p>Where possible, queries through walk-ins or telephone/mobile are addressed immediately. In case when the official is not available in person, s/he will get back to the customer with advice within 1 working day. Queries by email are acknowledged automatically and where possible, a reply is provided within 1 working day from request.</p> <p>Any requests for missing information are issued within 1 working day and a final reply is sent within 3 working days from receipt of additional information.</p> <p>For complex requests which need to be researched and require consultation, the customer is informed within 1 working day and a final reply is provided within 10 working days.</p>

<p>Notification of harmful organisms by citizens.</p>	<p>All citizens, in accordance to the legal obligations of Plant Quarantine Act, 2001. Article 20 (2).</p>	<p>In the case where an inspection is needed to identify or verify the presence of the harmful organism, the customer must grant access to the inspectors.</p>	<p>Notifications can be made:</p> <p>i) In person at the Lija Office</p> <p>ii) By phone on 8007 2310/ 2292 6535.</p> <p>iii) By SMS/WhatsApp on 79008101</p> <p>iv) by email on: plantquarantine@gov.mt</p> <p>v) via the smart phone app 'Flora and Fauna'. Use of the mobile app must be done in accordance with the applicable Terms and Conditions.</p>	<p>All notifications shall be acknowledged within 24 hours.</p> <p>In cases where a site inspection is required, the customer is notified by phone SMS/WhatsApp, via email or calendar invite, with the date and time of the inspection, at least a week in advance.</p> <p>In case of urgent matters, a site inspection is carried out as soon as possible.</p> <p>The PPD will inform the customer of the outcome of the notifications in writing (by post as well as by email), within 1 working day from the issuance of test results.</p>
<p>Registration of collections of genetic resources and issue of Certificate.</p>	<p>Research and academic entities and professional users in possession of living collections consisting of populations of an animal breed, plant variety, or other non-human organisms that are indigenous, endemic, traditional, or relic in nature, that originated in Malta, or were naturalised before 12 October 2014 according to EU Regulation 511/2014 and S. L. 549.111.</p> <p>Refer to User Guide: https://agrikultura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/registrationGenRes/userGuideRegistrationOfGeneticResources.pdf</p> <p>Refer to the user Checklist: https://agrikultura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/registrationGenRes/checklistRegistrationOfGeneticResources.pdf</p>	<p>The application must be submitted in original hard copy. Electronic scanned applications are accepted if they are followed by submission of the originals.</p> <p>The application must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the contact information; • information on the genetic resources; • repository information; • breeding entity information; • breeding information; • herd book, if applicable; • DNA certificate or morphological characterisation by a professional expert, if applicable. 	<p>The application form may be provided in person at Lija Offices or sent by post or email by sending a request on plantprotection@gov.mt or through an online application: https://www.servizz.gov.mt/en/Pages/Environment-Energy-Agriculture-and-Fisheries/Agriculture/Horticulture/WEB05291/default.aspx</p>	<p>Applications are acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt or immediately if handed in person.</p> <p>Vetting of applications for missing documents or information is done within 1 working day, and customers are informed accordingly.</p> <p>Application is processed within 7 working days, after which the customer is notified that his/her application has either been accepted or rejected.</p> <p>Accepted applications: A Certificate of Registration is issued within 1 working day from the completion of the processing of the application. The Certificate of Registration is sent to the client by post on the same working day.</p> <p>Rejected applications: Rejections are communicated within 1 working day from the completion of the processing of the application.</p>

<p>Authorisation to access and utilise national genetic resources for the scope of commercial or non-commercial research or innovation.</p>	<p>Individuals or entities that wish to access and use genetic resources and their derivatives as stipulated in S.L. 549.111.</p> <p>Refer to User Guide: https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/accessGenRes/userGuideAuthorisationAccessUseGeneticResources.pdf</p> <p>Refer to User Checklist: https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/accessGenRes/checklistAuthorisationAccessUseGeneticResources.pdf</p>	<p>The application must be submitted in original. Electronic scanned applications are also accepted if they are followed by submission of the originals.</p> <p>Application must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the contact information; • information on the genetic resources; • repository information; • breeding entity information; • breeding information; • herd book, if applicable; • DNA certificate or morphological characterisation by a professional expert, if applicable. <p>User is bound to submit annual progress reports and obligatory declarations according to legislation.</p>	<p>Applications may be provided in person at Lija Offices or sent by post or email by sending a request on plantprotection@gov.mt or through the online application: https://www.servizz.gov.mt/en/Pages/Environment_-Energy_-Agriculture-andFisheries/Agriculture/Agriculture/WEB05310/default.aspx</p>	<p>Applications are acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt or immediately if handed in person.</p> <p>Vetting of applications for missing documents or information is done within 1 working day, and customers are informed accordingly.</p> <p>Following administrative and technical processing of the application, within 10 working days, the customer is informed whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the application has been accepted and no further information is required. • the application is on hold because of missing information. • the use of genetic resources falls outside the scope and does not require a PIC. • is rejected. <p>If the application has been accepted, the digital certificate is issued and sent to the customer by email.</p>
<p>State registration and issue of licence as technical advisor in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrated pest management • soil management • breed standards for the Maltese Black Chicken 	<p>Individuals who can demonstrate relevant knowledge, expertise, and resources in the subject matter as per relevant User Guidance documents.</p> <p>Refer to User Guide: https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/technicalBlackChicken/userGuideRegistrationTechnicalAdvisorBreedStandardsMBC.pdf</p> <p>Refer to User Checklist: https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/technicalBlackChicken/checklistRegistrationTechnicalAdvisorsBreedStandardsMalteseBlackChicken.pdf</p>	<p>The application must be submitted in the original. Electronic scanned applications are also accepted if they are followed by the submission of the originals.</p> <p>A non-refundable registration fee of €50 is required.</p> <p>Licence certificates are valid for three years.</p> <p>For renewal of licence, the submission of a new application is needed.</p>	<p>The application can be submitted: in person at Lija offices; by post; or by email on: plantprotection@gov.mt</p>	<p>An acknowledgment of receipt is issued immediately for walk-ins or within 24 hours for applications received by post. An automated acknowledgment is issued for submissions by email.</p> <p>Within 15 working days from receipt of a complete application the customer is informed via email whether the application has been accepted or otherwise.</p> <p>Accepted applications: the customer is asked to pay the registration fee via cash or cheque within 15 days from notification.</p> <p>Within one working day from the payment the customer will be registered in the Register of Technical Advisors. A signed Certificate of Registration is sent to the advisor by post within one working day from registration.</p> <p>Rejected applications: applicants may appeal in writing to the Malta Arbitration Centre, within 15 days from notification.</p>

<p>State registration in the Malta Official Register of professional operators and issue of compliance certificate.</p>	<p>Individuals or entities involved in any of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce, trade, and import plant and plant products. • produce or maintain any collective warehouse or dispatching centres. • treat wood with heat treatment as per ISPM15. <p>Refer to User Guide: https://agrikultura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/registrationMOR/userGuideRegistrationMaltaOfficialRegister.pdf</p> <p>Refer to User Checklist: https://agrikultura.gov.mt/en/phd/Documents/registrationMOR/checklistRegistrationProfessionalOperatorsMOR.pdf</p>	<p>The application must include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system of records is available; • Place for the segregation of consignments; • An area suitable for inspection is made available on site; • List of products concerned; • A georeferenced site plan of the premises (if relevant); • A detailed plan for segregation of consignment in case of suspected/infestation by harmful organisms (if relevant). <p>Compliance to these criteria will also be verified during the on-the-spot inspection, if applicable.</p> <p>The MOR compliance certificate is valid for one (1) year from the date of issue.</p>	<p>Business operators may fill in the application at https://www.servizz.gov.mt/en/Pages/Environment_-Energy_-Agriculture-and-Fisheries/Agriculture/Horticulture/WEB05265/default.aspx</p> <p>Applications can also be submitted by hand at the Lija Office of by post.</p> <p>Requests for assistance to fill in the application forms can be made by phone on 8007 2310/2292 6535, SMS/WhatsApp 79008101, or by email plantquarantine@gov.mt</p>	<p>An acknowledgment of receipt is issued immediately for walk-ins or within 24 hours for applications received by post. An automated acknowledgment is issued for submissions by e-forms.</p> <p>An appointment is scheduled within one working day of receiving the request for assistance to fill in the application.</p> <p>Completed applications are reviewed and assessed within 3 working days and an appointment for an inspection is scheduled within this period.</p> <p>Within 5 working days from the inspection the customer will receive an inspection report and compliance certificate via email. In case of breaches, customers will be notified and given a grace period to rectify and continue the process.</p> <p>The compliance certificate is sent by post to the customer within 1 working day from registration.</p>
<p>Issue of phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for export and re-export.</p>	<p>Registered professional operators who wish to export plants, plant materials, seeds, and other commodities of plant origin outside of Malta to third countries, in accordance to S.L. 433.03.</p>	<p>Customers requiring phytosanitary certificates are to notify the responsible officials by not later than 48 hours in advance of the scheduled time of export.</p> <p>Fees apply in accordance to regulation 19A and Schedule XXVI of S.L. 433.03.</p> <p>Additional charges may apply in accordance to Regulation 19A (1)(b); 19A (2) (overtime charges); 19A (4)(a) (transport charges); and 19A (5) (delay charges).</p>	<p>Request for issuance of the certificate is done by sending an email on: plantquarantine@gov.mt.</p> <p>with the following details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exporter details and address; • Importer address (and country); • Container number; • Seal number; • Bill of lading; • Commodity or scientific name of the commodity; • Net and gross weight of consignment. <p>https://agrikultura.gov.mt/en/phd/Pages/phytosanitaryCertificates.aspx</p>	<p>Upon receiving a request, an appointment is set within 24 hours for the PPD to carry out a site inspection (including documentary inspection and phytosanitary checks) and to issue a certificate for export or re-export. This is done within 48 hours of being notified by customer.</p> <p>The certificate shall not be issued earlier than 14 working days before the date on which the plants, plant products, or other commodities leave Malta.</p>

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