



Delivering top-tier customer service

The Department of Transport and Main Road's (TMR) vision is to create a single integrated transport network accessible to everyone. With 3.7 million face-to-face interactions with Queenslanders each year, TMR is responsible for over 80 percent of all government counter transactions. No department has a bigger role to play in keeping Queensland moving, or in helping build for the future. That's why it's vital that every customer transaction is of the highest standard.

Here we talk with TMR's **Director-General, Mr. Neil Scales OBE**, about how undergoing ICSS certification through the CSIA assisted the department in delivering consistent customer satisfaction and improved customer experiences.

Mr. Scales, with such a large number of transactions, how important is it that TMR's interactions provide the best possible experience for customers?

It's vital that our customers' experience with our services is of a high standard. At TMR we strive to get it right for our customers first time, every time. We do this by always putting our customers, the people of Queensland, first. Our people put our customers at the centre of everything they do, and everyone understands how important our customers' needs and expectations are – and how to meet them.

So we can provide the best possible transport service to Queenslanders, we work with our customers to understand their needs and expectations by conducting customer research and listening to what they have to say. This helps us ensure we are striving to deliver tailored, end-to-end solutions, experiences, and outcomes to meet their needs.

How does the department consistently provide such gold-standard service?

It's because we care about our customers and believe they deserve the best possible service. This belief is driven by the passion of our people in delivering exceptional customer experiences for Queenslanders. This doesn't happen by accident though. We put the work in, not only internally, but also with our customers.

An example of how we connect with our customers, and something I am very proud of, is TMR's online customer research community, Transport Talk. With more than 6000 members, Transport Talk is a digital engagement platform that enables us to connect with Queenslanders across the state and work with them to discuss and explore transport related issues to inform and shape the future of transport in Queensland.

We also place high importance on learning and development at TMR; I am passionate about lifelong learning. If we stay curious, learning and growth positively impacts us individually and as an organisation. It also directly impacts what we deliver for the people of Queensland.

What was it that originally motivated the department to seek ICSS certification?

To be the best in customer experience and service, we needed to be assessed independently against the highest of industry standards. This is what the CSIA does, with the ICSS.

ICSS certification is not only important within TMR, it's an important indicator that demonstrates to Queenslanders that TMR is committed to putting them at the centre of everything we do. It shows we are a mature, award winning, customer-centric organisation. Being assessed against the ICSS showcases,

celebrates, and provides improvement opportunities that have enabled and supported TMR to set the standard across Queensland Government.

What was the process like, completing ICSS certification through CSIA?

It was excellent – very straight forward and we felt supported by the CSIA throughout the entire process. At TMR, our most recent ICSS assessment was from 16-18 March 2021. I wanted the department to demonstrate and showcase the diversity of our customers and the customer focused programs of work across the department, so the assessment took place across four TMR locations which included Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Carseldine, and Brisbane City.

We have a lot to be proud of. Being benchmarked against the ICSS and undergoing regular certification activities enables us to reflect and celebrate who we are and what we're delivering. It allows us to take stock, reflect, listen, and improve. For me and my Executive Leadership Team, our ICSS assessments are humbling and incredibly rewarding.

The CSIA Customer Service Leader of the Year for 2020 was TMR's Janet Born. How important is it to have customer service champions such as Janet leading your teams?

At TMR, our people are our greatest asset and the reason why we can provide such high-quality services and experiences to our customers.

Attracting and retaining team members such as Janet is always my goal. Janet understands the responsibility of leading by example, and she continues to focus on customer service excellence, as do all of my teams.

I am very fortunate to have exceptional people who work for me, and who make a positive difference for our customers.

CSIA's certification reports consistently award TMR with top level results; how rewarding is this?

Extremely rewarding and a well-deserved accolade for the staff. I am very proud that TMR is in the upper echelon of organisations accredited against the ICSS. In TMR it's paramount that we strive to excel.

I'm so pleased that the CSIA has and continues to recognise and formally acknowledge that my department is an organisation that puts Queenslanders first.

Anything further to add?

For many of us, reflecting on 2020 and 2021 brings a range of images and thoughts to the fore, some quite challenging and others perhaps, even life changing. 'Unprecedented' has been the catch-cry and whilst this is true in so many ways, as events unfolded a new 'business as unusual' emerged – a norm which is now enduring.

The pandemic has tried and tested us all here at TMR, in ways that have brought out the best in our resolute commitment to serve the wonderfully diverse communities of Queensland and forged our connection as a OneTMR family – a family with more than 9000 dedicated individuals.

The staff continually inspire me with their grit and determination, which is both dignified and respectful.

"It is an honour to continue to walk with them on this journey."

ABOUT TMR

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) moves and connects people, places, goods and services safely, efficiently and effectively across Queensland. They plan, manage and deliver Queensland's integrated transport environment to achieve sustainable transport solutions for road, rail, air and sea. TMR has been certified with the CSIA since February 2017 and have been regular finalists in the Australian Service Excellence Awards.

ABOUT ICSS

CSIA uses the International Customer Service Standard (ICSS) as the assessment framework for organisations undertaking certification. ICSS provides both a recognisable benchmark and a 'how-to' approach to implementation of best practice customer service management.

The ICSS enables an organisation to understand how well their strategy, structure, systems, people and processes are contributing to customer success and overall organisation performance. The standard applies equally across all industries including government and not-for-profit.

