

SERVICES CHARTER OF THE GUARDIA CIVIL: A COMMITMENT TO THE CITIZENS

SANTIAGO GARCÍA MARTÍN

TECHNICAL CABINET OF THE GUARDIA CIVIL

ABSTRACT

In terms of Quality of Service charters, the Guardia Civil has been a cutting-edge organization within the security sector since the approval of its first charter in 2003. Nowadays, we are encountering more and more responsible, active citizens who demand higher-quality services. It is no longer sufficient that the administration continues to provide services as usual. Instead, it should work with the citizens themselves, setting up those bridges of communication necessary in order to hear their opinions and demands, as well as their levels of satisfaction in respect to services they receive through the implementation of governmental public policy. In this task of shared responsibility between administration and society, the services charters have become a simple yet important channel which facilitates both the administration's undertaking of commitments, as well as the responsibility of the citizens to appeal to the public administration for their realization. It is for this reason that the Guardia Civil has recently shown an interest in renewing its Services Charter, adapting it to changes in regulations, as clear expression of what has always been its vocation, as written in its *vision*: "to be a law enforcement force close to the citizen and a role model in terms of its quality, versatility and availability".

Keywords: Services Charter, quality, commitment, indicators of success, management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the very first moment in the Guardia Civil's foundation, Quality in the provision of service is a factor which has been considered especially relevant. Phrases included in the *Cartilla del Guardia Civil* (a document first approved on 20th December 1845, in which the moral values of the Institution are defined), such as: "the Guardia Civil (...) must be a model of morality"; "carrying out their functions with dignity, prudence and firmness"; "the Institutional endeavor to be a beacon of hope to those in distress"; and "it will be take everyone into careful consideration" lead us to claim that the search for excellency in the service provided by the Guardia Civil has always been present in the minds of the managers of the Institution.

Those in charge of the Guardia Civil have always understood the need to change with the times, especially in regards to the need to be open to new organizational and managerial trends and, ultimately, the need to progress by modernizing ideas, structures and the service provided to the citizens.

In trying to understand the concept of quality, the many possible definitions of the word can be problematic. The Dictionary of the Real Academia Española (the definitive

dictionary of the Spanish language) defines quality as “the characteristic or group of characteristics inherent to something which allows for the evaluation of its value”. Taking this definition into consideration, the value represented by a quality service, or by an application of quality control systems, to an organization is extremely interesting. However, from a practical point of view, the realization of activities on the part of the Institutional administration can be viewed from two different perspectives:

- An internal one, with emphasis on the performance and strategic goals of the organization. This is what is traditionally meant by ‘strategic management’, as it could directly influence those elements linked to the competitiveness of the Institution. From this perspective, the quality consists on making things better, being more efficient, more effective, being able to achieve a greater performance and get, in general terms, lower crime rates or greater clearing up rate in benefit of public safety.
- An external one, focused on the citizen. This is the perspective under which quality control management itself operates. From this point of view, ‘quality’ could be understood as the process which consists of recognizing and satisfying the claims and expectations of the citizens, acting with transparency, participation, responsibility and commitment, with the aim of fulfilling the expectations of the citizens with regards to our organization.

Ultimately, the provision of a quality service is the intrinsic corporative desire to commit to the continuous improvement of their service. And it is that Quality, which is currently an integral viewpoint of the management which seeks to incorporate the opinion of every stakeholder in the development, maintainance and improvement of the service, with an emphasis on the user and on continuous improvement.

With regards to the strategic management system of the Guardia Civil, which serves as a framework for institutional planning, the concept of quality has been kept in mind since the very first moment of its conception. To reflect this, the strategic map appears not only in the definition of its vision (the Guardia Civil as a “role model for its quality”), but also in its mission (“to guarantee public safety and help the citizens in an excellent way”), in its consideration of the stakeholders (“contributing to society’s well-being through the provision of personal, quality services”) as well as in reference to internal processes (aiming for overall “police effectiveness and quality service”).

If we go back to the historical precedents of the first Citizen’s Charter, we find that it was presented in the British Parliament by the Conservative Member of Parliament John Major on 22nd July 1991, with the aim of increasing the quality of public services and publicizing the commitments of fulfilling the needs and expectations of the citizens.

After this, the White Book on the Citizens’ Charters¹ was published in Great Britain. Among other aspects, this document included the 7 basic principles of the provision of the public service: setting agreements on quality, transparency, information availability, the option and possibility to choose, non-discrimination, accessibility, suggestions and claims. In 1998, the Labor British Government then reevaluated the Charter in the

1 http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/22/newsid_2516000/2516139.stm (accessed 30 March 2015.) <http://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmpublicadm/411/41105.htm> (accessed 30 March 2015.)

program “Service First: The New Charter Program”, whereby they maintained its philosophy and, adding to the elements of the previous program, established six standards for service on a governmental department and agency level:

- Responding to letters quickly and clearly. Each department and agency shall establish a set period of time in which to answer these letters and shall publish its achievements in relation to this goal.
- If a citizen has arranged a personal meeting, they shall be seen within a maximum of 10 minutes of the arranged meeting time.
- Offering clear and direct information about the services provided and providing, at the very least, a telephone number for future arrangements.
- Contacting citizens regularly about the services on offer to them, and giving them information about the results.
- Having a complaints procedure and providing information about it when asked.
- Doing all that is possible, within reason, to put the services at the disposal of everyone, including those with special needs.

With the time, this practise arrived in the USA (*Putting the American People First*, 1993), Canada (*Getting Government Right*, 1993), Belgium (*Charte de l'utilisateur des services publiques*, 1993), Spain (RD 1259/1999, de 16 de julio, por el que se regulan las cartas de servicios y los premios de calidad en la AGE), Ireland (*Delivering Better Government*, 2000) and Sweden (*Service dialogue Pilot Projet*, 2001).

This phenomenon is now spread through the vast majority of EU countries as well as through many of the countries of which the international community is composed.

In Spain, the General State Administration (Administración General del Estado, AGE) has 342 charters, 324 out of which are conventional and 18 of which are electronic. Of these letters, only 220 (64%) have been updated in the established legal deadline of 3 years².

The Ministry of the Interior has 10 charters, 7 conventional ones and 3 electronic ones. The Guardia Civil has one conventional charter and one electronic charter, which will be discussed in greater detail later³.

If we analyze what happens in other organizations, according to the data published by the Spanish Evaluation for Quality of Service Agency (Fundación para los Compromisos por la Calidad), the number of charters studied by the general report *Barómetro de Cartas* published in 2013 was 890, 630 of which concerned the autonomous regions of Spain, and 269 of which concerned the large cities. Among the regions, we should highlight Andalucía and La Rioja with more than 80 charters. Among the cities, we should mention Gijón and Madrid with more than 40⁴.

2 AEVAL. Monitoring report of the Ministries' activities in relation to the General Framework Programs for the Improvement of the Quality of the General State Administration in 2012. 1st edition: 2014

3 MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR (2014). Service Charter: www.interior.gob.es/web/servicios-al-ciudadano/carta_de_servicios (accessed 26 May 2014.)

4 FUNDACIÓN PARA LOS COMPROMISOS DE CALIDAD. Barómetro de Cartas ciudadanas 2012 – De ciudades y Comunidades Autónomas y Grandes Ciudades de España. 1st edition: 2013.

If we put together the data from AEVAL with that from the Foundation and we take into account the fact that those studies do not include all of the charters in this field, the combined group of public administration Service Charters would reach a figure close to 1,300, a number which demonstrates the effort of the Spanish Public Administration in this area in more absolute terms.

It is at this point that we should ask ourselves why the Guardia Civil, as with 1,800 other Spanish public organizations, has decided to make its service charter public.

The answer is very simple. Our Institute has always been concerned with issues related to Quality. Since 1999 – the year in which Royal Decree 1259/1999 was passed on 16th July, a system of regulation for the Service Charters and the Awards for Quality in the General Administration of the State – different actions have been carried out:

- Adoption of the Service Charter and the Electronic Service Charter.
- The development and implementation within the Officers Academy of a Quality Management System and its certification in 2010 by the Chamber of Commerce in Madrid in the model specified by the norm UNE-EN ISO 9001:2008, making it the first Guardia Civil center to hold this certification in all their activities.
- Launch of the Quality System in the Guardia Civil Forensics Unit (Laboratorio Central y de Zona y Comandancia).
- Steps taken to begin the accreditation process for the Special Training Center as a Center of Excellency within the European Union, in order to achieve EFQM certification by 2016.
- Incorporation of the concept of Quality in Education, specifically in the advanced courses of economic and technical management, essential training tools for the promotion to Commander of the ESO.

Due to its interest in incorporating systems of Quality Management into the very heart of its institutional identity, the Guardia Civil was awarded with the following recognitions:

- The first ever Award for Good Practice in Internal Management (2001), for: “Improvements in the Service of Weapons Confiscation”.
- The Award for Good Practice in the Internal Management (in its third year in 2003), for: “Electronic elections to the Staff Advisory Council and implementation of the electronic signature in the Guardia Civil”.
- The Award for Good Practice in Internal Management (in its fifth year in 2006), for the practice “Inclusion and integration plan for newly hired civil staff”.

In addition, and now in more general terms, when developing a quality policy in the center of the organization the following options can be chosen:

- The establishment of a model of accreditation through the fulfillment of certain requirements or standards affecting different areas of the organization,
- The adoption of a quality management system based on existing internationally recognized models (ISO 9001:2000),

- The institutionalization of practices of business management excellence or good administration through administrative evaluation, using some models (EFQM and CAF) as a basis for reference or,
- The drafting of service charters.

The choice of the service charters is a response to a decision based on weighing the costs in relation to the potential benefits. Obviously, the service charters allow, at a relatively low cost, for the implementation of improvement measures which result in an important benefit for the citizen in terms of the quality of the service provided. Furthermore, for reasons which will be presented afterwards, the charters permit the establishment of bridges of communication with the citizen, giving them joint responsibility in public management.

Before going on, it first would be beneficial to define a group of concepts that will appear throughout the article⁵:

- Expectations: quality of the service that the citizens expect according to their needs, previous experiences and wishes.
- Indicators of success: data or group of data which helps to objectively measure the evolution of a process or activity.
- Commitment: the obligation assumed by an organization in the provision of a service.
- Service: the result of carrying out a generally non-tangible activity on the part of an organization for the benefit of the citizens.
- Relief measure: action planned by the organization in order to excuse, apologize or repair the failure to fulfill an agreement.

2. WHAT DOES A SERVICE CHARTER CONSIST OF?

A Service Charter can be defined in a positive sense as well as in a negative sense. Let us have a look at each one of the definitions.

Starting with the definition in a positive sense, according to UNE standard 93200:2008 for *Requirements of services charters* (Norma UNE 93200:2008 *Requisitos de las cartas de servicios*), the charter is “*a written document through which the organizations publically inform their users about the services that provide and about their commitments to quality in providing them, as well as about the rights and obligations that assist them*”.

In the sphere of the General State Administration, and in agreement with Royal decree RD 951/2005 of 29th July, in which the general framework (that we will mention later on) for the improvement of the quality in the General State Administration is established, the service charters are “*documents that are an instrument through which the various bodies, agencies and entities of the Administration inform the citizens and users about the services assigned to them, about the rights that assist them in relation*”.

5 AENOR. Norm UNE 93200:2008. Services Charter. Requirements. April 2008.

to those services and about the commitments to quality made when providing them". These are known as the conventional charters which can refer to the group of services of an organization, the services which various bodies provide, or those which specific bodies or agencies provide. The electronic charters refer to the provision of operative services which citizens access through electronic means.

From here we can already pick out three elements central to a charter of this type: the services, the rights and the commitments. Moreover, from the definitions we can also deduce four important characteristics:

- They are focused on the citizens,
- They manage their expectations,
- They measure the results of the public management and,
- They allow for the introduction of improvement processes.

It is possible to say that a service charter is a working tool created with the aim of establishing commitments and of boosting the management of expectations through communication with those people who receive the service. In this sense, these charters are one of the most common methods for the initiation and development of the Quality Management used by public institutions.

In agreement with article 4 of Law 6/1997 of 14th April, about the Organization and Functioning of the General State Administration (the *LOFAGE* Law), which regards the concept of service to the citizens, the service charters cover three aspects:

- Firstly, facilitating the citizens the exercise of their rights, telling them what is available to them, and giving them a quick, overall vision of the provided service, as well as of the commitment linked to this service and how to access it.
- Secondly, fostering continuous improvement in quality, informing managers of the quality of service reached in comparison to the quality which was expected, thus allowing them to adopt improvement measures to correct any deviations;
- Thirdly, clarifying the managers' responsibilities in terms of citizen satisfaction, through publicizing the results achieved.

In this sense, it is important to remark that, when fixing the commitments, the service charter has a double aspect:

- On the one hand, it is an excellent communication tool which allows citizens to know the Institution's expectations and what they can claim, clearly establishing the extent to which the organization will go in the provision of their services, adding a level of transparency about how the organization responds to the citizen.
- On the other hand, through gathering information on the results, it becomes an excellent tool for change as well as for continuous improvement.

Moreover, and as an aspect linked with the above-mentioned process of continuous improvement, the charter obliges us as an organization to value what we do, how we do it, if we are doing it as well as we thought and how we could improve upon how we do it. What is more, when elaborating the charter, we should be conscious of the

standards to which we are working, which objectives can be reached and how far our commitment with the citizens can go. Therefore, this generates a reflection process around the provision of the service that is extremely enriching.

From a corporate communication point of view, the charter creates the understanding that services are activity processes which lead to a specific result, a service on which we are evaluated as an organization and on which our public image and reputation depend. In this area, the charter represents an excellent marketing tool that enables communication with the citizen.

Aside from what we have already mentioned, it should be noted that the service charters not only inform the citizen, but they also place the citizen into the center of their field of activity. Through the provision of services which correspond to citizens' needs and demands, the citizen becomes a participant in which public policies are applied. In this way, the citizen can interact with the administration; by indicating those aspects with which they are in disagreement, or by proposing how bad practices can be corrected, etc. Thus, the service charter is not only a means of information but it also becomes a channel through which the citizen not only *can*, but also *should* (in a responsible manner) ask the administration to improve on their provision of services.

In other words, the service charter is a bridge between the administration, which seeks to get closer to the citizen, and to be receptive and committed, and the citizen, who should make an effort to demand what that administration should be doing with the funds which come from the citizens' taxes. In this sense, the charter is an exercise in mutual responsibility in the management of public affairs, where the administration is not the only one whose duty it is to regulate anymore; it is also the duty of the citizen to help regulate society through participation, and through making complaints and suggestions. In short, the 21st Century citizen has greater empowerment, but they are also expected to have a greater involvement in the management of public affairs.

And it is in the field of the new administration of the 21st Century that mutual responsibility requires the participation of both parties in analyzing, valuing and improving the provided services. This is a new vision of administration which is favored by the use of new technologies, so that the cost for the citizen to participate in the management of public affairs is almost nothing. It only requires his/her interest, some time and dedication, the desire not to let things slip by, and to be demanding about how these services are provided. With the contribution of the citizens, we can improve the governing processes and create authentically intelligent organizations.

"The aim is to ensure that our Administrations become truly intelligent organizations, able to generate value for the citizens, increasing and improving their possibilities in life and favoring the sustainable development of society."

Commitment letter to the quality of the public Administrations. Spanish Public Evaluation and Services Quality Agency (Agencia Estatal para la Evaluación de las Políticas Públicas y la Calidad, AEVAL). October 2009.

As pointed out by the Public Agency for the Evaluation of Public and Quality Policies (Agencia Estatal para la Evaluación de las Políticas Públicas y la Calidad, AEVAL), in order for the service charters to be useful for the citizens, they should be disseminated and made accessible online and in hard copies. Therefore, a suitable diffusion plan is necessary. A charter that is not widely published simply does not exist. However, we

should rethink whether diffusion in the current state of affairs, what with social concerns about climate change, the accelerated consumption of natural resources, the concept of 'less is more', and so on, should make the public actors re-think new formulas based on a form of e-administration that could be environmentally sustainable and that contribute to the eradication of the use of paper, in line with the 2011-2015 Strategy of the Avanza 2 Plan (thanks to the digitalization of the procedures, the inclusion of the digital signature and the creation of electronic registers). This, ultimately, also constitutes an improvement in the provision of the service.

Moreover, the commitments should be linked with specific procedures that could be easy to identify. Lastly, we should make sure that a strict monitoring be carried out on the observance of the commitments and the adoption of measures necessary to ensure compliance and awareness of the citizens.

Moving on to an analysis of the charter in a negative sense, a charter is not a mere catalog of services, nor a mere declaration of intentions and neither is it a charter of rights and obligations. On this premise, the AEVAL openly criticizes that some organisms have charters conceived in a great way from an organic perspective, reflecting the commitments of an organization regarding all their services and provisions, without getting into detail about the procedures that link the organization with the citizens.

Therefore, taking into account all that has been said, we should conclude by saying that a service charter, if we conform to its definition, is a document that displays the commitments of the administration towards the citizen and is the basis upon which the citizen is allowed to demand the compliance of the administration. It is an agreement that if breached allows responsibilities to be demanded of the managers. However, if we try to get deeper into its comprehension and understanding from the point of view of administration or a manager, we will end by saying that a services charter is a tool that helps in the implementation of a quality management system in the center of an organization and that, therefore, it should be part of their strategy. At this point, the prospective, strategy and quality systems might interlink as one engine of true transformation of the administration that puts the citizens – who are increasingly more informed, prepared and demanding when it comes to the management of the public affairs – first.

3. THE FIRST CONVENTIONAL SERVICE CHARTER OF THE GUARDIA CIVIL

The first Service Charter was introduced to the Guardia Civil on May 5th 2003 by way of the resolution of the sub-secretary of the Interior of February 7th, invoking the Royal Decree 1259/1999 of July 16th, by which the service charters and the quality awards in the General State Administration are regulated.

The Royal Decree 1259/1999, inspired in the principle of continuous improvement of the public services according to the citizens' demands, enables transparency and information, participation and enquiry of the users and the responsibility of the public managers. To that end, the decree was divided in three parts: service charters, evaluation of the quality of the services (through self-evaluations and external evaluations) and awards given for best practices and for quality in the General State Administration.

It is important to note that there is no article in the Royal Decree wherein it is expressed that the public organs and organisms of the General State Administration are

forced to write a letter, which implies that their involvement is voluntary. In any event, in article 5 section 2 the mandate addressed to the sub-secretaries of each Ministry is alluded to in order to ensure that each Body and Organism of the public administration draft their service charter, a mandate that was not passed on to the Guardia Civil in the form of an executive order.

In the same vein, the Guardia Civil – within the framework of the willingness to contribute to the improvement of the services provided to citizens – joined the movement in favor of quality and drew up their Service Charter.

The structure and content of the charter has three major sections:

- General and legal matters
- Commitments to quality and
- Points of complementary nature.

Thus, general and legal data include the identification of the Body responsible for the charter (in our case, the Technical Cabinet), the provided services, the rights of the citizens, the ways of participation or collaboration of the citizens in the improvement of the services, the regulations of governance and access to the book of complaints and suggestions.

In the section on quality commitments, the quality levels that are offered are laid out as:

- Planned procedure or service provision deadlines
- Communication and information mechanisms (general or personalized) and
- Open hours and information hubs for the public.

Lastly, but by no means less important, with a complementary nature we find the postal addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of every department where each of the services is provided, clearly indicating how to get there and, where necessary, the means of transport needed. There is also information about the postal address, telephone number and email address of the responsible unit of the charter and, lastly, any other interesting information regarding the services provided.

Looking at the information gathered in the services charter from a generalized perspective, we will start with the detail of how much it appears in the informational document. Once we have indicated the general services of the Guardia Civil and detailed its functions, we will highlight those services that are considered of *administrative* or *informative* character that are provided to citizens:

- Information about facts or events that affect public security.
- Information about legal or protective measures adopted or recommended to citizens in order to guarantee their security.
- Granting, modification and expiration of authorizations related to production, circulation and possession of weapons and explosives.
- Information about access into the Guardia Civil and the selective processes.

As can be seen, not all services were discussed, rather those that were of “administrative or informative” character.

Regarding the commitments, the following were included:

- Permanent citizen assistance, taking care of their needs 24 hours a day, going to the required place, provided help can be given and a physical presence is necessary, and appearing promptly in case of an urgent necessity.
- Attention to citizens in general and victims of crimes in particular, which can be specialized whenever it is necessary, ensuring their privacy at all times, providing all the help and information they require and acting quickly in the collection of the complaint and further paperwork. Information about the status and outcome of the investigations carried out with a view to clarifying the facts set out in the allegations.
- Crime prevention based on a closer relationship between the citizen and the service and more involvement on behalf of the citizen where information and collaboration are concerned, in this way assisting and clarifying as a priority those crimes that cause more concern or pose more risk for the population.
- Special protection of the most vulnerable people: elderly people, minors, women and families, as well as private homes.
- Prevention of risk for the citizens in general and protection of the environment.
- Protection against the organized crime threats and other serious crimes that can affect collective security (drug dealing, terrorism, illegal trafficking with humans or goods, corruption, fraud and other emerging crimes).
- Informing citizens about the security plans drawn up on national, autonomous, provincial, regional and local levels, and informing regularly about the security situation, security measures recommended to the population and reports about the results achieved.

As we can see, in the light of the considerations made by the AEVAL (Spanish Evaluation and Services Quality Agency), these commitments are closer to the services definition than to commitments themselves. There is still a lack of fixed standards upon the basis of which we can establish a firm and real commitment with citizens.

In connection with the indicators, we find the following:

- Average response time since the reception of a call.
- Average waiting time and duration of the criminal complaint paperwork.
- Variation of the year-on-year rate for known and resolved crimes.
- Number and circumstances of the visits, interviews and information regarding citizens.
- Study and evaluation of collective security threats.
- Citizens’ complaints and suggestions, and adopted measures.

According to the Royal Decree 1259/1999 only the establishment of indicators for “quality evaluation” was required. As we will see, this situation changed with the new Royal Decree 951/2005, which not only demands “quality levels or standards”, but also indicators “especially” linked to their own assessment, obliging us to design a different charter.

Nonetheless, in 2009, the Guardia Civil sent a follow-up table of the services charter in which it gave an account of the indicators’ compliance, its deviation, the causes that provoked that deviation and which were the measures to adopt in order to obtain the provision of the service under the conditions *committed* to the citizens.

4. THE NEW CONVENTIONAL SERVICE CHARTER OF THE GUARDIA CIVIL

First, the main change introduced by the Royal Decree 951/2005 was the coordinated and synergic integration of a series of basic programs for the improvement of quality, going beyond the simple consideration of the three aspects dealt with in the Royal Decree 1259/1999 (charters, organizations’ quality evaluation and awards for best practices and for quality in General Government Administration). Therefore, the Royal Decree includes the following programs:

- Analysis of the claim and evaluation of the user’s satisfaction.
- Service charters.
- Complaints and suggestions.
- Organizations’ quality evaluation.
- Exploration.
- Public services’ quality observatory.

Regarding the service charter, the main new points were:

- Necessity of having indicators linked to the commitments.
- Establishment correction measures in case of the breach of commitments, without possibility of taking on financial liability.
- Possibility of verifying or certifying the services charter.
- Introduction of measures that ensure gender equality.
- State whether management “normalized” systems are used (in terms of quality, environment or occupational risks prevention).

Be that as it may, the update of the chart, obligatory and pending since 2006, would make the incorporation of prescriptions of the new Royal Decree necessary. It was also necessary to establish commitments that responded to more measurable standards, according to the work methodology dictated by AEVAL. In addition, it was necessary to provide the commitments with their corresponding indicators, in order to be able to make a truth and credible assessment about its compliance. Another fundamental element was the possibility of permitting the citizens to petition for explanations regarding the breaches of “correction” applications of the deviations.

In this field we especially have to take into account an important entity previously mentioned: the Spanish Evaluation and Services Quality Agency (AEVAL), whose bylaw is regulated by the Royal Decree 1418/2006 of December 1st, that which substituted the General Secretariat for the Public Administration in these specific tasks.

According to RD 951/2005, the AEVAL is configured as a pre-eminent organism in the process regarding the approval of the letters. Therefore, it is responsible for:

- Establishing the methodological directives for its elaboration. The approved for use at present is the “Guide for the development of the Service Charters”, 2006 edition, revised and updated in 2010.
- Informing the Secretariat of the Ministry (Subsecretaría del Ministerio, in Spanish) mandatorily and prior to the charter approval.
- Certifying the service charters, when requested to do so.
- Following up on the compliance rate of the charters at a global level.

If we take a look at the latest follow-up table for the current charter, of 2009, we can appreciate how a series of indicators are available, the variation of which is analyzed regarding the previous year’s data, and not in respect of the standard fixed on the basis of the services that they provide and the possibility of reaching them. In this chart, the commitment is established, for example “the permanent assistance to citizens by tending to their requests 24 hours a day”, the indicator of its 8.08% deviation “number of service hours”, the cause is provided as “the increase in 3,000 agents” and as an improvement measure of the associated service, “consolidate the optimization of human resources”.

Given the regulation changes, mainly with respect to the necessity to consolidate a direct relation between the commitment and the indicator, the Guardia Civil stopped providing information for monitoring in 2010.

According to the provisions of the new Royal Decree, and especially in terms of the necessity to update the charter when circumstances so require, and in any case, each 3 year period saw the new charter started to be written from a basis of the constitution of a work team made up by directives of the organization, the analysis of the annual report content of the Personnel and Security Services Inspection of the Secretary of Homeland Security, about complaints and suggestions and the integration of “border officials”, by way of the presence of the Information and Citizen Assistance Office, in the ad hoc constituted group.

In the completed works, it could be observed how the old vice of commitments lacking concrete objectives is still around, which made them more similar to what would be the service description and which even incorporated own issues of internal management that had nothing to do with the service demanded by the citizen, that were references to savings and energetic efficiency.

In 2010, a charter draft was presented to the AEVAL, as a step towards its approval. In the AEVAL report -Service Quality Department⁶, which submits the charter’s update

6 AEVAL (2010). Insights to the updated proposal of the services charter of the Directorate General of the Guardia Civil (Interior Ministry)

proposal by the Directorate General of the Guardia Civil, the following assessments stand out:

- The need for establishing commitments, which do not clash with legal obligations.
- That the commitments are concrete and quantifiable, in other words: measurable, each of which having at least one associate indicator.
- The intentions, the willingness to correctly fulfill a service, cannot be seen as a commitment.
- No inclusion of internal management commitments.
- Percentages have to be used for the establishment of indicators.
- In short, a thorough revision of commitments and indicators had to be executed.

In order to solve the situation, following the AEVAL methodology and continuing with the established mechanism (work group, IPPS, OIAC reports) in 2011, works of the charter are resumed from where they were previously left off. The issue responds to a very simple approach: establishing commitments as well as indicators that are both objective-oriented and measurable.

The Technical Cabinet is in charge of group leadership. Thus, according to the PRE Order 422/2013 of March 15th, the Cabinet takes the reins on the economic planning process coordination and budgeting and management of the General Directorate quality.

For the methodological development of the Works, the published Guide was followed by the AEVAL in 2006. The most important milestones are:

- constitution of the work group,
- establishment of quality commitments and indicators,
- establishment of correctional measures,
- drafting of the charter, external and internal communication plans and, lastly, monitoring and updating its plan.

Further on, the most innovative aspects of the new charter focused on services, commitments and indicators are outlined. In the “general and legal information” paragraph, the services provided, as well as the procedures and the social benefits granted by the organization, will be mentioned.

When the projects commenced, we considered the possibility of focusing on the services from an informative or administrative point of view, or with a view to extending them to the services as a whole that are provided by the Institution. The chosen option was the latter, characterized by the following factors:

- **Personalized and close assistance**, thanks to having a network of 2,400 barracks and other official facilities dispersed across the nation.
- **Urgent telephone assistance, via the 062 number**, to provide help and a

prompt response in risk situations or others harmful to life, physical integrity of one's person or the legitimate possession of goods.

- **Electronic assistance**, in the search of the optimization of service providing through the use of modern technologies. It is specifically alluded to in the Electronic Services Charter.
- **Collective's assistance**, with the intention of correctly directing the citizens' concerns.
- **General Protection**, with the aim that the citizen is and feels safe, in the context of civil security as well as road, maritime, environmental, borders, ports, and airport security, both within and outside of Spain.
- **Specific protection**, in relation to those criminal actions toward which the citizens are especially sensitized because of its transcendence and seriousness, such as terrorism, organized crime, corruption, protection of the most vulnerable groups, especially victims of gender and domestic violence.
- **Report command for criminal complaints**, equally for those in office and for the citizen, for those cases in which we acquire the condition of plaintiff, victim or injured as a result of the suffering caused by the criminal or imprudent action.
- **Report of administrative records**, also in cases in which the citizen has the condition of applicant.
- **Granting of accreditations, recognitions, authorizations and licenses conferral** in terms of weapons, explosives, pyrotechnic articles and bullets and private security, within the Guardia Civil competences.
- **Receipt of inquiries, complaints, suggestions and congratulations.**
- **General information** about the competences missions and functions of the Guardia Civil.
- **Specific information** about the admission and training of the Guardia Civil, aimed for those citizens that have the intention of joining the Institution.
- **Dissemination of the security and knowledge culture** through traditional means, such as museums, historic documentation collections or its libraries and publications, or through informative or educational conferences in which citizen participation is possible or, lastly, through its Internet website and social networks presences.

In the work group it was confirmed that which cannot be measured cannot be managed either, and that it is difficult to improve if we do not work with objective parameters which allow us to know the level of quality of the service offered to the citizen, which is where there is room for possible deviations regarding those standards needed in order to finally adopt the necessary measures that allow to correct those deviations in such a way that what we offer the citizen is the closest thing manageable to his/her expectations.

On that premise and focused on the key factor in terms of quality– those that the group thought in theory would provide a greater satisfaction level-, two types of commitments were established: some of high level generalist character, wherein a relationship is

established between the citizens and its interest groups, with the purpose of reaching security levels as high as possible, and others are addressed directly to the services users who receive the benefits that the Guardia Civil offers.

In this regard, the commitments the work group agreed to take under its wing of were:

1. With the citizens as a whole and their interest group (general interest associations, political parties, syndicates, parliamentary groups, etc.):

- **Maintain** our territorial deployment as the highest expression of the proximity to the citizen. In particular, the commitment reaches the maintenance of 215 official facilities that have a citizen care area opened 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In www.guardiacivil.es/es/institucional/directorio a file in .csv format is available and downloadable with all the 24 hours a day, 7 days a week open facilities listed.

- **Maintain** an average of 20 daily meetings with social collectives or institutions about security matters,
- **Strengthen** the preventive service as a main tool for citizens' protection, carrying out more than 4,000 patrol services.
- **Improve** preventive services in terms of road safety, therefore contributing to a better protection of all road users and carrying out more than 5,000,000 breathalyzer tests for alcohol levels and drug tests per year.
- **Maintain** the number of humanitarian services as one of the main expressions of the distinguished character of the Guardia Civil, assisting the citizen when s/he so requires, with an annual average of 145,000 aids and rescues.
- **Maintain** the number of 276 Specialized Attention Points that the Guardia Civil establishes in order to deal with the cases which affect the most vulnerable collectives, such as the criminal offences that take place in a family setting, gender violence, youth criminality, human trafficking aimed at sexual exploitation and child pornography on the Internet.

In www.guardiacivil.es/es/institucional/directorio you can find a downloadable file in .csv format with the locations of the Specialized Attention Points.

- **Maintain** the 92,000 annual services that are provided in the educational centers and leisure areas frequented by young people in order to prevent drug selling and its public consumption.
- **Take** a minimum of 8,000 annual informative measures with respect to security aimed at citizens.

2. With the service user:

- **Answer the** complaints, suggestions and congratulations received in a maximum period of 18 working days since its arrival at the concerned Unit.
- **A written answer** in less than 5 working days, about the requirements that were suggested via Information and Assistance to the Citizen about the competences, missions and functions of the Guardia Civil. If the enquiry refers to its participation in the selective process or about the training to enter the Guardia Civil and

was made by telephone, it will be answered there and then.

- **Conduct** a minimum of 2 interviews with and **Make 2** visits to the gender violence victims during the investigations and proceedings that are underway to guarantee their safety.

For the appropriate quality level monitoring of the services that the Guardia Civil provides to the citizen, the UNE Norm 66175 of October 2003 entitled *Guide for the indicators systems implementation* was taken into account so that we would use indicators which were easy to establish, maintain, use and which provided real time information. We also took into account the reliability of the information gathering process and its use, as well as the value they added. As we will see later, commitments and their indicators were rejected because of the cost that the obtaining of the information implied. Therefore, we tried to coordinate them, as far as possible, with those that were already available in the Strategic Management System.

Ultimately, the following **indicators** were adopted:

1. Those linked to commitments to citizens and their interest groups:

- **Number** of official facilities that have a citizen attention area open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Daily average** of the meetings held with social collectives or institutions on security matters.
- **Daily average** of the patrol services carried out to protect citizens.
- **Annual Number** of breathalyzer tests for alcohol blood-levels and drugs levels carried out under road safety duties.
- **Annual Number** of aid and rescues in situations of emergency or need.
- **Number** of existing Special Attention Points to meet the needs of the most vulnerable collectives.
- **Annual Number** of surveillance services in schools and leisure areas frequented by young people in order to prevent drug dealing and its consumption in public.
- **Annual Number** of annual informative actions covering the subject matter of security regarding the citizens.

2. Those linked to the commitments to the person who receives the services:

- **Percentage** of complaints, suggestions and congratulations answered in a maximum period of 18 working days.
- **Percentage** of written answers by the Information and Attention to the Citizen Office in a period of less than 5 working days.
- **Average** of the interviews with and visits to gender violence victims during the open investigations and proceedings carried out to guarantee their security.

Regarding the commitments and indicators' monitoring, and given the importance of providing results to citizens which allows them to control the performance of the

Guardia Civil, a formal commitment was adopted by which in February of each year, the result attained in the most recent financial year end, as well as details of previous years would be made available on the Internet webpage within the charter (2015-2018) (www.guardiacivil.es).

We also want to highlight that during the new service charter creation process we took into account a non mandatory preliminary report from the AEVAL, dated October 2014, entitled the *Adaptation of the draft of the services charter to the Guide for the development of the service charters*, which suggests the need for instituting two types of commitments: one addressing the citizens and another addressing the users, a solution that has been incorporated into previous dealings.

The AEVAL has discussed the difficulty of incorporating concrete commitments of a generalist nature that link the Guardia Civil with the citizens and the interest groups, and gave this solution to be able to continue with the creation and publication of the charter. This is, without a doubt, a relevant fact if we take into account the peculiarity of the services that the Guardia Civil provides, so varying, as some are administrative, some are of criminal nature, some are merely informative and others are linked to the culture of security. All of them demonstrate a great difficulty when it comes to defining the relationship with the user and the commitments in this regard.

In respect of the commitments of the users, in the context of a willingness toward continuous improvement, we are conscious that we will have to make progress in relation to two important parameters; response time of the *emergency services and waiting time in the official facilities in order to be seen to for the purpose of the processing paperwork*.

Regarding these indicators, the work group has been analyzing them thoroughly. With regard to response times, the first thing that would have to be defined is what is understood by emergency (for example, one definition could be those cases worthy of special mention in which a third party causes the death of another person or makes a serious threat to his/her life or his/her physical integrity or to the possession of his/her goods). From there, we would proceed to divide the response time into four sections that have to be known in order to make a time estimate vis-à-vis the threat and establish the level of commitment:

- Time since the user calls until the operator answers.
- Time since the operator answers until communication is established for action to be taken.
- Time since communication established until the agent arrives at the scene of the incident.
- Time since the agent arrives at the scene until the incidence is resolved.

Given the waiting time in police stations is very heterogeneous, the possibility of including a commitment to “average waiting time in attending to a citizen when making a complaint in those stations that have a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week open attention to citizen area” was explored. The work group understood that it would be a very accurate time, linked to the service that concerns citizens the most in this field, for instance, the act of making criminal or administrative complaints has greater value in themselves

than does the introduction of a set waiting-period time in police stations during the processing of paperwork for said complaint.

In the current chart, the two aforementioned commitments are not included, not because we do not know if they are required by the user (everyone cares about how much time they are going to be waiting to have their needs met) nor because we are unaware that they are two important parameters for the quality of service, but because of the fact of the need for being accountable in the fulfillment of what has been promised and truthful in the posterior publication of the results. This is to say that *we cannot promise that what cannot be measured*.

Nowadays, there are Guardia Civil Units that measure these parameters but they do not do it to the extent of with parameterization, technicality and controls; which is what these measurements are due, in other words it constitutes that which is considered necessary. Therefore, we will have to wait a little bit more until we can have access to those interesting data from the point of view of the police service management. We hope that in a future update of the charter we will be able to provide these two new commitments with standards that please the users.

By Resolution of January 16th 2015 of the Undersecretariat of the Ministry of the Interior (Subsecretaría del Ministerio del Interior, in Spanish), the update of the Services Charter of the Guardia Civil was approved, for the period 2015-2018, being published in the *Boletín Oficial del Estado* number. 24, dated on 28 January 2015. (BOE-A-2015-7213).

5. SITUATION OF SERVICE CHARTERS OF POLICE NATURE IN SPAIN

On the Internet, a tool that is revolutionizing the knowledge management in society and in organizations because of the availability of a great volume of interesting information, we can find an endless amount of Service Charters from local and autonomous police. In particular, for the preparation of this article we have located a number of 17 service charters that have been published by the police forces of the autonomous communities of Spain, as well as by the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra (Barcelona) and by the Navarra Foral Police, and by the city councils such as Madrid, Alicante, Guadalajara, Segovia or Soria. Further on, we will discuss the commitments and indicators that are gathered in them and that, at some point, could be interesting in this field of consistent attending action that ought be the topic of quality undertaken in police services.

One of the commitments in which these corps get involved most often is that of response time before an emergency requirement, in some cases modulated by turning to an interventions percentage (in the x % of the cases) and in some others being limited to those in which the life or the physical integrity of the people or the legitimate possession of the goods are in danger (really urgent cases); in others, we include a second response segment, in non serious cases, the period being increased to 20 minutes. Sometimes, the times are limited owing to the fact that action is taking place either within or outside of the city. In some cases, the response varies according to the demand that materializes during the day or in nighttime.

“Immediate intervention in emergencies in 5 minutes maximum in at least 90% of the interventions”.

Local Police of Guadalajara.

“Answering the calls by urgent service, at any point in the municipal area, outside of the city, with arrival at the scene in a maximum of 12 minutes (understanding as such all those cases in which the integrity of the people is in danger)”.

Local Police of Castellón.

It also has been verified that the commitment to assist the citizen in the police stations is in a period that ranges between 3 and 7 minutes.

“Attention and information to the citizen commitment in a maximum waiting time of three minutes in all our units.”

Local Police of Alcobendas⁷.

“Assisting the citizen in the Local Police’s facilities in a maximum time of 7 minutes”.

Local Police of Soria.

In the sphere of telephonic urgent attention, the response time for phone calls has been used, with periods of maximum waiting time at 10 seconds, in 80% of the cases or a minimum satisfaction index. Maximum times of resources activation have also been established (90 seconds) since the moment of reception of the urgent call in the Control Centre.

“Answer the phone calls with a maximum delay of 10 seconds in the 80 % of the cases”.

Local Police of Leganés.

In the field of personal attention, an interesting element that had also been used in the satisfaction surveys, establishing an index based on a percentage to measure the perception level of the citizens towards the attention provided by the police body. Nevertheless, the appeal to the number of complaints received because of the personal treatment is still being produced.

“Conscientious attention and treatment in all the performances that affect citizens with an 85% satisfaction index with special support to the victims who require help, assessment about the processes to follow and information about the available municipal services”.

Local Police of Valladolid.

Because of their facility in attainment as an indicator, there is a very broad resource to measure the prevention and the security according to the annual number of patrol hours that are provided, that some police even multi-zoned (proximity, schools, industrial estates,...). In this field, they also use the number of controls carried out.

“We prevent and improve security by way of a 100,000 patrol hours’ commitment quarterly”.

Local Police of Alicante.

Special treatment dedicated in some cases to the most vulnerable groups, such as: minors, female victims of gender violence and elderly people, establishing in some cases, response commitments of one hour, according to the minors who are in danger of abandonment.

7 This commitment disappears in the update of its new Charter. Specifically, it focuses on an immediate attention by means of emergency telephones and on the public roads, present in the areas with largest passage of people for the attention to victims. Waiting times in the official facilities have not been mentioned.

“Assist, communicate and manage the return of the abandoned minors to the parents, tutors or legal representatives or to the pertinent Institutions as fast as possible and in all cases, in an hour at most”.

Policía de la Generalitat-Mossos d’Esquadra.

Regarding the answering periods to suggestions, congratulations and complaints, they surpass widely those of the State General Management, which takes up to 30 days in some cases.

In terms of criminal complaints, on some occasions we have turned to the establishment of a first contact with the citizen in a maximum period of 72 hours to inform him/her about his application and even the submission of a judicial inquiry in a period of 15 days since his/her request.

“Get in touch with the complainant citizen in a maximum period of 72 hours, since the lodging of the complaint providing information about his/her application”.

Foral Police of Navarra.

It can be seen how efforts are included in some informative or training performances for the benefit of the community (on education and road safety, in schools, old folks homes). In addition, regular contact with interest groups appears to keep them informed on security matters.

“Making at least 150 performances for the promotion of road education to groups in particular”.

Local Police of Melilla.

In terms of Traffic control and Road Safety, there is an important role carried out in obtaining the number of preventive alcohol tests, in some cases even measured in terms of percentage of controls to the population of a municipal area. In others, the concept of maximum response time is transferred to this field. And the number of road safety campaigns carried out during the year is also included in this paragraph.

“Carry out preventive alcohol tests, in order to test at least 4% of the registered population in the City of Madrid”.

Local Police of Madrid.

Some police members presented their concerns about the need for communicating with this organism on some matters which are not from its competence in a maximum period of 24-72 hours, depending on the urgency, regarding imperfections in the traffic routes, presence of dead animals, etc.

In view of these charters, the sensation we get is that there is a willingness to provide a quality service to citizens but that a verified monitoring of the indicators does not seem to be made, or are at least not available on the internet, a means that nowadays facilitates that the citizen’s knowledge on the level of compliance reached according to the commitment made by the Administration authorities.

It also can be observed that the organisms are not committed in some charters. Therefore, they do not incorporate quality standards in the commitments that can be measured afterwards against the corresponding indicators. Another defect that can be recognized is that some commitments are more characteristic of internal management record charts. Therefore, the number of training hours, that has direct implications for the quality of assistance provided to the citizen, has nothing

to offer when it comes to the measurement of the quality of service that the citizen ultimately receives.

In brief, a good measure to implement might be establishing quality departments in the autonomous communities or from the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, which could help police corps to define their charters – establishing model charters, although they already have guides⁸ – and help the follow-up assessment, as well as its dissemination and accreditation. It is a matter which could be debated but which, without doubt, would greatly contribute to advance the quality of services that are provided to the citizen from the police sphere.

6. THE SERVICE CHARTERS IN OUR SURROUNDING COUNTRIES

We should remember that the service charters emerged in the Anglo-Saxon world. That is why we find charters that respond to that old philosophy of accepting accountability towards the citizen for the public management that John Major mentioned in 1991, in his appearance before the British Parliament. This cornerstone is evident in the police area, given that the report presented by the British State Secretary of the Interior before the Parliament in June 1933, about the police reform in England and Wales, then raised the introduction of a quality of service concept and of a chart to increase the standards of the police service and increase the citizens' trust.

The Metropolitan Police of London has a charter that was approved in July of 2007. Entitled *Quality of Service Commitment* gathers and in its cover the motto: *the minimum standards of service you should expect whenever you contact us*.

As regards the most important commitments are: being present in emergency situations in a maximum period of 12 minutes, in accordance with what we have seen in the national charters, the commitment to answer the calls to the emergency service's number in a period of 10 seconds in 90% of cases and the rest of calls in 60 seconds and, lastly, the prospect of answering the questions about the police in a maximum period of 10 work days, independently of the communication medium chosen by the citizen. The rest of commitments do not include standards that allow measurement and control, rendering them more akin to what would be a declaration or letter of intent.

If we go to the Royal Canadian Mountain Police-Gendarmerie Royale du Canada, analogous to the Guardia Civil because of their military status, they do not have a similar document, rather they have opted for a description of the provided services and the results reached in the framework of its annual management report – in fact, the Guardia Civil adopted the strategic management model for its own management –.

Returning again to the police corps, this in a European setting, it has to be noted that the French Gendarmerie, according to Law 2002- 1094 of August 29, 2002 of Orientation and programming for the interior security (LOPSI), was equipped with a Quality Charter that they commonly used as did the National Police. Updated in 2007, this charter established the modes of reception of the public, especially hospitality, information, assistance and advice to the victims of criminal offences, for whom we have

8 FEMP. Elaboration and management of a services charter in the local Administration. Edition: January 2011.

to provide a homogeneous response at a National Police level: prompt, adapted to the situation and coherent. Therefore, this charter entitled *Accueil du Public – Assistance aux victimes (Reception of the public- Assistance to victims)*, is essentially addressed to the victims, as the center of their concerns and of its functioning. The charter is composed of 8 articles that gather the willingness to act correctly and professionally in regard of the victims. Nevertheless, it does not consider any security standard that could accord it the status of an authentic Services Charter.

Currently, apart from the previous mentioned, the French *Gendarmerie* has the new Services Charter entitled *La gendarmerie s'engage pour vous (The Gendarmerie is committed to you)*. This one does fulfill the standardization parameters which are required for a charter of this nature and it is even certified by the General Secretariat for the Modernization of the Public Action of the French Republic.

Among the main standards that this Charter gathers we find the following:

- Answering the citizens' letters in a maximum period of 3 weeks. In the case of a complex requirement that makes it impossible, an interim response of waiting notification is sent out during the delay period.
- Answering the e-mails in a maximum period of 7 days. In the case of a complex requirement that makes it impossible, an interim response of waiting notification is sent out during the delay period.
- Answering the calls in a maximum period of 20 seconds.
- Answering any complaint or suggestions related to the commitments in a maximum period of 3 weeks.

Regarding the results, both the General Inspection (equivalent to the Directory General) and the Regions (equivalent to our Zones) carry out a control regarding the victims, in terms of the quality of their reception and the monitoring of his/her dossier (investigation). The results are communicated and managed at a Regions-of-the-Gendarmerie level.

As for the Italian *Cuerpo de Carabinieri*, they do not have a document itself; at most, declarations of intent can be found, but not commitments in the sense described.

And the same happens at a continental level if we call in the Criminal Investigation Federal Office (BKA) or to the German Federal Police (BPOL); neither of which has a services charter in the sense outlined.

7. THE ELECTRONIC SERVICES CHARTER OF THE GUARDIA CIVIL

Finally, we have to analyze where the electronic services charter of the Guardia Civil stands, approved on July 25th 2012 and updated this past June 9th 2015, a charter through which we inform the citizens that we have electronic media via which we provide other types of services complementary to those of personal nature.

The services are distributed in 4 big blocks: Website, Information and Citizen Attention Office, Electronic Headquarter and Social Networks; this last is a priority in the update.

The services through the website consist of providing information of general interest to citizens about how to get to the Guardia Civil, emergency telephone information, ways to contact, what to do in case of gender violence or child abuse, complaints and suggestions, enquiries, forms to start administrative procedures, advice about security, bulletin board, press releases, civil collaboration, etc. A high valued service is included consisting of the possibility to advance the information for the report (prereport) regarding the minor offences types (theft in vehicles and of vehicules, harms, robberies...) or the loss or recuperation of documents or goods. Notwithstanding, nowadays, the posterior ratification of the complaint in a Post of the Guardia Civil is required.

The electronic complaint, or pre-report, is currently one of the ways toward developing the e-Police, which is in vogue at the moment. We try to encourage the use of new technologies in order to close the gap between administration and the citizen and facilitate by way of the complaint the obtainment of his collaboration with the police forces when faced with a committed crime or the suspicion that one could be being committed, among other activities. Thus the importance of having this type of charter that expresses the commitment to the user in order to maintain the electronic lines of communication opened 24/7, favoring intervention without the need to be present in a police station.

It should be brought to attention that the Guardia Civil has an Information and Attention to the Citizen Office, which mainly bases its activities in attention to the citizen via telephone and e-mail, answering as many enquiries and requests that are posed in relation with the services provided by the Guardia Civil. It also allows the personal formulation of complaints and suggestions and manages those that are received by email.

Regarding the website, it bases its activities mainly in the electronic register service through which and by way of the digital certification system, it makes way for as many procedures as the Guardia Civil has, as well as the filing of complaints and suggestions. In the case of complaints, they have to be carried out through the webpage of the Ministry of the Interior, which is responsible for them.

The commitments that have been acquired are related to communicating the maintenance incidents to citizens that cause the lack of malfunctioning of the website – with a minimum period of 24 hours advance warning –, to solve the errors, of content which have been detected and communicated by the users, in a period of 2 working days as to answer the complaints and suggestions that are received electronically in a period of 18 working days – since its entrance in the concerned Unit – and to post on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube a minimum of 5 Posts and 5 daily tweets and 3 weekly videos, respectively, containing relevant information. All these commitments have their correlated measurement indicators.

In the case of unfulfillment, the request for correction measures is permitted. The General Director himself will inform the claimant in writing about the causes of the unfulfillment and the adopted measures to correct the failures. Under no circumstance will give financial responsibility be brought about.

8. CONCLUSIONS

We live in a world that is constantly changing and which creates the need for adapting organizations to new climates. That adaptation not only has to respond to improvements in technology, the rise of new threats, the emergence of new procedures in

terms of criminal investigation, but also has to focus on what has been our *raison d'être*: to guarantee the security of the citizens.

In the framework of continuous improvement and in within democratic societies, the citizens take center stage as they desire participation in public management. Each four years they are called to the elections that are held at different territorial levels (State, Autonomous Community and Municipal areas) and they decide who will be their governors, in other words, the heads of the institutions. The matter does not end there. With the tool of the Services Charter they are provided with the possibility of continuing to participate in that management and consequently they become aware of which are the commitments of the Administration, how they are going to be measured and which are the channels that they have available to them to demand responsibility from the public managers.

We have seen how this phenomenon of the Services Charters emerged in the Anglosaxon world, circa 1992, and how it has spread since then to the whole world and more specifically to Spain where we have approximately 1,300. The Guardia Civil joined this process voluntarily by approving its first charter in 2003.

As a consequence of the continuous change and of the new regulation on the subject, the Guardia Civil has renewed its commitment with the update of its Services Charter, in January 2015, and of its Electronic Services Charter, in June of the same year, obliging itself to be rigorous in its monitoring and fulfillment. Nevertheless, it can be confirmed at this stage that it will not be its last charter. When it is possible, when the economic resources and technology allow it to be so, the Instituto will increase its level of exertion and commitment to its citizens, adding more commitments to the current ones relating to response times that so much concern the users across the board.

Taking into account the vocation of the service to citizens, with the new Services Charter we hope to make our contribution to continue fulfilling our Mission, which means "guaranteeing public security and assisting the citizens, in an excellent and direct fashion, in this way contributing to the welfare of society".

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