



Department of Food and Civil Supplies

At a Glance

Functions

The Department of Food and Civil Supplies manages the Public Distribution System (PDS) in Delhi with a view to maintain the supplies of essential commodities and ensure their equitable distribution and availability at fair prices by enforcing the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

Findings

- ❶ As on 31 March 2002, the total number of food cards issued by the Department was 37,55,694.
- ❷ The total number of fair price shops was 3,172 as on 31 March 2002.
- ❸ Overall, the Food and Civil Supplies Department was allocated Rs 9 crore during the Ninth Five Year Plan period (1997-2002), and it spent Rs 11.05 crore.
- ❹ The Directorate of Consumer Affairs was allocated Rs 500 lac and it spent Rs 541 lac.
- ❺ At present one State Commission and nine District Fora (consumer courts) are functional in Delhi.

Reforms

- ❶ The huge losses incurred by the PDS in delivering subsidised grains to the poor could be minimised with a targeted 'food voucher' system, with the current holders of below poverty line (BPL) food cards being given vouchers worth the subsidy amount. This part of the Department will merge with the proposed Individual and Family Welfare Services.
- ❷ The licensing role of the Department under the Essential Commodities Act should be discontinued. The rest of the Department will merge with the proposed Consumer Protection Department.