

Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group – Tax Time 2021

Key messages 28 September 2021

The weekly Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time meeting was held on 28 September 2021.

Key messages from the discussion are listed below to assist members to communicate key messages to colleagues, clients and association members.

Attendance

Role changes for the meeting are noted below:

- Kath Anderson– Acting Deputy Commissioner, ATO Individuals and Intermediaries (IAI)
- Tina Ford – Acting Assistant Commissioner, ATO IAI Engagement and Support

Additional guests for the meeting are noted below:

- Filiz Ketenci – Service NSW
- Monica Das – Treasury NSW
- Natalie Thomson – Treasury NSW

Lodgment performance data

Further to discussion at the meeting on 7 September 2021, additional Taxable Payments Reporting System (TPRS) lodgment data was shared with members to provide insight into practitioner lodgment.

- Taxable Payments Annual Report (TPAR) lodgments for 2021 are slightly below volumes received at the same point in time in 2020.
- As at 7 September 2021, we have received TPAR 108,000 lodgments (matched to 594,000 payees) compared to 112,000 lodgments as at 7 September 2020 (matched to 599,000 payees).
- As at 28 September 2021 there are between approximately 80,000 TPARs that are not lodged. This figure includes a number of projected 'nil lodgments'.

Service delivery

Performance across Service delivery is tracking well overall. Some key statistics are noted below:

- 7.6m income tax return lodgments have been received.
- 6.2m refunds worth \$17b have issued.
- 2.93m calls have been received.

The tax agent phone deferral service has taken approximately 320 calls to date.

ATO systems

The ATO advised that the system release over the weekend of 25-26 September 2021 was successful and acknowledged the assistance of tax practitioners who participated in the business deployment verification (BDV) process.

Performance across all ATO channels continues to be stable. The myGovID application experienced a minor outage on the morning of Monday 28 September 2021, which was quickly remediated.

Members acknowledged the efforts and for minimising the downtime and impact for agents.

Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group – Tax Time 2021

Key messages 28 September 2021

A member identified an opportunity to further promote the use of the [Online services for agents dashboard](#). The ATO will look to include some information in an upcoming edition of the *Tax professionals newsletter*.

Communications

myGovID

Communications focussing on the changes associated with the update, including examples of the new screens, issued to members on 15 September 2021. An update will also issue to tax professionals in this week's newsletter.

Members acknowledged and appreciated the communications, however re-emphasised that receiving the information earlier would have been beneficial. The ATO has acknowledged this request and have adjusted the approach to reflect this is future application upgrade communications.

Tax treatment of government grants and payments

Updated web content and a *Quick Support Guide* is anticipated to be available on ato.gov later this week. Members will be advised by email when the content is live.

Small business

The transfer of the APRA member verification service to Online Services for Business (OSfB) over the weekend was successful. The next phase of the project will be the removal of the electronic superannuation audit tool eSAT in March 2022.

Debt and lodgment

There are no changes to the previously discussed position with regards to firmer action campaigns. The ATO will continue to monitor and adjust accordingly for COVID-19 lock down impacted areas.

- A member reported that some agents in NSW and Victoria have received debt and lodgment related correspondence.

The ATO advised that correspondence campaigns have been adjusted to reflect the advised administrative approach. The ATO advised that correspondence will still issue depending on the profile and risks associated with the taxpayer, emphasising that the aim is to encourage the taxpayer/ agent to engage and seek the support required.

- A member reported agents receiving requests for lodgment of prior year returns. The member will provide further information offline for investigation.

NSW government stimulus update

A confidential discussion and update on NSW government stimulus processing and guidance material was held with Service NSW.

Member discussion

- A member reported the receipt of PAYG-I activity statement lodgment reminder emails that had no client name.

The ATO acknowledged this issue and apologised for any inconvenience. An error in the template used to generate the correspondence was only detected post-issue, however the remedy is to be deployed in early October. This will result in the inclusion of the client name in the email reminder, improving the ability to identify who the reminder relates to.

Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group – Tax Time 2021

Key messages 28 September 2021

- A member reported that TPARs income pre-filling had matched income to a client incorrectly. The member advised that they would use the Tax Practitioner Assistance (formerly Complex Issues Resolution) service to resolve the issue, however wanted the ATO to be aware that this process is time consuming for clients and agents alike.

The ATO acknowledged the issue, apologised for any inconvenience and advised that it will investigate further to ensure the issue is not systemic.

- A member highlighted the approaching activity statement lodgment due date and queried the ATO's position on blanket deferrals to assist agents.

The ATO affirmed that it would not be adopting a blanket deferral position and encouraged people to engage and submit deferral applications now.

- A member raised an out of session query regarding the impact of deferred lodgments on Centrelink family assistance payments.

The ATO advised that it has had an extensive engagement and communications campaign focussing on this issue throughout 2021, ranging from cross-agency collaboration and design, changes to scripting and published content and targeted communications in [newsletters](#).

The ATO will consider further opportunities to highlight this information via the ATO Individuals Stewardship Group.

Useful resources and links

- Published [TPSG Tax time key messages](#)
- [COVID-19 landing page](#)
- [Occupation and industry guides](#)
- [Tax time 2021 toolkit](#)
- [Records you need to keep](#) guide.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2021 meeting will be held on Tuesday 19 October 2021.