



Committee to examine whether Treasury should improve reporting on tax concessions

The Audit Office, Treasury and the Tax Office will appear together tomorrow at a public hearing into the Tax Expenditures Statement. The Statement attempts to measure the billions of dollars of concessions in the tax law and its goal is to increase the transparency and scrutiny of tax exemptions.

The Audit Office released audit reports into the Statement in 2008 and 2013. The 2013 audit found that some of the recommendations from the first audit had not been fully implemented or had been discontinued. The topics covered were: better integrating tax expenditures in the Budget process; regular reviews of tax expenditures; and improving the quality of the estimates.

Bert van Manen MP, Chair of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue, said the Audit Office does important work for the Parliament and Australia.

“The Audit Office has noted that recommendations on tax expenditures in the 1970s to 1990s were often not implemented. The same has occurred to the Audit Office recommendations of 2008. The Committee believes these issues are worth examining again.”

In its submission, the Audit Office has proposed the following priorities for Treasury:

- establishing a program of prioritised reviews to inform improvements in tax expenditure measures and to indicate whether tax expenditures are meeting their policy aims
- putting back in aggregate, trend and comparative reporting of tax expenditures to improve the visibility of their size and importance.

In its submission, Treasury has stated that, following further consideration, it believes the audit recommendations are no longer relevant or appropriate. Its concern is that the estimates are often misunderstood and their limitations are not taken into account.

Public hearing

Date: Wednesday, 9 September 2015

Time: 4.10 – 5.10 pm

Location: Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra

The committee is still accepting submissions to the inquiry, which can be lodged through the Committee's [website](#).

For media comment: please contact Jessica Reid on 0437 731 858.

For information about the inquiry: please contact the committee secretariat by telephone (02) 6277 4821, e-mail taxrev.reps@aph.gov.au, or visit the committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/taxrev>.