



Inquiry into tax disputes launched

The House Tax Committee today launched its inquiry into tax disputes.

The inquiry will cover all categories of taxpayers and include:

- fair treatment and respect of taxpayers
- how the ATO uses performance information in managing tax disputes
- whether the legal framework could be updated to encourage earlier dialogue between taxpayers and the ATO, such as through alternative dispute resolution and real time compliance strategies
- whether a separate agency should manage ATO litigation, whether the ATO should have a separate appeals area, or if current arrangements should continue
- comparisons with revenue agencies overseas.

As part of the inquiry, the Committee has requested the Inspector-General of Taxation to conduct a formal review into tax disputes in relation to large businesses and high wealth individuals. The Committee will concentrate on small business and individuals generally. The Inspector-General has not previously conducted an inquiry at the request of a parliamentary committee.

Committee chair John Alexander said, "Through the Committee's work to date, the ATO has made clear their efforts to promote taxpayer confidence and trust in the system. This inquiry will assist the Committee to ensure these goals, particularly with regards to mechanisms for dispute resolution."

"We are pleased to ask the Inspector-General of Taxation to conduct a formal review as part of our inquiry. The Inspector-General has a good track record and we look forward to benefitting from his expertise."

Although the Committee will receive evidence of individuals' experience with the tax system, it will not act on behalf of individual taxpayers in the inquiry. Full details are available on the Committee's website. Submissions are due Friday, 4 July 2014.

For media comment: please contact Committee Chair, Mr John Alexander OAM MP, on (02) 6277 4804.

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