



**Australian Government**  
**Inspector-General of Taxation**

**SENATE ECONOMICS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

Public Hearing – 30 May 2017  
Opening Statement

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee. The parliamentary scrutineering framework is vital to the integrity of governmental services and processes. Committees of this nature and independent scrutineering agencies, such as the Inspector-General of Taxation (IGT), are integral to that framework. They provide the community confidence and assurance that the service agencies and their processes are transparent and open to improvements.

Improvement of tax administration is at the heart of the IGT's function. My team seeks to foster trust and confidence in the tax system by championing effective engagement with taxpayers and tax professionals, enhancing voluntary participation and providing assurance over the integrity and fairness of Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and Tax Practitioners Board (TPB) administrative actions. We seek to achieve this primarily through investigating complaints regarding the ATO and TPB and by conducting reviews into broader tax administration issues.

Our complaints investigation service provides free and independent support to address concerns of taxpayers and tax practitioners. We have received over 2,000 complaints year-to-date with a similar number being resolved in the same period. Complainant feedback has been very positive. The initial findings of a survey, conducted this financial year, indicate the satisfaction rating is approximately 80 per cent — this figure includes those who may not have achieved their preferred outcome.

Our broader reviews are independent and publicly reported. My review into the ATO's employer obligation audits was released recently and focused on easing the compliance burden particularly on small businesses whilst ensuring obligations to employees are met. My review into Taxpayers' Charter and Protections, which had been released earlier, sought to promote fairness and taxpayer rights through a number of recommendations including that the Taxpayers' Charter should be at the forefront of the ATO's interactions with the community and its performance against Charter principles be measured and publicly reported.

We have also announced and commenced three new reviews, two of which are being conducted largely due to complaints we have received. They focus on aspects of the Pay As You Go instalment system and Goods and Services Tax refund integrity. The other review examines the future of the tax profession, which is being undertaken at the request of the Commissioner of Taxation and in response to tax practitioner concerns.

Significantly, our team is a collegiate group of dedicated and specialist tax professionals, who also topped a recent Australian Public Service Commission survey in fostering an innovation culture.

In closing, I would like to welcome any questions you may have.

Ali Noroozi  
Inspector-General of Taxation