



Edition 04 | April 2018



Greetings from the IGT

Welcome to 2018! This year marks my tenth year in office and while it is very tempting to look back upon the achievements of the office during that period, I try not to look back because it can detract from the future. Instead, I'll list some of the key achievements so far this year and what is in store for us as the year progresses.

In January, we publicly released the PAYGI report, our first targeted review based on intelligence obtained through the complaints handling service. I also delivered a keynote presentation to the 30th Annual Conference of the Australasian Tax Teachers Association.

In February, we lodged key submissions to Treasury's consultation on the Government's Tax Debt Transparency initiative and the Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue into areas of potential inquiry.

In March, the review into the ATO's approach to GST Refunds was completed and delivered to the Minister for Revenue and Financial Services as the report contains a recommendation to Government. The Minister is required to release the report within 25 Parliamentary sitting days.

In April, I will be delivering a plenary session at the University of New South Wales' Biannual Tax Administration Conference, the theme of which is 'Tax System Integrity in the Digital Age'.

In May, I will be participating in the 3rd annual International Taxpayer Rights Conference to speak on the issue of early warning and intervention systems in the tax system.

And as we round up to June, all hands will be on deck to prepare for Tax Time 2018 as well as to complete two remaining reviews with the development of a new work program commencing in the next financial year.

I look forward to the great year ahead and to working with all of our stakeholders in delivering improvements to the administration of the tax system.

Ali Noroozi
IGT



Reviews update

The [PAYGI review](#) was publicly released on 23 January 2018. The review made seven recommendations which were composed of 22 parts. It is pleasing that the ATO has agreed with the vast majority of the recommendations (21 of 22 parts).

Our [GST Refunds](#) review has been finalised and delivered to the Minister for Revenue and Financial Services on 16 March 2018 as it contains a recommendation to Government. The Minister is required to release the report within 25 Parliamentary sitting days.

All hands are currently on deck to complete the remaining two reviews.

The [ATO's Fraud Control Management](#) review is progressing well and a preliminary draft report has been provided the ATO for its initial comments. This will be followed by a series of other meetings to discuss the report, findings and potential recommendations. We are on track to complete it by 30 June 2018.

Last but not least, the review into the [Future of the Tax Profession](#) is also well-progressed and we anticipate delivering a preliminary draft to the ATO over the next few weeks. In addition to seeking comments from the ATO and the TPB, we will of course be engaging with practitioners and other professionals working in tax prior to the report's release.



Complaints handling service

Over the Christmas and New Year break there was a small dip in complaints numbers although they appear to have picked up in March. We maintain our record of approximately 80 per cent overall satisfaction from clients who responded to our most recent survey. Furthermore, 60 per cent indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome and 82 per cent said they would use our service again.



Although the feedback continues to be very positive, a number of those who have responded to our survey have stated that many are still unaware of the services that we offer. As a specialised office with national responsibility, we are mindful to ensure that all Australians, including those who are regionally-based, are aware and able to engage with us. We will be examining ways in which we can better reach out to the community.

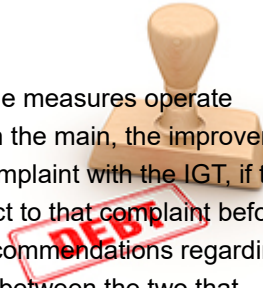
Transparency of Business Tax Debts

The IGT lodged a detailed submission to Treasury in relation to the Transparency of Business Tax Debt measures. The measures seek to empower the ATO to disclose certain business tax debts to credit reporting bureaus (CRBs) if the

taxpayer did not effectively engage with the ATO to address those debts.

Our submission sought to recommend improvements which ensure the measures operate efficiently and equitably for all parties and fulfil the legislative intent. In the main, the improvements require the ATO to inform affected taxpayers that they can lodge a complaint with the IGT, if they have not already done so, and consider the IGT's findings with respect to that complaint before disclosing information about any tax debt to CRBs. There are also recommendations regarding how the ATO notifies affected taxpayers and the type of engagement between the two that precludes the ATO from making any disclosure.

The full submission is available on the IGT [website](#).



Parliamentary review of the ATO's 2017 Annual Report

We lodged a submission to assist the Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue with its Inquiry into the ATO's 2017 *Annual Report*. The IGT drew on findings of his completed reviews and complaints data in examining the Annual Report in this submission which seeks to identify areas that may benefit from further exploration, namely:



- tax debt collection and reporting;
- lodgment compliance;
- dispute resolution; and
- services and support for tax practitioners.

The full submission is available on the IGT [website](#).

ATAx Tax Administration Conference 2018

The IGT will deliver a plenary address at the [13th International Conference on Tax Administration](#) hosted by the University of New South Wales. The biannual event attracts a range of local and international tax academics, discussing a range of different issues affecting tax administration.



This year's theme of 'Tax System Integrity in the Digital Age' is timely and the presentations will no doubt shed significant light on the future of tax administration both in Australia and around the world.

A copy of the IGT's presentation will be available on the '[Other Publications](#)' page of our website from this Friday.

International Taxpayer Rights Conference

The IGT will be engaging with a range of international tax scrutineers and academics at the [3rd Annual International Taxpayer Rights Conference](#). This year, the IGT will be speaking on the subject of early warning and intervention systems.



We will publish the IGT's speech on our website following the Conference itself and will provide links to materials from the as they become available.

Meeting of Inspectors-General

On 29 March 2018, the IGT hosted a meeting of Inspectors-General from across Australia with the participation of the Hon Margaret Stone - Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security, Dr Helen Scott-Orr - Inspector-General of Biosecurity, Mr James Gaynor - Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force and Mr Hamish McCormick - Inspector-General in Bankruptcy as well as their respective deputies.



It was an excellent forum for the discussion of the respective remits of each office and to share ideas on best practices and innovations that each had implemented.

We were also delighted that Emeritus Professor Rosalind Croucher AM, President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, accepted an invitation to attend the meeting. She spoke on the subject of statutory office holders and their independence.

Engaging with the tax profession

Although it is early in 2018, we are already activating our program to engage with tax practitioners around the country.

Grace Ng, one of our Directors, delivered a joint presentation with George Bendall of Grant Thornton on the topic of Employees vs Contractors at the [Tax Institute's 33rd National Convention](#).



The IGT together with another Director, Duy Dam, delivered a session to the Tax Technical Committee of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ), speaking on the subject of the IGT's complaints handling service as well as the future of the tax profession. The IGT has also committed to a number of keynote presentations at upcoming CAANZ Practice Forums in May and throughout June.

As always, we welcome such engagements with the tax practitioner community and will continue to explore opportunities to do so. Please don't hesitate to [email us](#) to arrange speaking

engagements with our staff.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on how we can make our newsletter more informative and interesting for the community, including any features that you would like to see in upcoming editions. Please [email us](#) with your suggestions.