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Greetings from the IGT

It is now almost time to leave a post that I have held for the past 10 years. Some months ago, I said that I would not take my foot off the pedal till the very end and I am pleased to say that I have been true to my word!

Even in my final weeks we have completed a number of significant tasks including:

- public release of the [ATO's Fraud Control Management review](#);
- finalisation and transmittal to the Minister of the [Future of the Tax Profession](#) review;
- tabling the [IGT Annual Report 2017-18](#), including our financial statements;
- appearance before the Senate Economics Legislation Committee; and
- conclusion of our Enterprise Bargaining process with 100 per cent of valid votes being cast in support of the new Agreement which will see the agency through to 2021.



I have also been presenting at a number of events in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania. This has provided me an opportunity to re-connect with old friends and colleagues. I have committed to further speaking engagements well into 2019, so if we have not caught up yet, there is still hope.

In the midst of all the above, I am still packing up my office and preparing myself for the next chapter. It has been a privilege and an honour to serve the community as the IGT. I will truly miss the role, my team and the many colleagues who have become friends. I hope that our paths will cross in future and when they do, don't be a stranger.

Ali Noroozi
IGT

IGT's valedictory speech

On 4 October 2018, the IGT delivered his official valedictory speech at a function hosted by Arnold Bloch Leibler in Melbourne. The event was attended by leaders from all sectors of the tax profession, the Government, the media and the wider community.



The IGT's speech recommended improvements to the IGT office as well as enhanced governance arrangements for the ATO and concluded with a call to action for everyone within the tax system:

This is our tax system and we are all guardians of it. I am proud to leave the IGT in a very strong position. Perhaps, my greatest achievement is the firm establishment of the IGT as a trusted, independent and specialist scrutineer who has an integral role in improving the tax administration system for all Australians. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the support and confidence of the tax profession and I urge all of you to support my successor as you have supported me. We must all work to ensure that fairness and transparency prevail in all things and to raise concerns where they do not. We are living in a time when untruths are easily and widely disseminated and where silence is taken to be acquiescence. Sitting on the side-lines is not helpful. Anything that is worth maintaining requires constant vigilance from everyone within the tax system.

The full text of his speech as well as videos from the event are available on our [website](#).

Reviews update

Our review into the [ATO's Fraud Control Management](#) was publicly released on 22 October 2018 and is available on the IGT website.



The [Future of the Tax Profession](#) review has been finalised and was transmitted to the Minister on 1 November 2018. Pursuant to provisions of the *Inspector-General of Taxation Act 2003*, the Minister must release the report within 25 Parliamentary sitting days.

The [Garnishee](#) review is well-progressed with our team working through a significant amount of information provided by the ATO on its work in this area and it is likely to be completed before the end of the financial year.

Complaints handling service

It has been an incredibly busy tax time for us as complaints numbers continue to rise. Over the past four months, there was a 25.4 per cent increase in complaints received when compared to the same period last year. The most significant spike occurred in September where we saw a 42.5 per cent increase in complaints.



It should not be a surprise that this has represented a challenge for us. Nevertheless, we are pleased to report that our team continued to acknowledge the majority of complaints within 2 business days and finalised them within 15 business days.

Feedback received during the period has also been very positive, with a number of taxpayers taking time to write to us to express their satisfaction. Some of the feedback is extracted below:

- *...thank you for your time and patience with this case. I found your conduct through the process of this investigation to be of a professional standard. From this outcome you have helped obtain, you have also helped in giving me some positive reinforcement to help me with combating my depression and anxiety;*
- *...many thanks for your effort and attention and without your help I don't think I would have got the stage where I finished up; and*
- *I very much appreciate the thoroughness of your report. You have managed to extract in a very short period of time the answers to the 2 questions I first (and then, repeatedly) asked of the ATO.*

Women in Tax

Congratulations to Grace Ng, Director – Tax Complaints and Review, for her feature in the Tax Institute's 'Women in Tax' series. Grace spoke about how she got her start in tax, her achievements working on SuperStream, her role with the IGT and the broad spectrum of work available within the tax sphere.



The series highlights the careers of a number of women working in tax, both in the public service and private sector, their journeys to date and the advice they give to aspiring tax professionals.

Reaching out to the community

Our community engagement continues to flourish with our team continuing to engage with a range of tax practitioner groups throughout New South Wales. It is always great to be

able to speak directly with key stakeholders and gather insights from practitioners who toil daily to assist taxpayers to meet their obligations.

The IGT himself has also delivered presentations in New Zealand, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart to legal and tax practitioners and will continue to do so well into 2019.



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.