



Australian Government
Inspector-General of Taxation
Taxation Ombudsman

**IGoT
News!**

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Season's Greetings from the office of the IG and Taxation Ombudsman

Welcome once again to our newsletter, *IGoT News!* You may have noticed a small change to our logo to include 'Taxation Ombudsman'.

Why did we make this change? Consistent feedback from taxpayers and tax practitioners is that while they like our service, there is low awareness of the Inspector-General of Taxation name or brand (outside the tax profession). It's a Eureka moment when complainants realise we are the Taxation Ombudsman – what a difference a single word makes. The 'ombudsman' concept has much longer standing and awareness in the community.



As we look to the future, the Taxation Ombudsman moniker will be embedded in our general and complaints-related communications! We will continue to work on our branding to raise awareness but will also maintain the Inspector-General concept and branding in support of our office's original review function.

We also got feedback that a social media presence would improve awareness of our services. Our Facebook page opened last month in response, thanks to an amazing effort by our communications team. In the coming year, we will explore other channels to raise awareness to ensure taxpayers are able to reach us and get our assistance.

The Government has appointed me to act in this role until early February or thereafter until a permanent appointment is made. Our office's focus during this time is threefold:

- supporting complainants and our team by responding to increased level of complaints as efficiently and effectively as possible;
- progressing the Garnishee review toward completion; and
- undertaking an internal review of our plans, policies and procedures to further enhance our ability to deliver high quality services next year and for the years to come.

We as an office would like to thank all of you for your support. We have enjoyed great support from all corners of the tax profession. We have also received support from ATO and the TPB officers similarly in managing complaints and conducting reviews. We would also be remiss in not acknowledging the contributions of the former IGT throughout his time at the helm and we wish him well in his future endeavours.

Lastly, but by no means least, I would personally like to thank our dedicated team. They have been simply magnificent in serving our broader community including all the taxpayers, tax practitioners and other stakeholders who availed themselves of our services over this year.

I wish you a very Merry festive season or Christmas and to all a safe and happy New Year.

Andrew McLoughlin
A/g Inspector-General & Taxation Ombudsman

IGT Social Media

We are pleased to announce the launch of our new [Facebook](#) page. The Facebook page provides an additional channel for our stakeholders to engage with us. The early engagement results on our page have been very encouraging with approximately 30,000 views being generated on two animated videos promoting our complaints and review functions.



In 2019, we aim to undertake a communications strategy review that will include expanding our social media presence onto other platforms to ensure that we are raising maximum awareness of our office's independent Taxation Ombudsman role and the services that our specialist team provides to all members of the Australian community free of charge.

Reviews update

The [Garnishee](#) review is well-progressed. We have undertaken considerable work to identify the required information both from records and discussion with key ATO personnel in testing the claims outlined in the terms of reference. There has been a high level of support and cooperation in the conduct of the review. Our aim is to finalise the process in the first quarter of 2019.



The [Future of the Tax Profession](#) review is currently with the Minister for his consideration and public release. We look forward to discussing the report once it is made public.

Complaints service

It has been a very busy year for us in 2018 with more complaints being received when compared to last year. Even as we wind down the year, complaints received continue to rise. In the month of November and the first two weeks of December, complaints received have increased by 33 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively.

Our team is working hard to ensure that as many of these complaints are addressed and finalised before the Christmas and New Year period.

Despite the busy period, it has been very encouraging to receive positive feedback from taxpayers who have used our service on how we have assisted them. A selection of this feedback about our team is set out below:

- *Thanks very much for your call, I must say your office is very good to deal with and it makes difficult situations workable;*
- *Thank you for your help because your involvement actually got somebody to look at it and solve whatever the communication issue was and got my issue moving. And without that I'd still be waiting so I really appreciate you getting involved; and*
- *You have no idea how much stress you have taken away from me, thanks again.*



Final Season's greetings

On behalf of our entire team, we wish you a very safe and joyous holiday season with your family and friends. Please note that our office will be closed for the Christmas to New Year period, reopening on 2 January 2019. Happy holidays!

Many thanks again and we look forward to working with you in 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.