

The Ontario Ministry of Revenue's

**Service Commitments
and Standards in
Tax
Administration**

**Report for the period of
April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007**

Message from the Assistant Deputy Minister, Tax Revenue Division

I am pleased to present the Tax Revenue Division's (TRD) fourth annual performance data measuring the ministry's results and achievements against the seven commitments and 18 service standards in tax administration.

These commitments and service standards reflect the ministry's dedication to providing excellent customer service and our continued commitment to improve services wherever we can. We rely on taxpayer feedback to ensure we are continuing to provide the best level of customer service to our clients.

Results show us that in 2006/2007 we made great progress with our assistance standards by providing timely, accurate responses to questions and requests for tax information. Although we have made progress, there is still room for improvement. Where our services are lacking we are identifying how best to address those areas of concern.

The Ministry of Revenue is committed to providing the tax clients of Ontario with quality service, while treating taxpayers fairly, professionally and with respect. Please assist us in continuing to improve our services by completing our [Quality Service Questionnaire](#), online or by visiting any Ministry of Revenue service counter or walk-in office.

Marion E. Crane
Assistant Deputy Minister
Tax Revenue Division

Ensuring Accountability

As Chief Administrative Officer for the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Revenue, I was accountable for conducting a third party review of the data in the 2006/2007 SCSTA report.

This year's analysis involved a review conducted by Ontario Internal Audit to assess the adequacy of the controls, systems and procedures for reporting and the accuracy of the results. Based on the review, quality controls were found to be adequate and the results were accurately reported. These results were determined to be statistically valid and reliable for the Tax Revenue Division, Ministry of Revenue. There was a significant increase in the returned number of Quality Service Questionnaires which provided full statistical reliability. The Ministry of Revenue has assured me that they will continue to take measures to further increase the volume of data received to ensure statistical reliability in the future.

Based on my knowledge, this report presents accurately and fairly, in all respects, the status of results for the fiscal year April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007.

Helmut Zisser
Chief Administrative Officer
Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Revenue

Results - Commitments - April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007

Service Commitment	2006/2007 Annual Results	2005/2006 Annual Results	Diff.
	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	
1. Impartial and Professional Service. We will provide impartial, professional and courteous service and provide a means for you to hold us accountable for the services we provide. We will be pleased to deal with you or your authorized representative.	93%	91%	2%
2. Privacy and Confidentiality. We will keep your tax returns and other information secure and confidential.	93%	92%	1%
3. Accessible Information. We will offer clear, understandable and current tax information and will make this information available to you through various media.	90%	89%	1%
4. Assistance. We will provide timely, accurate responses to questions and requests for tax information. We will explain to you the tax implications of your current tax situation and if you seek to learn more about your liability and how it is determined, offer you the option of meeting with us.	95%	89%	6%
5. Reliable Written Information. We will provide written information that you can rely on.	92%	87%	5%
6. Education. We will provide education and information programs on specific tax issues.	100%	100%	N/A
7. Voluntary Disclosure. We will allow you to voluntarily disclose your tax situation without incurring a penalty or being prosecuted for tax violations under certain conditions.	100%	100%	N/A

Results - Standards - April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007

Service	Service Standard	2006/2007 Annual Results	2005/2006 Annual Results	Diff.
TRD General Standards				
Ensure information explaining significant change in tax policy or legislation is available.	By the next working day following the change.	¹ 94%	100%	-6%
Invite new Retail Sales Tax vendors to attend a PST-GST seminar.	Within 15 working days of being registered.	99%	100%	-1%
Conduct Retail Sales Tax industry and/or topic specific seminars.	Schedule within 60 working days of request.	² 85%	100%	-15%
Government Common Service Standards				
Correspondence by fax, mail or electronic mail.	Respond within 15 working days or send acknowledgment within 5 working days.	85%	87%	-2%
Telephone General Enquiries	a) Pick up by third ring b) Call back within 1 working day.	100% 68%	95% 63%	5% 5%
Walk-in Enquiries	Post expected waiting times.	100%	100%	N/A
Customer Feedback/ Complaint Resolution	Document and acknowledge complaints within 2 working days; with each contact, provide opportunity for feedback on service.	100%	100%	N/A
Core Business Service Standards				
Registrations	Walk-in, mail-in and telephone - 1 working day. Through Ontario Business Connects - 15 working days. Other registration - 15 working days.	97%	97%	N/A
Refunds (once we receive all required info and documentation)	All refunds to be processed within 40 working days.	71%	69%	2%
Account Adjustments	30 working days.	83%	82%	1%
Tax Roll Updates	Walk-in and telephone - 2 working days. Mail - 15 working days	98%	98%	N/A

1. All but one of the 16 tax policy/ legislative changes published in the year met the standard. There was a one day delay in publishing 1 complex change.
2. This result is based on 13 scheduled seminars of which 11 met the standard. The two events that failed to meet the standard can be attributed to particularly complex issues which required extensive preparation.

Service Commitments and Standards in Tax Administration : Report

Service	Service Standard	2006/2007 Annual Results	2005/2006 Annual Results	Diff.
Audit Standards				
Notice of Audit	Arrange mutually agreeable date for the commencement of the audit, generally with 15 working days notice	99%	99%	N/A
Audit – taxpayer to respond to the proposed adjustments	Given up to 30 working days to respond	95%	92%	3%
Objections Standards				
Objections – contact by appeals officer	Within 3 months of the objection being assigned	94%	95%	-1%
Objections (complex objections) – Allow for response by objector to Opinion Letter	Within 30 working days from date of letter	100%	100%	N/A
Objections – resolution of objections dealing with interest and penalties	Within 3 months from date of receipt of Notice of Objection	¹ 80%	86%	-6%
Objections	Resolve 80% of objections within 2 years from date of receipt of Notice of Objection	100%	100%	N/A
Collections Standard				
Collections – time before legal action may be started	Allow 30 working days after original assessment (other than exceptional circumstances)	100%	100%	N/A

1. Positive results were consistent throughout the year with the exception of July. Decrease in that month is attributed to temporary staffing shortfalls.

Next Steps

Overall, the Tax Revenue Division (TRD) has met service standards in the core areas of registrations, refunds, account adjustments and tax roll updates 71 to 98 per cent of the time. These results are encouraging and the division will continue to strive for improvement in all areas, while focusing additional efforts in areas where service standards were not met at least 80 per cent of the time.

Last year TRD committed to improving customer service in the areas of telephone and correspondence standards, turnaround times for refunds and adjustments and objections dealing with interest and penalties. Ongoing efforts have resulted in improved results in four of the six areas.

- TRD improved the reliability of the Service Commitment data gathered for this report by increasing the number of completed and returned Quality Service Questionnaires to 460 from 204.
- The telephone standards for general enquiries, dealing with answering the phone by the third ring and returning calls within one working day, have both increased by 5 per cent.
- Turn around times for refunds improved by 2 per cent.

Building on this year's results, in 2007-2008 the division will:

- Continue to emphasize the importance of the Service Commitments and Standards to staff, specifically the telephone general enquiries and correspondence components,
- Discover new ways of distributing the Quality Service Questionnaire to further increase the reliability of the data, and
- Continue to improve turnaround times on the processing of refunds, adjustments and objections dealing with interest and penalties.

TRD is committed to continuing to look for ways of improving the level of service provided to taxpayers. Taxpayers are encouraged to comment on the service they receive through the online [Quality Service Questionnaire](#) and the Audit Quality Service Questionnaire which is sent by mail after the completion of an audit.

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ISSN 1712- 381X