The Ontario Ministry of Revenue's

Service Commitments and Standards in Tax Administration

Report for the period of April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008

Ontario

Message from the Assistant Deputy Minister, Tax Revenue Division

The Ministry of Revenue is committed to continually improving the quality of service it provides to Ontario taxpayers. In order to fulfill that commitment, I am pleased to present the Tax Revenue Division's fifth annual report in an ongoing, government-wide effort to measure customer satisfaction – where public service meets the community.

Our progress is measured against a base line of seven commitments and 18 service standards to help us identify how well we are doing. We rely on suggestions from our customers – who want speedy services that are easy to access and simple to use – to further improve services.

Quality service standards are powerful tools – survey results are shared with staff so they can continue to make improvements and celebrate their achievements. In 2007/2008, measurable progress is being made. For example, correspondence response times improved 9 per cent and our ability to schedule tax-related seminars within 60 days of a request improved by 15 per cent.

The Ministry of Revenue and its employees are committed to treating our customers with respect, providing quality service, and applying tax laws with fairness and courtesy. Please take a few moments to tell us how we're doing by completing our online Quality Service Questionnaire available at ontario.ca/revenue.

Terry Hewak
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 2007/2008 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.

Based on my knowledge, this report presents accurately and fairly, in all respects, the status of results for the fiscal year April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008.

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

Results - Commitments - April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008

Service Commitment	2007/2008 Annual Results	2006/2007 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.	94%	93%	+1%
2. **Privacy and Confidentiality**. We will keep your tax returns and other information secure and confidential.	94%	93%	+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%	90%	N/A
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.	94%	95%	-1%
5. **Reliable Written Information**. We will provide written information that you can rely on.	92%	92%	N/A
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, 2007 to March 31, 2008

Service	Service Standard	2007/2008 Annual Results	2006/2007 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.	100%	94%	+6%
Invite new Retail Sales Tax vendors to attend a PST-GST seminar.	Within 15 working days of being registered.	98%	99%	-1%
Conduct Retail Sales Tax industry and/or topic specific seminars.	Schedule within 60 working days of request.	100%	85%	+15%
Government Common Service Standards				
Correspondence by fax, mail or electronic mail.	Respond within 15 working days or send acknowledgment within 5 working days.	94%	85%	+9%
Telephone General Enquiries	a) Pick up by third ring b) Call back within 1 working day.	100% 63%	100% 68%	N/A -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.	95%	97%	-2%
Refunds (once we receive all required info and documentation)	All refunds to be processed within 40 working days.	71%	71%	N/A
Account Adjustments	30 working days.	86%	83%	+3%
Tax Roll Updates	Walk-in and telephone - 2 working days. Mail - 15 working days	98%	98%	N/A

Service	Service Standard	2007/2008 Annual Results	2006/2007 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	96%	95%	+1%
Objections Standards				
Objections – contact by appeals officer	Within 3 months of the objection being assigned	97%	94%	+3%
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	93%	80%	+13%
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

Next Steps

In 2007-2008, results show the Tax Revenue Division (TRD) exceeded its service standards by achieving a score between 82 and 100 per cent in 17 of our standards in tax administration. These results are encouraging and the division will continue to make every effort to improve delivery of services and to achieve a score of at least 80 per cent in all our service standards.

Last year, TRD committed to delivering quality services to the public in the following areas: telephone standards, correspondence standards, refund and adjustment processing timelines, interest and penalty objections, and distribution of the Quality Service Questionnaires. Our efforts resulted in improvements in three key areas:

- fax, mail and e-mail response standards improved by 9 per cent
- account adjustment timelines improved 3 per cent
- turn around times for interest and penalty objections increased by 13 per cent

In 2008-2009, the division will build on these results by:

- continuing to highlight the importance of the service commitments and standards to staff with a focus on general telephone enquiries
- striving to improve refund timelines
- encouraging taxpayers to complete the Quality Service and Audit Quality Questionnaires to help us improve our ability to deliver services

TRD will continue to evaluate our performance along with customer satisfaction to improve the level of services provided to taxpayers. Please comment on our services by completing our online Quality Service Questionnaire or by completing the Audit Quality Questionnaire, which is sent by mail after the completion of an audit.

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ISSN 1712- 381X