

Digital Support for Business & Agents – Agent Team November Update for VCG

Talking Points

- A variety of subjects were covered in October, including: ‘Demystifying Certificates of Residence for Ltd Companies’, ‘Paying HMRC – What’s Changing’ and 3 meetings on ‘Simple Assessment is here’.
- Over 2800 agents joined us for the live Talking Points on ‘Simple Assessment is here’ during October.
- We also joined forces with Intellectual Property Office colleagues to deliver an introduction to Trade Marks.
- There were over 6000 agent participations in live Talking Points meetings during October.
- The monthly ‘re-cap’ email, including links to recent Talking Points recordings, was issued on 18th October to all agents that are subscribed to our weekly invitations, providing them with an opportunity to catch up.
- Our SA18 programme of Talking Points begins in early December and will include:
 - Basis Periods - In particular we will look at the different rules that apply to commencement years, the effect on a basis period when there is a change of accounting date and overlapping periods. We also look at some pointers when dealing with a change from sole trader to partnership and vice versa.
 - Trade Losses - Looking at the different ways trade losses may be relieved.
 - Income from Property: minimising the risks for individuals - Dealing specifically with expenses and deductions, allowances and reliefs. Including repairs, the relief for the replacement of domestic items and the restrictions to income tax relief for finance costs.
 - Capital Allowances and Vehicles - This meeting will mainly cover the special rules for cars.
 - There will be further opportunities to join meetings focussing on all of the above during January.
- Our forward-look schedule, publicising Talking Points currently arranged between now and the end of January, will be published on Gov.uk by the end of November.
- We will of course accommodate other meetings in the programme where we can to meet demand and communicate those opportunities by email.

Agent Forum (AF)

- As at mid November 2017 the Forum has 189 Agent subscribers, up 24 since last progress report. And 90 HMRC staff, up 5 since last progress report. We continue seeking key stakeholder engagement to both use the Forum and recruit more Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for provision of issue resolution responses. It has attracted over 10k views (up 2k), 800+ 660 (up +140) posted messages on 125+ current topics; which are moderated daily with appropriate responses given, as determined by subject matter, related traffic generated and referrals provided by line of business.
- The AF will be mobilised during DSBA’s 2016/17 EoY SA filing programme (SA18), which provides help and support to businesses and agents. A dedicated messaging service will be set up on the Agent Forum, specifically for this purpose. This is an

annual event run throughout January and includes segmented out bound emails promoting live webinars, self-help modules, YouTube videos, Toolkits, Twitter and forum messaging across a range of topical subjects including but not limited to, On-Line filing procedures, Expenses & Benefits, Income from Property, National Insurance etc.

- We continue to work closely with the Issues Overview Group (IOG), made up of Professionals Bodies (PBs), a number of whom also sit on the VCG and HMRC representatives. It jointly determines what the 'widespread' issues priority classification should be, for earliest resolution. New arrangements for these meetings have now been agreed, moving away from a fixed schedule of events throughout the year to bespoke ones. Focus will be on subjects of most concern, at which relevant SMEs will attend to both hear first hand how Agents are impacted and to offer up or take away issues for resolution. The first of these is on 15 November 2017 to discuss P800 related topics. Also during November (21st), a Talkin Points event is scheduled featuring the Agent Forum and role of the IOG.
- The Digital Support for Businesses and Agents (DSBA) Agent Team, staffed by 2.5 FTE Issues Resolution Managers (IRMs), moderate and run the forum. As and when required we bring in extra cover from our Agent Account Managers (AAMs) team to ensure we maintain response service levels, when going to Lines of Business for issues resolution.

Agent Toolkits

- Agent Toolkits continue undergoing a 'refresh' programme to update their content in accordance with current compliance practices and taxpayer obligations. The existing product portfolio is being expanded to cover subjects hitherto not considered, following customer insight findings and research. Work is currently being undertaken to evaluate the merits of migrating Toolkits onto a new digital platform, to make them more user friendly to use. Significant promotion activity, including the next issue of Agent Update (AU63) – due out this month - has been successfully undertaken, in raising the Toolkit brand profile, within the Agent community, together with making them easier for agents to access via the GOV.UK website.