



Ref:

15 June 2022

Ms Myrtle Lloyd
Director General Customer Services
HM Revenue and Customs

Via email: myrtle.lloyd@hmrc.gov.uk

Dear Myrtle

HMRC service levels

Following the postponement of the Representative Bodies Steering Group meeting to 5 July, and in the absence of the expected interim meeting on HMRC performance and the agent dedicated line, we are writing regarding our long-standing concerns over HMRC's service levels.

We all continue to be contacted by our members about poor HMRC service levels, and asking what we are doing about it. The issues being raised should not come as a surprise to you, having been shared with your staff by the professional bodies, through the online agent forum or via the complaints process. Issues seem to exist across a range of HMRC services, and can change over time. While not a comprehensive list, the following issues get raised with us most frequently: self-assessment registrations and refunds, correspondence about VAT grouping and the option to tax, section 455 refunds, responses to technical queries, corporation tax post and returns not processed. Feedback also indicates that performance on the agent dedicated line appears to be erratic; there are sometimes very long waiting times, and calls can be cut off unexpectedly and promised call backs do not happen. Members are also concerned that helpline hours have not been restored to pre-pandemic levels.

To ensure we and our members are fully informed about HMRC's performance and plans for recovery, we would like to inquire when HMRC expects to be able to publish the following information:

- **Response to Public Accounts Committee (PAC) recommendations 6a to c:** The government agreed with all three of the PAC's recommendations¹ regarding HMRC's customer service and recovery plans. Recommendations a and c had a target implementation date of June 2022. Please confirm that implementation is still on target, and that the Treasury Minute will be published shortly.

¹ <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/1665/hmrCs-management-of-tax-debt/publications/>

- **HMRC performance dashboard.** The dashboard remains in development and only available via the online agent forum. There appears to be a delay to its progression and roll-out, including integrating it with the 'Where's My Reply' service and making it widely available on gov.uk. Please confirm the expected timescales for the roll-out of the dashboard, and the plans and timescales for interaction with 'Where's My Reply'.
- **HMRC performance statistics.** The latest information available is for the month of February 2022; we have not seen information for March or April 2022 or for the January to March 2022 quarter. When will these be published?

The professional bodies have all largely refrained from making public statements or media comment expressing concerns about HMRC's performance standards. However, we are under considerable pressure from our members to demonstrate what we are doing about poor HMRC performance levels and to raise the issues with government, parliamentary committees and the media. The impact on individuals and businesses of these delays is considerable.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss our concerns further and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[by email]

John Cullinane

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Frank Haskew

Head of Tax, Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

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