

House of Representatives Economics Committee

Inquiry into Tax Deductibility

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Australian Taxation Office

March 2017

Department/Agency: ATO

Question: Hansard Page 7

Topic: Work-related deductions

Question:

1. **Mr THISTLETHWAITE:** Okay. I am still struggling to understand why we are having this inquiry. I will ask the ATO a set of similar questions. Actually, I do want to ask you a set of questions about staff. How many staff does the ATO have monitoring compliance on work-related deductions?

Ms Lendon: We have people focused on work-related expenses as part of their role right across the ATO. As I mentioned before, we have activity around help and support, which obviously we have staff working on, right through to the audit activities. I would have to take on notice what the figure is right across the ATO, because we do not account for our staff for just one aspect of the individuals tax system that we look at. The staff we have working on work-related expenses, for example, would also be putting effort into what income is and what you have to return at tax time in your tax return, right through that process to donations and so on. We do not get to that granular level with our staffing.

2. **Mr THISTLETHWAITE:** You might need to take this on notice. Can you tell us the staffing levels in that section for 2013- 2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016?

Ms Lendon: Yes.

3. **Mr THISTLETHWAITE:** Can you tell us if there have been reductions in staff in that division?

Ms Lendon: The numbers in the actual area that look after compliance is what you are after, for individuals?

Mr THISTLETHWAITE: Yes.

Ms Lendon: And any reductions.

4. **Mr THISTLETHWAITE:** There have been staff reductions at the ATO more generally, have there not?

Ms Lendon: There have.

Mr THISTLETHWAITE: Can you tell us how many there have been over the course of the last three years?

Ms Lendon: I would have to take that on notice.

Mr THISTLETHWAITE: Do you have a rough idea?

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Answer:

1. In 2015-2016, the ATO had approximately 120 staff working on compliance activities for work-related expense deductions.
2. Refer to question 'Staff reductions'.
3. Refer to question 'Staff reductions'.

4.

Year	Number of ongoing ATO employee separations
2013-2014	1,673
2014-2015	2,959
2015-2016	1,415