

Department/ Agency: Australian Taxation Office

Question: BET 729-731

Topic: ANAO report on HWI

Reference: Hansard page 70

Senator: Bushby

Question:

CHAIR asked:

CHAIR: I want to read one of the things. On page 19 of the summary the ANAO found: There is no systematic, quantitative analysis of the outcomes of the compliance activities to assess if the compliance cases selected through the RDF process are the highest risk cases. Is there a systemic analysis of whether cases selected through the RDF process are the highest risk cases? Is that a fair comment?

Mr Olesen: As I said earlier in the proceedings today, the key challenge in some of these areas is doing a good risk assessment to identify the right cases to audit, particularly in an environment where there is very little information on the public record, as is the case with the kinds of taxpayers that we are talking about. Yes, there is a systematic approach to risk assessment. Yes, there is plenty that we can do to continue to improve that and refine that.

CHAIR: I presume you have a dedicated area or areas in the private groups and high wealth individual's area working on data collection and analysis?

Mr Olesen: We have dedicated officers that do this work; that is right. As I said, a key issue in this space is the lack of publically available information. There is often a lot of data to just collect apart from going to the taxpayer entities themselves directly to get the information.

CHAIR: How many staff in that private group area would be working on that?

Mr Olesen: It is quite a lot, but I do not have the precise numbers here.

CHAIR: Do you also have dedicated staff working on the upkeep and constant improvement of your risk engine and do you have a sense of how many staff will be doing that?

Mr Olesen: Yes, and I can take the precise number on notice.

CHAIR: I see that the ANAO report also says you have dedicated staff working on case selection. Roughly how many work on case selection?

Mr Olesen: I will take it on notice again.

Question:

729. How many staff in that private group area would be working on that? [data collection and analysis]

730 Do you also have dedicated staff working on the upkeep and constant improvement of your risk engine and do you have a sense of how many staff will be doing that?

731 Roughly how many work on case selection?

Answer:

729. Nine staff work on data collection and analysis to establish the wealth of individuals and their associated entities.

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730. Eight staff work on the upkeep and constant improvement of our systemic risk assessment processes.
731. Ten staff work directly on case selection. We also engage with private group taxpayers to conduct risk assessment reviews to elicit additional information needed to determine if an audit is warranted. We estimate 180 people are involved in this work.