

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

31 May – 2 June 2011

Question No: BET 53

Topic: Electronic tax return lodgment service standards

Hansard Page: 106

Senator Xenophon asked:

Senator XENOPHON: I think that puts it in perspective. I have a couple more questions. Do you expect to meet your service standards this year?

Mr D'Ascenzo: For the electronic lodgement of individual returns?

Senator XENOPHON: Yes.

Mr D'Ascenzo: No.

Senator XENOPHON: Why not?

Mr D'Ascenzo: This is the coming year or the past year?

Senator XENOPHON: The coming year. For the current financial year, sorry.

Mr D'Ascenzo: That is what I am saying. For the current financial year, no, because of the first period in terms of the slow ramp-up of the new system. That means that for that first month we did not meet the service standards. Because we work at such a tight level of efficiency, if you fail in a certain way one month, it is hard to catch up for the remaining 11. Mr Butler can give you some more details on that.

Senator XENOPHON: That is fine. I am happy to take that on notice. I will be interested to see what happens in the next estimates.

Answer:

The ATO's service standard for processing individual electronic tax return lodgment is 94% within 14 days.

The following table provides an overview of year to date performance for this standard.

Table 1: 2010-11 year to date individual electronic original tax return processing data, as at 31 May 2011

Individual electronic original tax returns received	Individual electronic original tax returns processed inside service standard	Year to date service standard performance
11,531,511	9,513,497	82.5%

Table 2: 2010-11 year to date individual electronic original tax return processing data, month by month, as at 31 May 2011

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May
YTD	54.2%	71.6%	76.7%	80.2%	81.5%	80.6%	80.7%	81.2%	81.8%	81.9%	82.5%
Month	54.2%	89.6%	92.6%	94.4%	94.4%	66.5%	84.4%	93.6%	94.2%	87.7%	92.5%

The ATO continues to maintain a strong focus on achieving processing performance consistent with published service standards. However, the volume of returns processed outside service standards in July 2010, resulted in this service standard not being met for the 2010-11 year.

The impact of both natural disasters and further fine tuning of the system is particularly evident in both December and April's performance.

The ATO has now 18 months experience with the new system and expects to meet service commitments in 2011–12 year.