

FORUM ON TAX ADMINISTRATION

Taxpayer Services Sub-group

Increasing the use of self-service channels by taxpayers

Scoping document

September 2013



FTA TAXPAYER SERVICES SUB-GROUP SCOPING DOCUMENT: INCREASING THE USE OF SELF-SERVICE CHANNELS BY TAXPAYERS

CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

In 2011 the FTA via the TSG, conducted a study entitled 'Working Smarter in Revenue Administration – Using demand management strategies to meet service delivery goals'. Among other things, the study found that despite having implemented multi-channel service models and setting service objectives to shift taxpayers to self-service and the online channel, many revenue bodies continued to experience high demand on their more expensive in-person and inbound call channels. Further the methods used by revenue bodies for measuring demand were not effective in determining the root causes of the demand for services.

The FTA commissioned further work in 2012 to provide practical guidance for revenue bodies to assist them meet taxpayers' service expectations. The Guide provided a whole-of-revenue body approach to managing service demand. It effectively, set out a possible 'model' for governance arrangements and practical steps to support revenue bodies to identify, analyse and address the causes of demand.

With developments in technology, pressure on revenue administrations costs and growing demand from customers for service improvements, the TSG meeting in September 2012 discussed commissioning work to support revenue bodies to manage increased take-up of cost effective channels.

In May 2013, the FTA Bureau agreed to the TSG conducting this work, requesting that this work should also focus on the support provided to tax intermediaries to move to self-help and influence their clients to do the same.

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE

Revenue bodies continue to operate in an environment characterised by increasing client expectations and reducing operating budgets. The increasing penetration of digital technologies, big data strategies and analytics capabilities are 'tools' that continue to provide opportunity for revenue bodies to meet increasing client expectations while continuing to achieve budget outcomes.

Building on the work to develop the 'Managing Service Demand' practical guide, this work will consider the strategies revenue bodies can undertake to shift clients to self-service channels in the context of a proposed future service experience for individuals, businesses and tax intermediaries. It will also provide practical examples of the initiatives revenue bodies have undertaken to shift clients to self-service, including successes and challenges, as well as the effect on service demand.

More specifically, the work could cover:

- Development of a vision and framework that captures the future service experience for individuals, businesses and tax intermediaries;
- Consideration and prioritisation of self-service opportunities in the context of the future customer experience;

- Identification of strategies revenue bodies have used/are using to shift clients to self-service, including measures of effectiveness, challenges and lessons learned;
- How legislation and effective service and process design can be used to enable the shift to self-service channels;
- How demand is monitored and managed on self-service channels, including how revenue bodies are responding to feedback to increase take-up of self-service channels;
- The role of 'traditional', more costly channels (for example, face-to-face and on-call) in delivering the future service experience and shifting clients to self-service channels; and
- The role of tax intermediaries and third party providers in encouraging and supporting the shift to self-service channels.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

This project will be led by the Australian Taxation Office and the following countries have expressed interest in participating as task group members:

Canada	France	Denmark (tbc)
Singapore	Chile (tbc)	United Kingdom (tbc)
New Zealand	Sweden (tbc)	

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Lead agency

The Australian Taxation Office will be responsible for:

- presenting the scoping document and the proposed survey instrument at the FTA TSG meeting in September 2013
- developing the survey instrument
- coordinating the project work
- liaising with the OECD Secretariat
- organising task group conference calls with the participating countries
- keeping task group countries informed of progress at major milestones; and
- developing the 'Shift to Self-Service Channels' report.

Participating countries

Countries participating in the task group will be required to:

- participate in task group conference calls
- provide responses to survey requests as input to the report; and
- provide ongoing feedback as the work progresses.

Other Sub-group member countries

Other non-participating Sub-Group member countries will be required to provide their feedback at the FTA TSG meeting in September 2013 and on the final draft version of the report.

OECD Secretariat

The OECD Secretariat will provide their expertise, advice and support and will be responsible for publishing the completed report on the OECD website and distributing it to all FTA member countries, following relevant approvals.

TIMETABLE

The key milestones for this project are as follows:

Target date	Milestone
July	Develop the draft terms of reference
Mid – July	Obtain feedback on draft terms of reference from potential task group countries and revise the draft
Late July	Send the draft to the Secretariat
August	Provide the draft terms of reference to TSG member countries
End July – Early August	Request information from task group countries on customer experience, service delivery and/or self-service strategies that they have in place to guide the development of a preliminary framework for discussion at the TSG meeting.
September (TSG meeting)	Discussion of the preliminary framework, including case studies. Confirm task group countries.
October	Develop and circulate information gathering request to task group countries.
November - January	Draft paper and send to task group countries for feedback.
February	Revise and finalise the draft based on the feedback.
TBA	Circulate paper to TSG members and OECD Secretariat
TBA	Obtain endorsement from the FTA Bureau
End June	Publish the report on the OECD internet site and distribute to FTA member countries. The report may be formally introduced to Commissioners at their next FTA meeting.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND ANTICIPATED CONTENT OF OUTPUT

The expected deliverable from this project is a report on 'The Shift to Self-Service Channels' which will outline:

- A vision and framework for the future service experience for individuals, businesses and tax intermediaries;
- Priority self-service opportunities in the context of the proposed future service experience;
- Strategies and approaches used by revenue bodies to successfully move clients to self-service channels;
- The challenges faced by revenue bodies in shifting clients to self-service; and
- The role of tax intermediaries and third party providers in enabling the shift to self-service channels.

The completed report will be made available to all FTA member countries.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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