



Institute of Certified Bookkeepers

Making you Count

P: 1300 85 61 81

F: 1300 85 73 93

E: admin@icb.org.au

W: www.icb.org.au

Bookkeepers helping Bookkeepers help Business

December 2016



News, views and things you need to know.

Welcome to ICB's December 2016 Newsletter.

Contents

Important News

- 3 ICB Celebrates 10 Years
- 8 ICB Annual Bookkeepers Survey
- 9 ICB Annual Conference - Bookkeeping 2017
- 10 Artificial Intelligence is Not Bank Feeds
- 12 Stop Underselling Your Product

Best Practice Bookkeeping

- 13 Christmas Gifts Clarified

BAS Agent World

- 14 New Deferral Requests - You Will Love It
- 14 TPB Annual Declaration
- 15 TPB Investigating Unregistered BAS Service Providers
- 16 TPB Terminates BAS Agent Partnership
- 16 TPB Report October 2016

Continued Professional Education

- 17 This Month From the ICB CPE Page

ICB Network Meetings

- 18 December 2016 Question of the Month - How to Encourage a Client to Move Forward
- 18 November 2016 Question of the Month - GST on Processed and Unprocessed Milk - ICB's Response
- 19 Upcoming Network Meetings

Other Things Happening in the World

- 20 Public Holidays in Victoria

This Month From the ICB

- 21 ICB Christmas 2016 Closure Notice
- 21 What's New this Month from ICB
- 21 December 2016 eBrief - Client Newsletter

Products and Solutions

- 22 Major Features Released for Reckon One in 2016

From the ATO

- 22 ATO - Private Rulings
- 23 Upcoming Portal Maintenance

ICB Membership Statistics

ICB Supporters and Sponsors



**ICB Staff, Management and Directors would like to wish you
and your family
a relaxing and peaceful Christmas and
a safe and happy New Year.**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support as we strive to raise the bar for professional bookkeepers.

The ICB administration offices will be unattended from 2pm on Friday, 23rd December, 2016 until 8am Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017 (AEDST) and we thank you in advance for your patience during these times.

Additional Information for Members Only

In this month's [Members Newsletter](#) you will find the following additional information:

Important News for You

- [Business Information Sheet - Simpler BAS - New Resource](#)
- [Business Information Sheet - Single Touch Payroll - Updated Resource](#)

Best Practice Bookkeeping

- [Employer Obligations in Annual Salary Agreements](#)
- [Leave Loading Paid on Termination - Updated Resource](#)
- [Bookkeeping for Airbnb - New Resource](#)
- [Balance Sheet Accounts - Updated Resource](#)

The BAS Agent World

- [How to Use the BAS Agent Portal - New Resource](#)

Continued Professional Education

- [ICB Technical Webinar - The Bookkeeping Cycle - End of Month](#)
- [ICB Technical Webinar - Review of Payroll Entitlements](#)
- [ICB Technical Webinar - The Bookkeeping Cycle - BAS](#)
- [ICB Technical Webinar - The Bookkeeping Cycle - End of Year Preparation](#)

From the ICB

- [Call for Fellow Membership Nominations](#)
- [December 2016 eBrief, Customisable Newsletter for your Clients](#)

Important News for You

ICB Celebrates 10 Years

ICB officially started in February 2006, and this year we celebrate ten years of dynamic development as an institute in the constantly evolving world of bookkeeping.

Matthew's Comments

In 2006 the software companies MYOB and Reckon dominated the Australian SME space. Xero began its journey a little later in the year and Intuit came to Australia with QBO a few years later. At this time the partners of software companies had established themselves and we had begun to look for the next level of endorsement and credibility of the bookkeeping profession.

The Australian Government was continuing its very long review of the tax agent regime, (13 years I think it had been going). Between 2006 and 2009 bookkeepers needed strong representation into Treasury to assist in the establishment of the new [Tax Agent Services Act 2009](#) and, therefore, the creation of registered BAS Agents.

At the same time [ICB Global](#) had made contact with me and a few other players in the Australian industry. The planets aligned and ICB Australia was born.

We look forward to the next ten years of ICB Australia's evolution and the developments that are coming our way in the bookkeeping industry.



Highlights from the Ten Year Journey

2006

- Matthew embarked on two trips around Australia presenting “State of the Bookkeeping Industry” and the concepts of ICB to over 3,000 people.
- ICB's first part-time employee joined Matthew.
- The first newsletter was published in July 2006 at a whopping two pages long!
- The first three online general bookkeeping assessments were “up and running”.
- By the end of the year, ICB had admitted 282 members.

2007

- John Birse was appointed as director.
- The first ICB “explanation paper” was released on the topic of BAS Service Providers.
- The first annual survey was conducted.
- August 2007 saw the first wave of membership renewals with an 89% rate of renewal - a rate that continues today.
- The first versions of the ICB practical bookkeeping assessments were released, titled “ICB Shoebox Assessments”.
- The ATO released the new portal for BAS Service Providers.
- The first Certificate IV in Financial Services (Bookkeeping) became available.
- ICB offered a professional email address to all members holding a practising certificate: yourname@goodbookkeepers.com.au
- The ICB website averaged 3,000 hits per day with over 240 unique visitors each day.
- Bookkeeper Search function was launched, (now called [Find a Bookkeeper](#)).

2008

- Regional [network meetings](#) were started, the first locations being Burnie (TAS), Devonport (TAS), Balcatta (WA), Gold Coast (QLD) and Hobart (TAS). Tasmania led the way in enthusiasm for networking.
- ICB was invited to join the advisory group for the Australian Treasury Standard Business Reporting development.
- June saw the release of draft legislation for the new BAS Agent regime: “We are now to be called BAS Agents”.
- Information sessions on the new BAS Agent regime were held around the country in Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

- Membership renewal gifts were sent out for the first time: “Thank you so much for your Membership Renewal Gift. What a thoughtful present! Now I can look like a true professional; it was a pleasant surprise, although my membership is worth every penny on its own”.
- ICB was appointed as the industry expert to advise on professional partner members in the MYOB Partner Connect events around Australia.

2009

- ICB membership reaches 1,000 during January.
- ICB made a formal submission to the Senate Economics Committee regarding the new Tax Agents Services Bill 2009. The [TASA 2009](#) became law in March.
- “A Day to Remember - 2009 Information Sessions” were held in ten locations around the country, with 354 total members in attendance.
- The new [Tax Practitioners Board](#) was established to replace the various state based tax agent boards.
- The ICB practical assessments were recognised as accredited units towards the Certificate IV in Financial Services (Bookkeeping).
- MYOB began formal sponsorship of ICB’s network meetings around Australia, which continues to date.
- Tax Agent Services Regulations released along with the first explanatory statements from the TPB.

2010

- ICB published information on the development pathway for aspiring BAS Agents and guides to completing the BAS Agent application forms.
- ICB released a new version of the [Code of Professional Conduct](#).
- The TPB accredited ICB as a [Recognised BAS Agent Association](#) under the TASA 2009.
- MYOB engaged ICB to provide the assessment knowledge and expertise behind the MYOB Approved Bookkeeper program.
- Transitional arrangements for BAS Agents are put in place.
- [Insurance Made Easy](#) were appointed as the preferred insurer for bookkeepers - and they still are.
- ICB membership reaches 2,000 during July.
- Amanda Linton was appointed a director of ICB.

2011

- First annual conference for ICB held, “[Stepping Out in 2011](#)”, with nearly 800 attendees in nine locations.
- [ICB Bookkeepers Forum](#) up and running, available to anyone in the bookkeeping community - within a month there were over 1,250 topic views of the discussion posts.
- [Question of the Month](#) was started as a section in each newsletter - still going!
- ICB professional name badges are offered to all members.
- The ICB website now averaged over 13,000 hits from nearly 9,000 unique visitors each month.
- August saw the release of the first [eBrief](#) newsletter for members to send to their business clients.
- The first [ICB Member Guide](#) was printed and mailed to all members.
- Membership reached 3,000 during October.
- ICB Global celebrated 15 years of service to bookkeepers and was named as Professional Institute of the Year in the UK.
- [Products and Solutions](#) specifically for bookkeepers offered on the ICB website.

2012

- Nearly 900 people attended the annual conference, “[Transformation of Bookkeeping](#)”.
- Deborah Thompson presented the first network meeting via webinar - still going strong and now with two webinar meetings each month.
- [Podcasts](#) of the members’ newsletter started.
- ICB awarded the first Fellow level memberships.
- From the first newsletter being 2 pages long, the newsletters are now over 40 pages on average.

- ICB presented the [End of Year June workshops](#) for the first time at four locations with over 200 people attending.
- The first newsletter podcast was issued, being read by Deborah Thompson.
- The first [Annual Skill Review](#) assessment was released, drawn on resources included in previous newsletters.
- ICB started producing and presenting [technical webinars](#) for members on practical bookkeeping and industry current topics.

2013

- The conference "[Today's Bookkeeping Towards Tomorrow](#)" had over 1,000 attendees.
- Monthly technical webinars commenced.
- LinkedIn company page was created, and ICB started actively posting in Twitter and Facebook as well.
- The first [ICB Advisory Board](#) was gathered together. The advisory board continues to meet regularly to discuss current issues and advise ICB management on direction and policy.
- One page "click-through" newsletter now offered as an alternative to the full newsletter.
- Launch of the [BAS Supervisory Agent \(BASSA\)](#) program, connecting experienced and ICB accredited BAS Agents with new bookkeepers who are starting the journey towards becoming a registered BAS Agent.
- ICB has representation on educational advisory boards IBSA (Innovation and Business Skills Australia), FCAC (Finance Sector Advisory Committee) and NTAN (National TAFE Accounting Network).



2014

- Conference attendance continued to increase, with over 1,100 attending "[Essential Learning, Essential Knowledge](#)".
- ICB started major project of [software feature comparison](#) (to be completed over the year).
- TPB released the [registered agent symbol](#), a great development for the professional standing of registered agents.
- New look ICB website launched.
- ICB Forum included a members' only section.
- The expanding ICB team moved to bigger offices.
- Membership reached over 4,000 during September.

2015

- "[Bookkeeping Now and the Future](#)" was the theme of this year's conference, with over 1,200 attendees.
- ICB CPE register was launched, allowing members to track all their professional education activities in the one place.
- ICB Global wins best international association award.
- ICB and the ATO present a joint webinar on the ATO's approach to debt.
- New Facebook group was launched: members only ICB Discussion and Support Group.
- The first [Global Bookkeeping Week](#) was initiated, inspiring bookkeepers around the world to acknowledge the great work we do for business owners.
- Membership reached over 5,000 during October.
- ICB technical support team is expanded to include members from around the country working remotely.

2016

- “Bookkeeping 2016” conference had over 1,400 attendees.
- June workshops with an end of year focus continue to be run in several locations around Australia
- The newsletters now have a total of over 12,000 subscribers to all versions, as well as over 3,300 subscribers to the newsletter podcast.
- Business Support Program was launched.
- Membership reached 6,000 during April.
- Rick Freitag was recognised for contribution to ICB and the industry with the first ICB Lifetime Membership award.
- Mel Power was awarded a Certificate of Recognition for “significant contribution to the growth and development of the bookkeeping community”.
- MYOB was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation and Recognition for “the support, sponsorship and commitment to the development of the bookkeeping profession and to ICB Australia (2006-2016)”.
- The team of staff is now 16 employees and contractors around Australia - we would not be where we are without the contributions of all current and past staff.
- There are now 74 network meetings around the country, run by ICB members.
- The website now has nearly 95,000 hits per month on average, with 64,000 unique visitors.
- The LinkedIn company page now has nearly 6,000 followers and a reach of over 7,000 per week on average; Facebook has around 2,500 followers and an average reach of over 6,000; and Twitter currently has nearly 2,000 followers and nearly 15,000 impressions per month.

Directors Report

Amanda Linton saw Matthew present at a MYOB event in Melbourne in early 2006 and joined as an ICB member soon after. She was invited to be a director late 2010. She sees ICB’s major contribution to the industry as being the dedication to developing the Tax Agents Services Act 2009, and the related BAS Agent professional development. The ICB resource development has also come a long way, giving real practical benefit to the members. ICB has been instrumental in raising the professional profile of bookkeepers from being unqualified and unregistered to being a legitimate and respected part of the tax agent regime. She says “I love this industry. We are the backbone of the SME industry”.

Before the inception of ICB, John Birse was active in the bookkeeping franchise networks and working to raise the standards of bookkeeping. John was introduced to Matthew after having seen him at MYOB events, and he was invited to be a director in early 2007.

John enthusiastically highlighted what he sees as ICB’s great achievements:

- The role of ICB in the Tax Agent Services Act 2009.
- Establishing professional standards for the bookkeeping profession and developing relevant skill sets for BAS Agents.
- Involvement in policy and decision making at government level.
- Visiting places like Darwin, Newcastle, Cairns and Tasmania to reach our members, not only the capital cities.
- Network meetings around the country are a fabulous initiative to educate members and share information amongst professional peers.
- Australia is emerging as a significant player in the global market and standards of bookkeeping, and ICB is a major contributor to this.
- ICB is the premier strategic partner for everyone in the industry - from student bookkeepers to BAS Agents to the ATO to government departments.

Agree with everything we do or with some of it, ICB has been and will continue to be a significant change agent, a resource, an informer and an advocate for professional and Certified Bookkeepers. “Bookkeepers helping Bookkeepers helping Business”. A great community.



ICB Annual Bookkeepers Survey

Survey Closes 31 December, 2016

The **2016 Annual Bookkeeping Survey** provides information to you about your world with questions such as "How many bookkeepers are actually using bank feeds?" "How many bookkeepers charge their clients for travel time?" "How much are bookkeepers charging?"



From 615 respondents so far, we can report that about half of you engage employees and about a third engage contractors, Only a third of you are satisfied with the financial return of your business. Over half of you have been in business for over eight years. We encourage anyone who has not yet participated in the survey to do so now before it closes on 31 December. We look forward to finding out the current state of affairs for more of you - contract and employee bookkeepers both!

ICB provide the independent survey results to government, software companies and the education sector to assist them to understand the reality of the bookkeeping profession. Help us to help them!

Which survey is right for you?

Contract Bookkeepers providing services to multiple clients:

[Access the Bookkeepers in Business Survey](#)

Employed Bookkeepers providing services to one clients:

[Access the Bookkeepers in Employment Survey](#)

Results will be published in January. You do not have to be an ICB member and you do not need to log in. We anticipate the survey to take approximately 15 minutes to complete. We do not capture your email address for any subsequent marketing without your permission. Everything you say is totally confidential.

Pass the link on to any colleagues, employees or even your accountant to complete, as the more information we can get, the better. You can access the past years results [here](#).

If you are having any problems accessing the survey, please contact us at admin@icb.org.au. We know your time is valuable, so we really appreciate your response.

ICB Annual Conference - Bookkeeping 2017

Make a note in your diary for The 2017 Bookkeeping Conference - Bookkeeping 2017

[Register Now](#)

To register for Bookkeeping 2017, please click the location you wish to attend



Hobart

Hobart

Wednesday 1 March, 2017
Hotel Grand Chancellor
1 Davey Street, Hobart



Brisbane

Brisbane

Tuesday 7 March, 2017
Royal International Convention
Centre
600 Gregory Terrace, Bowen Hills



Cairns

Cairns

Wednesday 8 March, 2017
Shangri-La Hotel
Pierpoint Road, Cairns



Darwin

Darwin

Thursday 9 March, 2017
Rydges Palmerston
15 Maluka Drive, Palmerston



Adelaide

Adelaide

Tuesday 14 March, 2017
Adelaide Convention Centre
North Terrace, Adelaide



Canberra

Canberra

Wednesday 15 March, 2017
Hotel Realm
18 National Circuit, Barton



Perth

Perth

Thursday 16 March, 2017
Crown Perth
Great Eastern Hwy, Burswood



Melbourne

Melbourne

Tuesday 21 March, 2017
or
Wednesday 22 March, 2017
Melbourne Park Function Centre
Batman Avenue, Melbourne



Sydney

Sydney

Monday 27 March, 2017
Sydney International Convention
Centre
321 Kent Street, Sydney

For full details regarding Bookkeeping 2017, [please click here](#).

Artificial Intelligence is Not Bank Feeds

The best use of our contemporary accounting software is to use it as the business administration and process system. The accounts and GST just happen behind the scenes.



Some businesses are creating their accounts in a process where they only code from a bank statement. Some accountants create the accounts not from the business processes but from the bank records. This isn't the best use of the "intelligence" that we have available to us in our existing software.

Using bank feeds in this way ignores the business process and only notes that someone has been paid, (it's on the statement), and the bank feed brings that into the software for allocation. This system creates the transaction in the software after the event and as a separate process. This technique is great for rescue jobs, (catching up the creation of accounts for a business that is way behind). This technique does use machine learning techniques, (in some cases), by the software observing coding behaviours and recommending what the next code could be. It could apply rules that have been previously set up. One of the downsides is that this accounts creation process is separate to the business processes, therefore every transaction of the business has been performed once when the business process happened, and again when the accounts are being created.

Comparison to Business Process

The business process would have the placement of the order or the receipt of the invoice already in the system. Therefore the obligation to pay the supplier's invoice is already entered into our accounting / business software. We can then control who we owe what and when to pay. A business typically has to pay suppliers by some conscious process conducted by humans. (I don't know of too many businesses that would allow a computer to automatically just pay their supplier's bills, neither should they). We hit a few buttons and indicate to the software to send a payment message to the bank; alternatively we create an ABA file for upload to the bank. The smart software has already allocated the expense when the invoice was received and already recorded the payment in the software when the supplier payment message was sent.

This process changes the use of bank feeds. Bank feeds don't create the transaction; the bank feed verifies what is already in the business records. The smart software looks in the transactions already recorded in the bank and matches the bank feed data to the software. It then looks for anomalies in amounts and would highlight that it can't match the items. It would provide the list of items not already in the system.

In this better use of bank feeds, we have removed a duplicate set of processes. The business did its thing and had already created the accounts. Bank feeds then verified the transaction.

Documents Have to Exist

The possibilities opened up by artificial intelligence in the software also highlight the dissection of responsibilities and expectations by the bookkeeper and business owner.

Unfortunately many are using bank feeds as the sole system for creating accounts. We are seeing accountants jump into using bank feeds as the 'next best thing' and for some it is a massive jump forward in their efficiency. Instead of manually coding a paper statement and having someone process it into a computer, the bank feed software does that in a fraction of the time. This highlights that the reliance on bank feeds alone to create the accounts is removed from the existence or reliance on the source documents, (invoices and receipts).



The accountants typically have buried in their terms of engagement that it is the responsibility of the business owner to keep all the necessary invoices and records of what has gone on in the business. They use the bank transactions as a means of pulling together the accounts based on assumptions that the records exist.

The bank statement or bank feed alone is not necessarily sufficient documentation. Bookkeepers need to advise the clients of the obligation to keep documents and to retain tax invoices and then agree on who is responsible for ensuring that system is in place. In many cases it is the bookkeeper's responsibility.

Bookkeeping is Not Just Bank Feed Processing

There are commentators and some accountants believing that bookkeeping is dead because they don't understand that we do far more than just code from statements, we actually help the business with all aspects of what they do. When some accountants are saying "We can do the bookkeeping for less", what they are actually saying is, "We can use bank feeds to auto-code the transactions". Our response should be "Well, that would be a step backwards. We already use bank feeds in this business to verify the transactions that were recorded as the business actually conducts their natural business process."

Note: Software should be used as the business tool and the accounting / GST / tax happens as a result. The bank feed should match against transactions already entered. I note there are many accountants and many business owners who could do with bookkeepers to help them to understand the most efficient use of software and bank feeds.

Maybe Bank Feeds is Part of Artificial Intelligence

It is the accounts happening 'behind the scenes' that is the current application of Artificial Intelligence to our world. We conduct the business in the software: we issue the invoices or make the retail sales, we process the payroll, we receive supplier invoices and we make the payments to suppliers. All those business processes conducted in the software are part of us or the business people doing the business which, because of the development of computer assisted processes, is also doing the bookkeeping.

Part of artificial intelligence is the concept of "machine learning". This is described as the machine learning what you would have done manually and processing it for you. Is this "auto-coding"?

Artificial or automated intelligence could help us with better review and certainty. We have been using the basic implementation of computerised processes for years. The next version is the machine / computer learning what our other behaviours have been in the past and then reviewing current behaviour. The machine will also highlight changes, possibly altering or amending transactions, but also reporting things to be checked or anomalies to be accepted.

Related References

- [ICB - Artificial Intelligence and Bookkeeping](#)

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Stop Underselling Your Product

Dear software companies,

Stop underselling your product.

The bookkeeping community love working with your products and love the efficiencies you bring us.

There are a couple of things we don't understand:

1. Why do you undervalue your own product? It seems some of you spend considerable time encouraging us toward value based pricing or fixed fees, yet constantly we see you selling your fully functioned business management software as though it is a dime a dozen spreadsheet. The constant discounts, volume based deals and promo codes are nice sometimes, but how can we position the value that your product could deliver when your own messaging says it isn't to be valued?

It causes us grief because the business owners don't understand why they are paying higher value for our services to utilise undervalued software.

2. It seems your own statistics say that when an advisor, (in our biased view a bookkeeper), assists a business with implementing and using your software that it works better. You, (and the ATO, interestingly), also seem to be saying that businesses survive better and are more profitable when they engage an advisor.

Our dilemma is the mixed message you send: on one hand you say, "Help the business do it properly"; on the other hand, you say, "You have to have more clients to be rewarded by us".

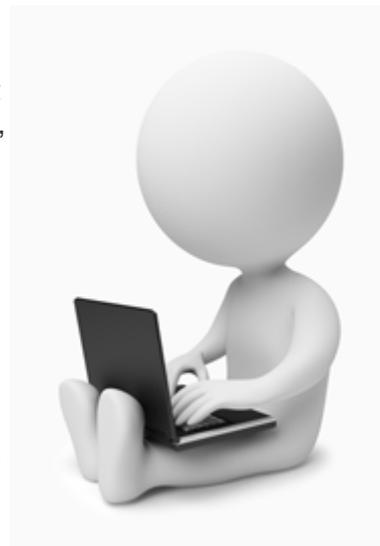
We are very concerned with the latter message: more clients doesn't mean a better business profile for us, nor does it mean the business is using your software properly. Please reward us for our commitment to knowing and understanding your product, servicing our mutual clients and keeping up to date. Note the decreased emphasis in number of clients. We are happy to be rewarded for using more of the advanced features.

3. We also wonder whether you are doing a disservice to the accounting profession. It seems you reward them for taking on multiple "ledgers" but frankly, all they are doing is coding from bank feeds. Your software typically is so much better than that. You are not positioning your product to them properly. Volume sales through accountants as a ledger product doesn't encourage loyalty nor 'stickability'. When the next year comes around they, will just look for the next cheap bank feed generated ledger.

Please remember we love your product because it is so much more than a ledger.

Kind regards,

Your loyal bookkeeper partners



[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Christmas Gifts Clarified

Christmas Gifts for Your Employees

Are gifts to your employees claimable? Gifts may be classified as “entertainment” or “non-entertainment”.

The provision of a gift to an employee at Christmas time, such as a hamper, may be a minor benefit that is an exempt benefit where the value is less than \$300. Where the gift is given at the Christmas party, each benefit can be considered separately.

For gifts such as wine, food, hampers, vouchers, etc., these are not considered to be entertainment.

- If the gift is a minor benefit (i.e., less than \$300 value), then the gift is tax deductible, and therefore GST is claimable for gifts to employees and their family members. No FBT applies to gifts of less than \$300.
- For gifts over \$300, FBT may apply for employees and their family members and it is tax deductible.

Gifts such as a holiday, membership to a club, or tickets to a theatre, sporting or musical event are considered to be entertainment.

- For minor benefits, under \$300, the gift is not tax deductible and no FBT applies.

For employees given a gift over \$300, the gift is tax deductible but it is also subject to FBT



Christmas Gifts for Your Clients and Suppliers

Are gifts to your clients and suppliers claimable? Gifts may be classified as “entertainment” or “non-entertainment”.

For gifts such as wine, food, hampers, vouchers, etc., these are not considered to be entertainment.

- Non-entertainment gifts to clients or suppliers are deductible and GST is claimable, no FBT implications.

Gifts such as a holiday, membership to a club, or tickets to a theatre, sporting or musical event are considered to be entertainment.

- For clients and suppliers, the entertainment gift is not tax deductible, no FBT applies and no GST is claimable.

See here for the full ICB resource for [Christmas Related Matters here](#).

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

New Deferral Requests - You Will Love It

The ATO have listened to our concerns about the many ways that the current deferral system seems to struggle.

From today forward;

1. The default position of the ATO is that your request will be granted.
2. Deferral of payment will automatically be linked and granted in line with the granting of the lodgment extension.
3. If you don't lodge all the information required, the ATO will contact you to obtain the information rather than reject the application.
4. The ATO will provide better instructions about how to apply.



The ATO recognises that BAS Agents are endeavouring to do the best by their clients and the best by the tax system, therefore they recognise that you are typically applying for extensions for valid reasons.

Watch this space as the ATO rapidly implements this philosophy.

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

TPB Annual Declaration

The Tax Practitioners Board requires an annual declaration for BAS and tax agents. It is a simple notification form providing your details to the TPB, which confirms to the TPB that you are meeting all of your obligations as a registered agent.



The annual declaration form replaces the professional indemnity insurance notification that was previously submitted each year.

The form will ensure that you have advised the TPB of the following:

- Your professional indemnity insurance policy – if you are covered by another agent's policy, include their policy details.
- That you are complying with your CPE requirements (for individual registrations).
- That you meet the fit and proper person requirements – certain events within the last five years may affect this status.
- That you are lodging and paying all your tax obligations – note that if you are on a payment plan with the ATO for your own tax obligations, and you are adhering to the terms of the payment plan, this is considered to be meeting your obligations.

Check Your Current Details

If you have changed any contact details, particularly your email address, make sure you update your contact details on your TPB portal well ahead of your renewal anniversary, so the TPB emails your annual declaration notification to the correct and current address.

Update your details from your [TPB portal](#). The TPB must be notified of any changes, including contact details, change in business structure, change in legal or trading name, change of circumstances that may affect your registration eligibility, or a change to professional association membership. These details are then notified to the ATO so that your registered agent details are the same for the TPB and the ATO.



BAS agent
79861007

Notification

The TPB will email you when you are required to fill out the annual declaration. It will be due on the anniversary of your renewal. Check the [TPB register](#) for your renewal date.

Notices will issue:

- 45 days in advance of the submission date.
- Reminder 15 days before due date if not lodged
- SMS and phone calls if not lodged with 7 days to go

You will not be required to lodge an annual declaration in the year of your Renewal. The annual declaration form is required for the two years following registration renewal, during your registration period.

There is no fee.

This form replaces the previous requirement to notify the TPB about your PII details.

Related References

- [ICB – Applying and Renewing as a BAS Agent](#)
- [ICB – BAS Agent Resources](#)

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

TPB Investigating Unregistered BAS Service Providers

The TPB wants you to 'dob' in [unregistered BAS preparers](#).

They have found on Gumtree and similar websites, (for only a small part of Australia), over 1,000 apparent unregistered preparers.

Of the 134 advertisements, 106 were recognised as being in breach of 50-10 of the TASA and the following actions occurred:

- Advertisements removed / amended by an unregistered entity
- Change of behaviour, (with ads amended to include relevant identifying details and / or refer to the correct registered entity)
- Escalated for further compliance action based on previous transgressions.



BAS agent
79861007

They are currently **actively** pursuing people who previously registered with the Board, but did not continue as registered agents when the full requirements commenced. They have detected 1,388 breaches and have follow-up action currently in process with 238 entities.

The TPB asks for complaints to be made either through the TPB complaints form, where your complaint can be treated as anonymous, or can be emailed to TPBComplianceReferral@tpb.gov.au.

You can provide details of possible unregistered behaviour or references to advertisements that may be used to promote unregistered activity. This information can remain anonymous and will be included in the ongoing project.

ICB is prepared to be the complainant to the TPB if you wish to remain totally anonymous in the process, [click here](#) to advise us of your concerns.

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

TPB Terminates BAS Agent Partnership

BAS Agent Partnership's Failure to Have Sufficient Number

A BAS agent partnership's registration was terminated on the basis that it no longer had any registered individuals to provide BAS services to a competent standard and carry out supervisory arrangements.

The partnership's two supervising BAS agents had failed to renew their individual registration, and despite numerous attempts by the TPB to advise the partnership of the consequences of not meeting their sufficient number requirements, the partnership failed to respond. The TPB consequently terminated the partnership's registration.

Having a sufficient number of individual registered agents to provide services to a competent standard and to carry out supervisory arrangements is a legislative requirement for company and partnership agents. The TPB will take prompt action where an entity ceases to meet this requirement.

Extract from the TPB Code of Professional Conduct:

- In particular, a partnership or company agent must ensure that at all times there is a sufficient number of individuals, being registered tax agents (in the case of a tax agent) or registered tax agents or BAS agents (in the case of a BAS agent) to provide tax agent or BAS services to a competent standard and to carry out supervisory arrangements.

Related References

- [TPB - Code of Professional Conduct](#)



BAS agent
79861007

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

TPB Report

The TPB reports as of the end of October 2016:

- 1,701 applications in process (547 new, of which 197 were BAS agents and 1,154 renewals, of which 158 were BAS agents)
- It is taking 28 days to process new BAS agent applications and 32 days to process a renewal.
- 14,940 BAS agents are currently registered, of which there were 11,732 individuals
- The annual declaration process has seen a number of agents withdraw their registration
- 521 complaints received, of which 57 were against BAS agents and 66 against unregistered service providers
- 6 agents have had their registration terminated or their renewal rejected



BAS agent
79861007

Important Note

Renewals **must** be lodged 30 days before expiry. Once lodged you are deemed to be renewed unless the TPB tells you otherwise.

The full report is available to [download here](#).

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Continued Professional Education

This Month From the ICB Continued Professional Education Webpage

ICB Events and Webinars

[ICB Annual Conference - Bookkeeping 2017](#)
Nationally, March 2017

[ICB Technical Webinar - The Bookkeeping Cycle - End of Month Webinar](#), 19th January, 2017

[ICB Technical Webinar - Review of Payroll Entitlements](#)
Webinar, 31st January, 2017

[ICB Technical Webinar - The Bookkeeping Cycle - BAS](#)
Webinar, 9th February, 2017

[ICB Technical Webinar - The Bookkeeping Cycle - End of Year Preparation](#)
Webinar, 16th February, 2017



Classroom

All classroom training is now finished for the year - look out for new courses in the New Year.



Online

[Effortless Bookkeeping with Receipt Bank](#)
Online
Multi-Dates

[Excel Training Courses](#)
Online
Multi-Dates

[MYOB Training Courses](#)
Online
Multi-Dates

[Xero Training Courses](#)
Online
Multi-Dates



[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Question For You to Discuss This Month - How to Encourage a Client to Move Forward

This month's question for you all to debate at your network meeting is:

My client has to upgrade software, as they are currently on a low grade product that does not meet NFP reporting requirements, specifically, it will not produce a cashflow report and I cannot get a consolidated profit and loss statement for all bank accounts in use. I have provided them with various options, but they don't want to pay monthly subscription fees, and they don't understand the importance of ASIC reporting obligations. (In the past, the volunteer committee has actually not provided correct reports to Consumer Affairs).

Do you have any suggestions for how I can convince them to move to a real accounting product when none of the committee is interested in the financial reports of the entity?



[Let us know your thoughts here.](#)

Last month we asked you:

Why are dairy farmers charged GST when their milk is picked up from the dairy, (before any processing), but it is sold at the supermarket GST free?

ICB's Response:

It is true, unprocessed cow's milk is subject to GST. And yet once it has been processed in any way, it will become GST free.

This is because at the "raw" stage, before processing, the milk is not considered to be food "fit for human consumption" and is excluded from the definition of "food". But once it becomes a product that is deemed to be food for human consumption, it is GST free under Section 38-4 of the GST act exemptions provisions for food.

Similarly, live animal sales are subject to GST, but once the animal has been killed and inspected by an authorised person as fit for human consumption, the meat becomes GST free food.

Just to keep things interesting, goat and sheep milk is GST free, whether it has been processed or not.

References

- [ATO - Farm to Food Product Transformation](#)
- [ATO - GST Act 38-4](#)
- [ICB - Warped Versions of GST](#)

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Upcoming Network Meetings

Join a network meeting, not just to share, but to also network and keep informed.

All ICB Network Facilitators volunteer their time to assist ICB in keeping you up to date and informed and without the help of these fantastic people these valuable meetings would not happen.

If you are unable to attend your local meeting due to time restraints or there isn't a meeting in your area, why not join us via webinar on the 2nd week of each month.

Webinars				
Online - 12pm 13th January, 2017	Online - 5pm 9th January, 2017			
ACT				
Canberra - Northside 18th January, 2017	Canberra - Phillip TBA			
New South Wales				
Albury TBA	Ballina 10th February, 2017	Balmain 16th January, 2017	Bathurst 21st February, 2017	Bellingen TBA
Blue Mountains TBA	Brookvale 7th February, 2017	Central Coast TBA	Dubbo 3rd April, 2017	Hawkesbury Region TBA
Hills Region (Rouse Hill) 18th January, 2017	Hornsby 9th February, 2017	Lower North Shore TBA	Newcastle TBA	Newport 14th February, 2017
Orange 17th February, 2017	Port Macquarie 14th February, 2017	Randwick - Bondi TBA	Shoalhaven 6th February, 2017	Southern Highlands TBA
Sutherland 18th January, 2017	Wollongong 17th February, 2017			
Queensland				
Atherton Tablelands 16th January, 2017	Brisbane North 10th January, 2017	Brisbane South TBA	Bundaberg TBA	Burpengary TBA
Cairns 19th January, 2017	Dalby TBA	Gold Coast - AM 14th February, 2017	Gold Coast - PM 14th February, 2017	Hervey Bay TBA
Ipswich 17th January, 2017	Logan 18th January, 2017	Moreton Bay 9th January, 2017	Nth Sunshine Coast 10th February, 2017	Paddington TBA
Port Douglas 10th February, 2017	Sth Sunshine Coast 9th February, 2017	Toowoomba 10th February, 2017	Townsville 10th February, 2017	
South Australia				
Adelaide West 20th January, 2017	Mt Barker 14th February, 2017	Para Hills 18th January, 2017	South Adelaide 2nd February, 2017	Unley TBA
Victoria				
Brunswick TBA	Bulleen TBA	Burwood 1st February, 2017	Chadstone 6th February, 2017	Cobram 2nd February, 2017
Craigieburn 21st February, 2017	Docklands 10th February, 2017	Echuca 23rd February, 2017	Frankston TBA	Geelong 14th February, 2017

Lilydale 28th January, 2017	Macedon Ranges TBA	Mordialloc TBA	Mt Waverley TBA	Narre Warren 14th February, 2017
Point Cook TBA	Sale TBA	Warragul 1st January, 2017	Yarra Valley 10th February, 2017	
Western Australia				
Broome TBA	Bunbury 22nd February, 2017	Busselton 20th January, 2017	Cockburn Central 18th January, 2017	Geraldton 3rd March, 2017
Joondalup 16th February, 2017	Kalgoorlie TBA	Melville 8th February, 2017	Noranda 8th February, 2017	Welshpool 21st February, 2017
Tasmania			Northern Territory	
Hobart 13th January, 2017	Launceston 19th January, 2017		Darwin 13th February, 2017	

These meetings are conducted in a relaxed and informal environment to promote discussion amongst those attending the meetings.

No meeting in your area?

We are always on the lookout for facilitators to run meetings in their local area so if you are interested please contact Carmel Wright [here](#).



ICB Network Meetings are proudly supported by MYOB

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Other Things Happening in the World

Public Holidays in Victoria

The Fair Work Ombudsman has advised that Christmas Day (25 December) has been [gazetted](#) as a public holiday for the state of Victoria. 27 December remains a public holiday for Victoria.

This means 25, 26 and 27 December will be treated as public holidays for the purpose of employee entitlements.

This change brings Victoria into line with the other states which have previously observed public holidays on the day that they fall, as well as observing a replacement holiday if the actual day falls on a weekend.



Note that trading restrictions apply to businesses on Christmas Day, but trading restrictions will not apply to the substituted holiday of Tuesday 27 December.

For further information about public holiday dates and entitlements in your state or territory [click here](#).

See also ICB's information on [Christmas Matters](#).

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

ICB Christmas 2016 Closure Notice

ICB's office will be closed from:

2.00pm Friday 23rd December, 2016 (AEDST)

until

8.00am Tuesday 3rd January, 2017 (AEDST).

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.



[RETURN TO TOP](#)

What's New this Month from ICB

New and updated resources for December 2016

- [December 2016 Network Meeting Webinar](#)
- [November 2016 Members Newsletter Podcast](#)
- [ATO - How to Use the BAS Agent Portal](#)
- [BAS Agent Portal Dashboard](#)
- [Bookkeepers Reference Guide 2016-2017](#)
- [Audited by the ATO - What to Expect](#)
- [Termination Pays - 2016 - 2017](#)
- [Not For Profit](#)

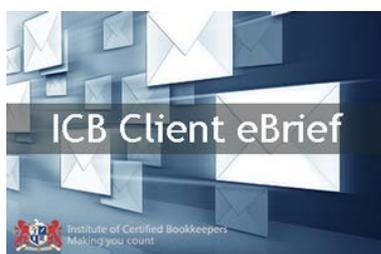


[Click here to view the latest news for the month.](#)

[ICB Q & A Space](#) - You can check out all the latest threads here. Feel free to ask your questions regarding any issue you may be having or if you require clarification, we are here to help. The [Latest Updates](#) lists all the topics in order of replies.

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

December 2016 eBrief Newsletter for Your Business



The December 2016 Bookkeeping eBrief is now available for you to download.

- [December 2016 Bookkeeping eBrief Newsletter - PDF](#)

[Back copies are available here.](#)

"The best bookkeepers using the best resources".

Major Features Released for Reckon

We've had a huge year with many new features released in [Reckon One](#), a few highlights include:

In April, we [released our newest Payroll module](#) with unlimited employees for \$3 p/m built on the idea of no steep price increases as your business grows.

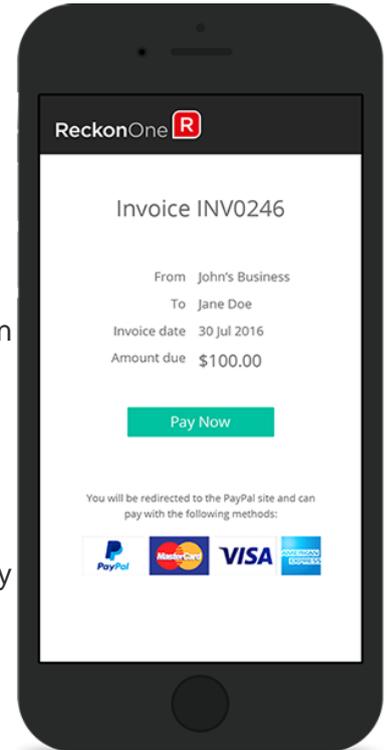
In July, we enabled TPAR reporting in the Core (The Basics) module, for those operating in the building and construction industry. A release to our Payroll module enabled lodgement of [SuperStream compliant](#) files automatically via NAB Super Pay or the Ozedi Gateway. Finally, we [partnered with PayPal](#) to include a 'pay now' option on invoices to help small businesses get paid faster.

In August, we moved our navigation from horizontal to vertical making Reckon One even easier to navigate, with significantly less clicks needed to get to what you're after.

Reckon One is an affordable premium online accounting solution that can be uniquely engineered to fit any business. For more information please [click here](#).

We wish you all the best for the holiday season and a successful year ahead!

Kind regards,
Andrew Hellier and The Reckon Team



[RETURN TO TOP](#)

From the ATO

ATO Streamlines Private Ruling Applications

The ATO have released a new application form to streamline the application process for private rulings. This allows agents to lodge applications in the ATO accepted style and format. It provides greater guidance when applying for a ruling, and "recognises your significant skill and ability".



Activity statements and tax returns should still be lodged by the due date, even if you are waiting on the results of a ruling. If the ruling changes your lodgement, this can be revised later.

Agents can include details of any relevant research you have undertaken, as well as your professional opinion of how the law applies to your specific situation. Rulings can only be given on situations that are actually relevant to your client. The ATO will not give rulings about hypothetical situations.

Information Required

- Your agent details
- Your client's details
- The general subject, e.g., GST, employee or contractor
- Completed application form, including details of the scenario, time frame, relevant law
- Supporting documents if relevant

Portal Lodgement

- Go to **Online forms**, select **Private ruling application**.
- Complete the online form and attach your saved application.
- If further information is required, this can be submitted via the **Submit further information** link.
- Once lodged through the portal, you will receive a lodgement receipt. Lodging through the business or agent portal will provide a faster result than lodging via fax or post, however these options are available.

The ATO is bound to reply within 30 days, either to provide the ruling, or to advise that a ruling will not be provided, (and the reason why), or to negotiate a new date for particularly complex matters.

Complex Issue Resolution

Before lodging an application, check the existing rulings and technical advice on similar or related matters. It may also be appropriate to first contact the complex issue resolution service. These issues are generally responded to within 5 working days.

Related References

- [ICB - Complex Tax Issue Resolution for BAS Agents](#)
- [ATO - Applying for a Private Ruling](#)
- [ATO - Advice Products - Rulings](#)

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Upcoming Portal Maintenance

See [this link for scheduled times](#) for the full guide to system maintenance and issues.

The portals will be unavailable at the following times for scheduled system maintenance.

Regular Planned System Maintenance

Saturday 7th January, 2017 9.00pm AEDST	Sunday 8th January, 2017 9.00am AEDST
Saturday 4th February, 2017 9.00pm AEDST	Sunday 5th February, 2017 9.00am AEDST

Please note the long shutdown over Christmas and New Year.

Annual Shutdown System Maintenance

Friday 23rd December, 2016 9.00pm AEDST	Tuesday 3rd January, 2017 7.00am AEDST
---	--

For more details regarding BAS Agent portal maintenance, [click here](#).

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

ICB Membership Statistics as at 30th November, 2016

6,344

3,563 Members maintain Fellow, Member, Associate, Affiliate and Educator membership.

ICB also has 18 Accredited Training Provider Members and 2,763 Student Members.

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

ICB Supporters and Sponsors



[RETURN TO TOP](#)

Please note that, in between newsletter issues, articles maybe published straight to the *Latest News* section of the website.

The Institute of Certified Bookkeepers complies with the Spam Act 2003 and we have a documented [Spam Policy](#) on our website. You can unsubscribe from ICB newsletters and updates [here](#).

ICB's Newsletter contains news articles, links and regular sections that we feel will be of interest. If there is anything that you would like to see, whether a regular feature or a one-off, please let us know. Email your ideas to admin@icb.org.au

The monthly Newsletter for members of the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers.

A selection of those articles listed are accessible by ICB Members **only** - ICB Members, you will need to be logged onto the ICB website to view all the articles in full.

The newsletter of ICB is designed as information and resources for Bookkeepers with clients and also bookkeepers in employment. The content of the newsletter maybe relevant in part or in whole to other publications or other purposes.

The ICB withholds all rights of all content that is restricted to member access only and that information included in the member newsletter. Member only information is not to be reproduced without specific consent from ICB.

The ICB permits reproduction of ICB articles and material contained in the non-members newsletter and available publicly on the website on the proviso that acknowledgement of ICB is specifically provided including links to the ICB website and original article. e.g. "This information has been obtained from the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers from www.icb.org.au.