

Bookkeepers helping Bookkeepers help Business

April 2013

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News, views and things you need to know

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Important News for You

- ICB Australia Advisory Board

Best Practice Bookkeeping

- Bank Feeds - How to check if they are reliable
- Super-Guarantee rates go up - Bookkeepers Best Practice
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From the ICB

- 2013 Member Meeting Outcome

What is a bookkeeper in 2013?

There is much debate as to the breadth and depth of what a bookkeeper was and is and should be. There are many claims that due to “the cloud”, bookkeeping is dead and we should all be looking for something else to do.

HOW CAN THAT BE

When you are asked what you do? Typically we answer “A Bookkeeper”. We need to then explain what that means before you are categorised into whatever that person thinks it means: We spend our time working on advising, setting up and managing integrated business systems

Our view of what is happening at the moment is that due to the cloud, due to the advancement of technology:

- the role of a bookkeeper is becoming more obvious
- the competence required to do bookkeeping properly is more evident
- and the essential/compulsory and integral role of a bookkeeper for the success of a business and for a business to meet their compliance obligations, their record keeping requirements is being appreciated and acknowledged by so many more.

The ATO and Treasury and other sectors of government are now first seeing and recognising that bookkeepers are a significant player in assisting business to be well run. Treasury and the SBR project team have caught on that Bookkeepers and BAS Agents are the ones actually preparing and lodging many, many BAS's.

The better software companies are recognising that, in Australia, it is the Bookkeepers who are working very closely with business, more frequently with business and who are at the forefront of what technology a business implements. It is the bookkeeper who should lead the charge on changes to software to do with accounting/bookkeeping/compliance/record keeping as it is the bookkeeper working with it “more than once a year”!

Technology is bringing us better solutions and better ways to do business. Technology is changing what we do, it is not removing it.

The implementation of GST in 2000 brought bookkeepers to light and significance....someone needed to make sure the business was collecting GST when it should and getting every cent of it back...typically the bookkeeper. Someone needed to work closely with the business to change their business processes and comply with the new requirements, typically the bookkeeper.

In Australia we have two kindred professions: Accountants and Bookkeepers. Their roles overlap and many accountants do Bookkeeping and many bookkeepers do accounting.
(As an aside neither word is protected: anyone can call themselves either an accountant or a bookkeeper)

Bookkeeping duties include:

- Recognising what the business does and making sure the customer gets billed
- Issuing and then recording that invoice
- then making sure the customer pays

Alternatively, how did they record the sale/take that cash for what (Point of sale systems. Registers, the till). Receiving, banking and recording that money.

What is the business process for making money and how should it be recorded?

Bookkeepers are responsible for:

- Tracking down all the ways the business spends money
- Cash payments – trying to get the documents, working out what it is for, recording it
- Is there an ordering system? Does there need to be one? How to record and reconcile the systems
- Supplier invoices to be received, checked for validity, scheduled/noted for payment
- Paying suppliers and recording the payment
- Paying employees and recording the payment and the payroll obligations
- Meeting all employment on costs and obligations
- What is the business process for spending money and how should it be recorded?

Bookkeeping isn't just historical processing.

Bookkeeping is “integrated business systems management”

Noting that bookkeeping remains subject to what the business requires.

(Adapted from the opening comments by Matthew Addison at [ICB conference 2013](#))

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Do you read marketing material?

Do you expect your marketing material to be read?

What was the last bit of marketing or new approach to you that you actually engaged with? Was there something that you actually read and then took to the next step of reading some more or finding out about the person who produced it?

I am a conservative accountant, apparently! So maybe not the best marketer but as a business person I receive constant barrage of email marketing, hardcopy marketing or I am looking for answers on the web. **What does engage me?** Information that is relevant to my needs or what I am doing!

Therefore if I am doing “marketing” by an email or hardcopy or even the web, I am looking to provide people with information to engage them.

Hit the audience between the eyes by answering their question!
Provide the relevant “key” words that will appeal to the audience. (Although key word searching seems to have become very tainted).
Don't overcrowd the information piece.

The research appears to be saying that the average time spent on any webpage is down below 3 seconds. So each page needs to engage quickly.

I think this is indicative of any marketing. Tell me something I need to hear, or wanted to hear, or didn't know I needed to hear but is totally relevant.

ICB endeavours to assist you with this aspect of what you are doing through the provision of Business Information Sheets. Small documents you are able to provide to your existing and potential clients to show them your professionalism, your currency and to engage them in further discussion.

We provide monthly [“eBRIEF” newsletters](#) for you to provide to your clients.

I am not a fan of insurance companies. There is something fundamentally wrong with an industry based on commission only. However, when it was time for ICB to research the insurance market on behalf of bookkeepers, we had a very easy place to start – the Insurance company who had been offering us information, making contact (not too often, but enough) to keep their name in front of us and to keep us informed. We then delved into engaging with their solution and making sure it worked for us. The point – we knew where to find them, we knew they provided decent information so we then engaged with them when we needed some assistance.

Ensure your marketing hits the spot. Ensure it gets at least opened.

Most importantly when trying to engage with an unknown person – don't lie to them. An example was put to me recently of the way to get marketing material looked at was to label the envelope with "X-rays enclosed". Then there was an add with a skeleton. My first reactions are not positive. It is a long way back from being lied to.

Marketing via paper, via web needs to create instant engagement.

[For more Marketing ideas and information, click here](#)

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Best Practice Bookkeeping

Super-guarantee rate goes up

Superannuation Guarantee Rate - which one applies for when?

IT IS ABOUT THE DATE THE PAY (Ordinary Time Earnings) IS PHYSICALLY PAID!

For pays actually paid before 30th June calculate the super at 9%
If the pay is paid after 30th June then the super amount is calculated at 9.25%

Background:

As you are aware, the MRRT package of reforms included the increasing of the Superannuation Guarantee Rates from 9% for before 30 June 2013 to 9.25% from 1 July 2013.

The question is: To what amounts is the 9.25% applied?

Is it only to salary and wages (OTE) accrued after 30th June 2013?
Is it only to all payments for salary and wages (OTE) paid after 30th June, irrespective of when they are accrued?

One (incorrect) thought was that the 9.25% applies to any "payments" of the **super** made after 30th June. This would have been really complicating for business who have accrued at 9%.

Another thought has been that: in terms in the SG Administration Act of "paid for the quarter" could be read in a number of manners with the emphasis being on "paid" as in date of payment of the super, or the emphasis being on "for the quarter" which means when it was accrued.

The Correct Answers

9% applies to all pay physically paid before 30th June
9.25% applies to all pays physically paid after 30th June

Practical Examples

1. If on the 2nd July 2013 a payment of wages (OTE) is being made for the previous month, which rate applies? Is it 9% as it was for the quarter before the change or does 9.25% apply as it was paid after the date of change?

Answer: On 2 July 2013 the wages are paid to an employee for June 2013. The SG contribution is to be calculated at the 9.25% rate.

If the wage was PAID in June but on 2 July 2013 the SG contributions are made on, the SG contribution is to be calculated at the 9% rate.

2. Alternatively if the payment was on the 2nd July for the week so that 5 days was pre 30 June and 2 days after 30 June is the rate different ie 9% for the 5 days pre 30 June and 9.25% for the 2 days after?

Answer: On 2 July 2013 OTE is paid to an employee that relates partly to unpaid wages accrued up to 30 June 2013 and partly to work performed after 30 June 2013. The SG contribution is to be calculated at the new rate of 9.25% on the full amount of OTE which is paid on 2 July 2013.

3. If the employer pays the superannuation LATE ie after 28th July then the Super Guarantee Charge calculations come into play and it would assess the charge at the new rate of 9.25% against the OTE for the previous quarter. Is this correct?

Answer: Superannuation guarantee (SG) contributions are payable as a percentage (9% or 9.25%) of ordinary time earnings (OTE) paid. Contributions are required to be paid by the 28th day after each quarter end. For the quarter end 30 June 2013, SG contributions should be paid to employee super accounts by 28 July 2013.

The ATO advises "When an employer does not meet the quarterly contribution cut-off date, they are liable for the SG charge (SGC) which is payable to the ATO. The SGC is calculated as a percentage (9% or 9.25%) of salary or wages paid.

For both SG contributions payable to funds and SGC payable to the ATO, the rate to apply (9% or 9.25%) is determined by the date on which the OTE/salary amount was paid to the employee".

4. If an employee is paid on Thursday 4th July, 2013 for fortnight commenced Friday 21st June, 2013; do they get 9.25% SGC based on whole fortnight's pay or 9.00% to 30/6/13 pay portion and then 9.25% on remainder?

Answer: should be clear from the above that it is related to the date of payment so it would all be at 9.25%

5. Is this Employer allowed to pay them part pay on Friday 28/6/13 with 9.00% SGC and then remainder of fortnight on Thursday 4/7/13 with 9.25% SGC?

Answer: Good question, we expect in a general sense the answer is NO. As you would be varying the terms of employment for the purpose of paying them less remuneration. We expect it becomes subject to the employment agreement etc etc. We would strongly recommend that any such actions were with total communication and then agreement by the employee before such action was taken.

THE ANSWER

The new 9.25% rate is applied to salary/OTE amounts paid after 30 June 2013, irrespective of when those amounts accrued.

The 9% rate applies to OTE/salary paid up to 30 June 2013.

The new 9.25% rate will apply to OTE/salary amounts paid from 1 July 2013 onwards (2013-14 year).

Tax File Number Declarations - Is it our problem?

Question: TFN Declarations – where does the Bookkeeper/BAS Agent stand if they continue providing services for a Business/Employer that continually refuses to obtain TFN Declarations?

Do they just complete Payment Summaries and Annual Return with address “Care of the Business Address” with relevant default TFN and leave Date of Birth blank? Is the Bookkeeper/BAS Agent liable for penalties etc from ATO and hence prosecution from anyone?

Answer: As always, you are only required to do what you are engaged to do. So if the client says "don't think about it" or "don't process it", then you have not been engaged to do any work on this matter therefore there is no requirement to do things you are not engaged to do.

However

You are a professional and maybe you are a BAS Agent.

Therefore

You have a duty to advise the entity of their rights and obligations under the law:

1. Advise the entity of the obligations as an employer
2. As a BAS Agent you cannot participate in the making of a false statement to the Commissioner NOR participate in withholding an incorrect amount. So if an employer is making a payment to a person, where there are no details known about that person, then the obligation on the employer is to withhold 48.5%. You cannot knowingly help that client to ignore the law and the obligations.

So what do you do? In the case described you should not be involved in processing the payment to the “unknown” employee. You therefore cannot be involved in declaring the amount of tax withheld on a BAS as being the correct amount if you know that they have not withheld the correct amount.

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Taxable Payments Reporting - Construction Industry

Taxable Payments Reporting System – Who is allowed to do what? and How to lodge?

Background:

"Taxable Payments Reporting" is being applied to the Construction Industry
For an explanation refer to ICB Resources

Legislative impact on who is allowed to do what:

The legislation regarding this section of reporting is part of tax law.

The forms are most likely caught in "representing an entity in their dealings with the commissioner"¹ and only a registered Tax Agent is allowed to advise, ascertain, represent on behalf of a taxpayer under the TASA2009, in circumstances where it is being relied on.

The only people allowed to “represent” are the taxpayer themselves, or if an Agent has been appointed to help that taxpayer then that agent must be a registered tax agent.

Until the particular "service" has been included in the list of services defined as "BAS Services" which this one HAS NOT. YET!

There are changes proposed but not yet law.

So what does a bookkeeper (or a BAS Agent) do?

They can use tools to provide reports to the taxpayer. They can use a system to administer and keep the books in a manner that will facilitate the reports.

Unless you are a registered tax agent, at this point in time, you cannot advise a taxpayer how the system applies to an entity. You cannot provide certainty that the reports are correct and suitable for lodgement and you cannot lodge them.

As stated, you can provide reports out of the system to the taxpayer that they may then verify themselves or have verified by someone else but a BAS Agent and bookkeeper cannot be the one "relied on".

Best Practice Bookkeeping to assist in Taxable Payments Reporting

Provide business owner with general information about the system

[ICB Explanation \(ICB Member page\)](#)

Provide them the means to assess whether the law applies to them:

[ICB Assessment guide for Business \(ICB Member page\)](#)

Assuming the business or their tax agent advises that the system is to be applied then:



Flag Suppliers for Taxable Payments Report (TPR)

- Print Supplier List
- Client to highlight applicable Suppliers for TPR
- Bookkeeper to flag Suppliers in software



Report supplier invoices in software for TPR

- All invoices for the flagged suppliers to be included
- In invoice ONLY goods, gain approval from client to remove TPR

Only PAID invoices to be included in TPR at 30/6/2013 (it seems all software is aware of this requirement)



Preparing TPR Reports and file

- Print report of suppliers and YTD Paid Value for TPR for review by client (you may need to export to Excel if report is not available in your software)
- Create file of TPR in required format
- Business may lodge on Business Portal or Tax Agent can lodge through Portal or SBR enabled software

How to lodge the form?

The ATO have implemented a file lodgment facility in the Portals. This is not yet perfected but permitted Agents and Businesses can use this facility.

SBR enabled software that has implemented this form will also be a viable mechanism. Otherwise in theory it is paper. I understand that the ATO would prefer NO PAPER versions but if we don't get sufficient electronic means then where do we go?

In the software?

[Refer ICB information on how to prepare the reports and information in the mainstream software \(ICB Member page\).](#)

¹90-5 Meaning of tax agent service

1. A **tax agent service** is any service: A service specified in the regulations for the purposes of this subsection is not a tax agent service.
 - a. that relates to:
 - i. ascertaining liabilities, obligations or entitlements of an entity that arise, or could arise, under a *taxation law; or
 - ii. advising an entity about liabilities, obligations or entitlements of the entity or another entity that arise, or could arise, under a taxation law; or
 - iii. representing an entity in their dealings with the Commissioner; and
 - b. that is provided in circumstances where the entity can reasonably be expected to rely on the service for either or both of the following purposes:
 - i. to satisfy liabilities or obligations that arise, or could arise, under a taxation law
 - ii. to claim entitlements that arise, or could arise, under a taxation law.
2. A service specified in the regulations for the purposes of this subsection is not a **tax agent service**.

Note: For specification by class, see subsection 13(3) of the Legislative Instruments Act 2003.

90-10 Meaning of BAS service

1. A BAS service is a *tax agent service": A service specified in the regulations for the purposes of this subsection is not a BAS service.
 - a. that relates to:
 - i. ascertaining liabilities, obligations or entitlements of an entity that arise, or could arise, under a *BAS provision; or
 - ii. advising an entity about liabilities, obligations or entitlements of the entity or another entity that arise, or could arise, under a BAS provision; or
 - iii. representing an entity in their dealings with the Commissioner in relation to a BAS provision; and
 - b. that is provided in circumstances where the entity can reasonably be expected to rely on the service for either or both of the following purposes:
 - i. to satisfy liabilities or obligations that arise, or could arise, under a BAS provision
 - ii. to claim entitlements that arise, or could arise, under a BAS provision.
2. A service specified in the regulations for the purposes of this subsection is not a **BAS service**.

Note: For specification by class, see subsection 13(3) of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003*.

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What is a bookkeeper allowed to do???

What is a Bookkeeper allowed to do (as of today) in relation to:

1. Taxable Payments Reporting – Building and Construction Industry
2. Superannuation Guarantee

Similar concept to what a BAS Agent can do as compared to what a Bookkeeper can do in relation to BAS preparation etc.

From the ICB Definitive Guide as to How to apply the Code of Conduct!

What is a BAS Agent allowed to do?

A BAS Agent is issued a licence that says they can: Advise a client, provide certainty to a client or represent that client to the tax office in relation to:

- All GST matters
- Wine Tax, Fuel Tax, Luxury Car Tax matters,
- Payment of FBT,
- All aspects of Payroll that relate to the withholding of tax amounts and the reporting of that amount to the employee and the Tax office,
- All aspects of other PAYG Withholding amounts: ie no ABN, Interest and Dividend,
- All aspects of the payment of income tax via PAYG Instalments

A Tax Agent can also do these and then other areas of tax also.

What does this mean?

A registered Agent may:

- Design and set up compliance systems
- Advise the client on how the above areas of law affect them
- Review a client's operations in relation to these areas of law and
- Provide certainty to that client that they are getting it right.

These tasks cannot be done by a bookkeeper who is not a registered Agent.

So, what can a Bookkeeper do who is not a BAS Agent?

- They can follow systems designed by others
- They can process
- They can reconcile and produce results

But not if the client is relying on those, without further action to be certain that they are meeting their obligations

- They should raise questions and not answer them

A BAS Agent can be a business with one or more qualified persons (registered BAS Agent/s) and others working, performing BAS Services, being supervised and controlled by the qualified person.

This is legal!

So in terms of TPR & SGC both a bookkeeper and a BAS Agent apply these same above principles on a restricted basis.

Employees

Employee bookkeepers, owners who are doing this work for their own business are permitted to prepare both SGC work and also TPR work on their own businesses behalf.

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Salary Packaging - The concept

What does it mean for a bookkeeper

The concept: Part of what otherwise would be considered the normal Gross Pay of the worker is reallocated/reclassified as an expense of the employer due to the manner in which the money is being spent.

Instead of the employer simply paying the employee their total Gross Pay (less the tax), the employer takes on a packaging arrangement with the employee and now pays a reduced Gross pay (less a smaller amount of tax) and the balance of what would have been paid goes into the provision of a benefit to the employee, ie

a motor vehicle or increased superannuation etc.

For a bookkeeper: Mostly you should receive instruction as to what has been agreed by the business with the employee and then keep it simple.

It is normal for only the reduced Gross pay to be in the payroll system and all other aspects of the total package are retained in a separate set of records outside of the payroll accounting system. Some systems can certainly cope with a full recording within the system.

The simple version is payroll deals with the gross pay and the expenses are simply coded as expenses. A step up is where the package expenses are caught separately as packaged expenses to enable easier tracking of the total cost of employment.

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Business Registration Assistance

From the Government

Two different technology provided solutions to help business deal with government.

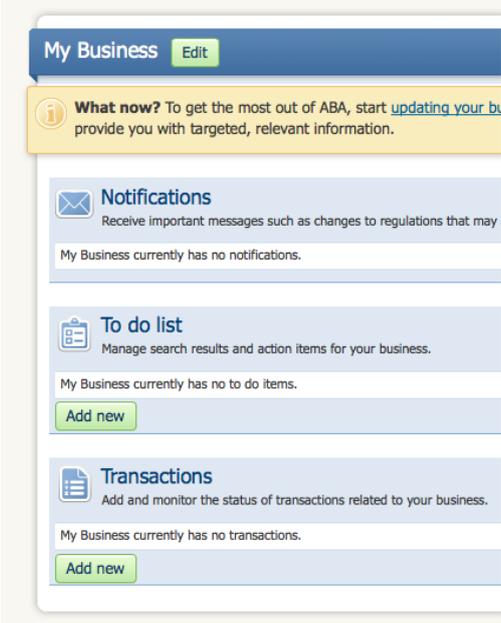
1) Register for an “ABA” Australian Business Account

<https://account.business.gov.au/>

This becomes a username and password that provides access to government websites. When linked to the entities AusKey it can become a master access code.

Its alternate purpose is to provide a communication or CRM functionality to manage your various government interactions.

Provides quick links into key “new business” areas of interest



Popular resources

Discover

[Search for licence requirements \(ABLIS\)](#)

[Check availability of a business name](#)

[Search Trademarks IPA](#)

[Search domain names](#)

Getting started forms

[Apply for an AUSKey](#)

[Initiate ABN Registration](#)

[Register a Business name](#)

Extend your business profile

[Link my AUSKey to my ABA](#)

[Update my ABN details](#)

[Update my BN details](#)

Leading to item #2 being the “Licence requirements” functionality behind the “ABLIS” system

2) Australian Business Licence and Information Service

We recommend this service as a means of checking and advising your business/s about their obligations.

Based on your business type (ie Bookkeeping) and your location it provides National, State and Local government registration requirements.



You are here: [Home](#)

Welcome to ABLIS, the Australian Business Licence and Information Service

ABLIS helps you find the government licences, permits, approvals, registrations, codes of practice, standards and guidelines you need to know about to meet your compliance responsibilities.

If you are starting, operating, growing, or closing a business, ABLIS will reduce the run-around and give you the time to get on with business.

Find out which government licences and registrations apply to your business, and create and download a personalised report containing:

- ▶ A summary of state or territory, local and Australian government requirements relevant to your business.
- ▶ Information about licence fees, how to apply, periods of cover and renewals.
- ▶ How to access application and renewal forms.
- ▶ Where to go for more help and information.

ABLIS Search

What is your business type?

For example: cafe, plumbing, news agent

Where is your business located?

state or suburb or postcode

[Next](#)

Custom search

To search for a specific licence or piece of compliance information try [custom search](#).

What financial, credit or insurance services will you provide?

Assurance or audit or tax services



Registration as a BAS Agent

Published by: Australian Government - Tax Practitioners Board Topic: Financial, Insurance or Credit Services

You will require this registration if you intend to provide BAS services for a fee or reward. BAS services are tag agent services relating to: BAS services are tax agent services relating to: ascertaining (that is, working out) or advising about the liabili...

[+ Display forms and resources](#) [View service summary](#)

Answer the following questions and the system will create a tailored set of results that is right for your business:

- Do you require details of your tax obligations or services related to taxation?
- Do you need information about the registration needs of your business?
- Will you advertise or market your business?
- Will you employ staff or contractors?
- Will you plan to build, alter or change the use of an existing building, structure or site?
- Will you use or handle dangerous goods, such as chemicals, poisons, gases or explosives?
- Will you design, manufacture, install or use plant and equipment in the workplace?
- Will you use a business name other than your own name or a registered company name?
- Will you use or impact areas of cultural, heritage or environmental significance?
- Do you want information on foreign investment?
- Will you play, reproduce or use copyrighted music, images, electronic or print material?
- Would you like information about how to protect the intellectual property of your business ideas?
- Will your business offer financial, insurance, self insurance or credit services?
- Will you conduct commercial activities on public holidays?
- Do you want information on assistance available to your business?
- Would you like information on where to subscribe to eNewsletters, information updates or alerts?
- Will you need to use public spaces for any of your activities?

By accurately answering these questions you're helping us find the right information for you.

Select which employment related activities are relevant to your business:

- Pay wages to yourself, employees or contractors
- Required to withhold tax from employees or contractors
- Offer benefits to employees beyond their normal wages

What taxation obligations and services are relevant to your business?

- Expect to have an annual turnover exceeding \$75,000
- Require a new Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Require a new tax file number

How will you advertise or market your business?

- Online

How will you protect your business ideas?

- Trade Mark

What financial, credit or insurance services will you provide?

- Assurance or audit or tax services

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Summary: In short you are not allowed to make them!

This document is a re-ordered extract from ATO Practice Statement Law Administration 2012/4 which is about “the circumstances in which an entity becomes liable to a penalty for making a false or misleading statement which does not result in a shortfall amount”

What does it mean for Bookkeepers?

(Remembering that Bookkeepers includes employees, contractors and BAS Agents)

To be a professional bookkeeper implies a standard of behaviour and service delivery in a manner that is reasonable and appropriate. In the concepts presented herein the “reasonable and appropriate” (ICB expression) are defined as:

- took reasonable care, in the circumstances
- made a genuine attempt
- displays an investigative approach to engaging with the (tax) system
- prudent attitude: query advice, especially if it appears questionable

This paper is about “making a statement to the Commissioner” but the concepts can/should also apply more generally.

What is a statement? (the ATO version)

A statement is anything disclosed and may be made or given orally or in any other way, including electronically.

A statement will include entering information on an application, approved form, activity statement, certificate, declaration, notice, notification, return or other document prepared or given under a taxation law. Statements may be made in correspondence, requests for information, a notice of objection, a request for an amendment of an assessment, in answer to a questionnaire, in a registration form, in connection with an examination or investigation, or in any other communication for a purpose connected with a taxation law.

A statement is not the form that is lodged or the general statement that is made. A statement is the information at individual labels in the context of a form requesting information, or the individual statements answering questions or providing information in conversations or documents. Therefore it is possible that more than one statement in the one form or discussion can be examined for the purposes of assessing the application of this penalty, potentially resulting in multiple impositions of the penalty.

Omissions may be statements

A statement may also be made if an entity fails to include material information in a document or approved form and the document or approved form requires that information to be supplied. Although at first it appears that no statement was made, the entity will be taken to have made a statement by omission.

Is the statement false or misleading in a material particular?

A statement is false if it is contrary to fact or wrong, irrespective of whether or not it was made with knowledge that it was false. It may be false because of something contained in the statement or because something is omitted from the statement.

A statement is misleading if it creates a false impression, even if the statement is true. It may be misleading because of something contained in the statement or because something is omitted from the statement. Even

if it is literally true, it may be misleading because it is uninformative, unclear or deceptive.

Regard must be had, or consideration given, to the purpose for which the statement is being made, if it is about a tax-related matter and it is not immaterial, inconsequential or trivial. 'material' refers to a relevant point, detail or circumstance concerning the purpose for which the statement was made and is to be determined at the time it is made.

(ICB: This extracted paragraph is from the ATO PS and therefore refers to items in relation to "tax related matter" however from an ICB view point the concepts herein are about all of a bookkeepers service delivery)

For topics: ***Does the statement concern an issue relevant to a tax-related matter? Who is liable to the penalty? Exceptions to penalties resulting from making a false or misleading statement?*** [Refer to the full article.](#)

Has the entity taken reasonable care?

The 'reasonable care test' requires an entity to make a reasonable and genuine attempt to comply with obligations imposed under a taxation law. The effort required is one commensurate with the entity's circumstances, including the entity's knowledge, education, experience and skill. In practice, this means that all actions leading up to the making of the statement should be taken into account, including appropriate record keeping, reporting obligations and whether a tax agent was engaged.

There is no presumption that the false or misleading nature of a statement necessarily or automatically points to a failure to take reasonable care.

The evidence must support the conclusion that the entity's attempt to comply has fallen short of the standard of care that would reasonably be expected in the circumstances. In borderline cases, it can be more readily accepted that an entity has exercised reasonable care where the entity has a good compliance history.

However, a higher standard of care is expected of an entity dealing with a matter that involves a substantial amount of tax or involves a large proportion of the overall tax payable.

Reasonable care and genuine attempt

A genuine attempt means showing engagement with the tax system by actively attempting to comply with tax obligations. A key indicator of an entity making a genuine attempt to comply is displaying an investigative approach to their tax affairs (that is, the entity has a responsibility to effectively manage the risks associated with their tax position and displays this approach).

Assessing reasonable care requires a consideration of the personal circumstances of the entity including whether:

- there was an inadvertent mistake
- reasonable enquiries were made, which may be indicated by whether:
- the entity just assumed the statement was correct
- the degree of enquiry exhibited by the entity was commensurate with the risk associated with the decision and their resources
- the entity was aware, or should have been aware, of the correct treatment of the law or of the facts:
- an entity should not rely on advice they have received where a reasonable person would be expected to know the advice is not worthy of such reliance¹⁸
- an entity is not obliged or entitled to blithely accept assurance by his or her professional advisor
- any factors prevented them from reporting, reporting correctly, seeking advice or understanding the requirements of the tax law, and
- the entity's level of knowledge or understanding of the tax system impacted their compliance, with reference to:
 - whether a registered tax agent or BAS agent was used
 - the entity's level of education, expertise and sophistication relating to tax matters, or
 - the entity's age, health and background.

Using a registered tax agent or BAS agent (registered agent)

Each entity is expected to take a prudent attitude to their tax affairs. This is still the case even if they are using a registered agent or they are following recommendations of their advisors. ([Further comment in full version](#))

The safe harbour provision recognises that an entity should not be subject to a penalty as a result of certain actions or omissions of their registered tax agent or BAS agent (registered agent) where the entity provided all the relevant taxation information to the registered agent necessary for the correct preparation of the statement.

Registered agents are not required to audit, examine or review books and records or other source documents to independently verify the accuracy of information supplied by their clients. As stated in MT 2008/1, in most situations it would not be practical for a registered agent to view all the relevant source documents. A client may provide some information in a summary.

Where an entity provided incorrect information in a summary and the registered agent reasonably relied on the summary in the preparation of the statement, safe harbour would not apply as the correct information was not supplied. It is irrelevant that a registered agent taking reasonable care may have queried the information.

What is the behaviour?

The relevant levels of care are:

- failure to take reasonable care - item 3C
- recklessness - item 3B
- intentional disregard - item 3A.

The guidelines for determining the behaviour are in MT 2008/1. They are briefly summarised below but tax officers must use the ATO view found in MT 2008/1. (ICB comment: This particular ruling will be discussed in future newsletters)

Failure to take reasonable care occurs where reasonable care has not been taken in connection with making the statement, but neither the entity nor the agent has been reckless or intentionally disregarded the law.

Recklessness is behaviour which falls significantly short of the standard of care expected of a reasonable person in the same circumstances as the entity. It is gross carelessness. Recklessness assumes that the behaviour in question shows a disregard of the risk or indifference to the consequences that are foreseeable by a reasonable person. However, the entity or agent does not need to actually realise the likelihood of the risk for it to be reckless.

Intentional disregard of the law is something more than reckless disregard of or indifference to a taxation law. Intention of the entity is a critical element - there must be actual knowledge that the statement made is false. The entity must understand the effect of the relevant legislation and how it operates in respect of the entity's affairs and make a deliberate choice to ignore the law.

Has the entity relied on advice or a statement from the Commissioner?

Where an entity has treated a taxation law as applying in a particular way, and that way agrees with advice given by the Commissioner or a statement in an ATO publication, then they may be protected from application of a penalty. The levels of protection for particular forms of ATO advice and guidance are discussed in Attachment A to PS LA 2008/3 Provision of advice and guidance by the Australian Taxation Office.

Where an entity has relied on advice or a statement in an ATO publication, it is highly likely that they will

have exercised reasonable care and the exception in subsection 284-75(5) will apply. However, even if reasonable care has not been taken, when the entity relies on advice or a statement from the Commissioner, the BPA is reduced to the extent that it was caused by that treatment (section 284-224).

Advice given by the Commissioner may be given in writing, electronically or orally. Statements in approved publications would include the various return form instructions and guides published by the ATO to assist entities with their tax affairs. If, for example TaxPack or the various activity statement instructions contained an error, and an entity's liability was disclosed as less than it should have been because the entity followed the instruction, section 284-224 reduces the BPA to the extent that it was caused by following the instructions.

LINKS

[The full ICB article](#)

ATO PS LA <http://law.ato.gov.au/atolaw/view.htm?DocID=PSR/PS20124/NAT/ATO/00001>

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BAS Agent portal – new feature – it gains a file lodgment facility Improvement or what – we aren't sure yet.

The ATO recently upgraded the BAS Agent portal (and Business Portal) and added a File Lodgment facility. We presume this is in anticipation of the Taxable Payments Reporting System for the Building and construction industry and the required reports but also in response to us all asking for the ability to lodge EMPDUPE files direct to the ATO.

Yes SBR enabled software has these facilities (refer GovReports) however there is an argument the ATO should be providing these facilities in their interface with Agents and Business.

Australian Taxation Office

Tax Professionals

4 April 2013

New File transfer function in the Tax Agent Portal

As part of our commitment under the *Tax practitioner action plan 2011-15* to improve our online services and provide you and your business clients with a more efficient mechanism for meeting reporting requirements, we have introduced a new **File transfer** function in the Tax Agent, BAS Agent and Business Portals.

You can now use the **File transfer** function on the portal to lodge:

- Payment summary annual reports
- TFN declarations.

You can also send the new *Taxable payments annual report* to us in test mode. We encourage you to do this so you have time to fix any issues with format compatibility or data quality before the reports need to be lodged. You will be able to lodge these reports from July 2013.

Benefits include:

- the ability to upload large files without needing to split them
- the option to compress files to reduce the upload time
- the option to send multiple files as a single compressed file
- the ability to receive confirmation that your data has been received
- your reports will be checked for format compatibility and data quality; and you will receive an acknowledgment report showing the results
- reduced risk of errors and faster processing times.

Over time, we will be expanding the function to enable lodgment of a wider range of reports and files.

Using the new File transfer function

To allow you to use this new function, the AUSkey administrator for your practice will need to update your **ATO Transactions** permissions in Access Manager. Help on how to do this is available in Access Manager.

For more information about the new function and how to use it, refer to [File transfer](#), or click on **File transfer** in the portal, then select **Help**.

We have identified that some users may experience issues with receiving confirmation when submitting files. In this case, select the **File status** option from the left-hand menu to confirm lodgment status and ATO reference number.

Cameron Sorensen
Assistant Commissioner
Tax Practitioner and Lodgment Strategy

So it was with excitement (hmmmm...need to get a life) that we opened our portal to have a play...alas we ended up with a series of questions including "What were you thinking?"

Start here

To do today

Home

Favourites

Your details

Your dealings

Reports

Your clients

Information

Directory

Add client

Mail

Online forms

Online tools and
calculators

Access manager

File transfer

Lodge file

File status

Once you open the portal

The file transfer facility is accessed from the main screen. (See to the left and below). So it appears you DO NOT access the relevant client – but this is a file lodgment facility that the ATO will administer separately to your client directory.

Hence our first question to the ATO

1/ It is not evident that a practitioner can lodge the files for a client using this facility. Nothing indicates how a file that is submitted is attached to the client. Logic would have said that you would go into the client and then look to lodge a file for that client. We can live with having a separate facility however I believe you need better instruction.

We then accessed the “Lodge File” screen

Lodge file

* denotes mandatory item

[What reports can I lodge here?](#)

Do you want to test or lodge this file? Test Lodge

Files submitted for testing will be sent to the ATO and validated but not lodged.
Files submitted for lodging will be sent to the ATO, validated and lodged if no errors are detected.

File name: *

Your AUSkey details will be used to digitally sign this lodgment.
 I declare that the information given in this file is true and correct

Under the “What reports can I lodge here?” you are informed that each of:

- Taxable Payments Annual Report (TPAR)
 - Payment Summary annual report (PSAR)
 - TFN Declaration (TFNDec)
- are possible.

The TPAR is a new form that most of the common software are working to provide to us. Presumably they are all creating the correct format of electronic file that the ATO will accept.

The PSAR (which most of us know as the “EMPDUPE” file) is currently created by most of the payroll software we use and we have typically lodged on CD through the post, or by ELS/ECI but in 2012 we started using SBR software to lodge these (refer GovReports).

The TFNDec isn’t typically produced by most used software (but interesting that some of the smaller players seem to produce this easily in the right format for paper lodgment or electronic lodgment – come on all payroll providers make the TFN Dec a simple output).

Using the ATO facility:

YOU CANNOT LODGE PDFs

YOU CANNOT LODGE .doc, .xls, .jpg etc etc etc

THE FILES THE ATO WANT HAVE TO BE IN THE APPROVED ATO FILE FORMATS

Take note: Because we are uploading a file in the approved formats, buried in that file is the identifiers of the business to whom the forms apply. So we don’t need to tell the system which client – the file has that information. Or at least it should.

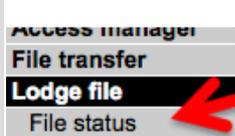
Once you upload the file, you tick the box to say that the information is true and correct and hit the “Submit” button.

Quoting from the ATO website:

“Once you have submitted your files, they will be checked for format compatibility and data quality. You will receive confirmation your file has been received, which will then be validated for errors. You will be able to download a validation report confirming that your file has been lodged or asked to correct any errors.

Other benefits of lodging these files online through the portals include:

- the ability to upload large files without needing to split the file
- the option to send multiple files as a single compressed file
- options to compress files to reduce the upload time
- an easy to use, fast and efficient service
- reduced risk of errors and faster processing times than paper or electronic media
- provided free of charge, with help available to answer your technical queries.”



Note that this is the screen where all your “file” lodgments for all your clients (lodged using this facility) will appear, so it has a filtering facility to presumably help manage what is going on.

Filter by:

File type

File name

For the period From To

Supplier ABN

Status

ATO reference

Once you have filtered you then get a list of what has been lodged... we haven't used it yet so can't show you the list but the Column headings really worry us.....

File type	File name	Date	Supplier ABN
Status	Download	ATO reference	

Our questions include:

What do you mean by "supplier ABN", is that related to the agent? Is that related to the taxpayer for whom the form is being submitted - in which case why would you say supplier? Do you mean each individual supplier under the construction industry reportable taxable payments system and therefore each different ABN for each different supplier?

Answer: The term “Supplier ABN” is derived from the legislation and it means the ABN for the business that has submitted the form. We have made the following comment:

“We recommend that you use the taxpayer name so that it can be linked to the entity easily. Agents do not remember the ABN for all their clients hence the ABN as the main identifier is not going to be helpful on its own.

IN SUMMARY:

The concept is a good one, the implementation is at best a BETA that needs some help.

However, it will be very useful for more effective lodgment with the ATO.

AN ICB COMMENT:

We are very, very disappointed with this implementation of a good idea. We sit on the ATO Electronic Activity Working Group and the BAS Agents Advisory Group and have NOT been consulted on the way this has been implemented nor what was planned. ATO please talk to us as we will help you introduce useful features that will help Agents and Business lodge effectively.

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Consultative Forum Report - Tax Practitioners Board

On the 18th of April 2013 I had the opportunity to attend the TPB consultative forum held in Melbourne. I found it to be an interesting meeting, although a lot of the discussion was around topics that were more geared towards tax agents rather than BAS agents. Nevertheless some matters were of interest to us as BAS agents.

Topics of Interest

- Registrations: there are currently 16300 registered BAS agents in total. To date for this financial year there are 1855 matters that have been brought to the TPB for investigation and of those 1200 have been resolved. (These figures relate to both tax and BAS agents).
- There are various Current Projects on the TPB agenda, these of note to BAS agents:
 - Professional Indemnity Insurance: There are currently 3000 agents that have not notified the TPB of their PII details. The TPB are targeting these agents to get their details up to date.
 - Personal tax obligations: the Code of Conduct also requires us to have our personal tax obligations and our own BAS up to date. The ATO has an exemption to release information to the TPB to allow them to target agents who are lagging in their own filing by 10 years or more.
 - The ATO and TPB are conducting a survey in tandem with each other—the ATO are contacting 7500 agents and the TPB are contacting 2500 agents to get feedback on what we think are important issues for agents.
 - The Outreach program: this will start in Perth with the TPB visiting the area to communicate directly with agents in the area.
- There are some proposed legislative amendments to the TASA:
 - Currently the CPE requirements for the TPB are “desired but not mandatory”. There is a proposed amendment to the legislation to make CPE compulsory. The checking mechanism will not be within the application process but “on request”.
 - Currently an agent under investigation by the TPB can surrender their registration and any action against them is dropped. The proposal is to allow civil or legal actions to continue even if registration is surrendered to ensure justice and/or discipline is accomplished.
 - If an agent is being investigated by the TPB, proposed changes would allow the TPB to notify the professional organisation they are a member of.
 - There is a proposal to allow the TPB and ATO to exchange/disclose information where it is relevant to the purpose of enforcing tax law.
 - Finally, a proposal we are very hopeful of: that the TPB will have the power to decide what constitutes a BAS Service.

REMINDERS: update your PII details with the TPB! Note that under the obligations section of the Code of Professional Conduct, you are required to: “Keep your PI insurance cover details up to date...Having PI insurance cover is an ongoing Board requirement for so long as you are a registered agent, unless you are exempt. When you renew your policy or take out a different one, we ask that you login to update your PI insurance details using the online form”.

AND get your personal/partnership/company tax and BAS in order. The Code of Conduct section 2 requires you to "...comply with the taxation laws in the conduct of your personal affairs".

Jo Voight
ICB Technical Support

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CPE (Continued Professional Education)

ICB's June End of Year Workshop

Each year ICB run workshops around the country to assist our members in preparing for the demanding End of Year processes for their clients. This year again with the support of The Association of Payroll Specialists, we will provide a 2 day workshop on need to know information, updated checklists and procedures along with some useful client reporting information.

Following the invite to members: There are only a few places left in Adelaide. Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney are Sold Out with waiting lists in place.

We are also pleased to announce that the supporting software companies of MYOB, XERO and Intuit will be present for both days to assist in answering software specific questions.

[Full agenda available here](#)

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PLRDA - training for ICB members and non members

PLRDA is the name of group of 5 MYOB Certified Consultant (2 of which have been awarded MYOB partner of the year) who have come together and formed a training business arm to jointly work together in providing Bookkeeper specific training.

PLRDA is pleased to offer the below training sessions, for details click on the links provided.

- [The latest and greatest features in MYOB V2013](#)
Learn how to apply the new and updated features, plus how to ensure a smooth transition from V19 (or earlier) to V2012/3.
Monday 20th May, 1pm, presented by Pam Chilman
- [Transitioning to Account Right Live](#)
Learn from MYOB Certified Consultants about preparing your clients, their files and areas to watch out. Friday 31st May, 1pm presented by Debra Anderson
- [Live Accounts](#)
Learn about the features in this highly under-rated fully cloud based offering from MYOB. Friday 17th May, 10am presented by Pam Chilman
- [Building Contractors Reporting](#)
Understand your reporting obligations then implement the setup, making best use of MYOB to report to the ATO – Monday 3rd June, 10am presented by Leanne Berry
- [Excel – Getting a grip on Pivot Tables](#)
Presented by a Microsoft Office expert

This month from the ICB CPE webpage

Upcoming events

[ICB Network Meetings](#)

Nationally, Monthly

[ACCC Online Education Program](#)

Online

[Intuit QuickBooks Training for Accountants and Bookkeepers \(Intuit partners only\)](#)

Sydney, Melbourne

7th, 8th, 9th May and 14th, 15th, 16th May

[Xero - Your Business on Xero Event Series \(Bookkeeping\)](#)

Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Melbourne, Perth and Online

27th May, 2013 - 4th June, 2013

[Business.gov.au](#)

Face to face events and online webinars

Various topics to assist your business

[EzyLearn - Online Microsoft Excel Courses](#)

Beginner to Advanced courses available

[BAS Agent Skill Set](#)

Holmesglen, Moorabbin, Vic

Over 3 days

7th June, 14th June and 21st June, 2013

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ICB Network Meetings



Question for you to discuss this month??

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

You took on a client back in 2010 and had to revise their payroll setup. You had to look at the setup for salary sacrifice and didn't notice that one employee had been set up incorrectly. Hence the employee has been receiving salary sacrifice payments to her super fund, but has also been receiving this amount in her net wage. The total amount paid to her incorrectly is over \$16,000.

Because her pay differs every month, nobody noticed until recently when a new employee was set up the same way with salary sacrifice and commented that he was happy to receive more money than he thought in his pay packet. This made someone in payroll check the set up.

What do you do when the mistake is brought to your attention? Do you have the right to reclaim the money from the employee? Let us know your thoughts and solutions by posting comments on the Q & A Space.



[Let us know your queries you would like addressed here](#)

Upcoming Network Meetings

Join a network meeting this month, 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 it 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 Friday of each month.

Webinars		
Online 10th May, 2013 - 12pm (AEDST)	Online 13th May, 2013 - 5pm (AEDST)	
Queensland		
Gold Coast (am and pm sessions) 14th May, 2013	Brisbane North 14th May, 2013	Brisbane South 21st May, 2013
South Sunshine Coast 9th May, 2013	North Sunshine Coast 2nd May, 2013	Logan 22nd May, 2013
Moreton Bay 13th May, 2013	Bundaberg 7th May, 2013	Hervey Bay 13th May, 2013
Cairns 3rd May, 2013	Toowoomba TBA	Townsville 10th May, 2013
New South Wales		
Sydney - Balmain 20th May, 2013	Sydney - Moorebank 5th June, 2013	Sydney - Randwick 21st May, 2013
Sydney - Brookvale 3rd June, 2013	Sydney - Hornsby 9th May, 2013	Sydney - Newport TBA
Sydney - Sutherland 22nd May, 2013	Bathurst 15th May, 2013	Ballina 7th June, 2013
Bellingen TBA	Blue Mountains 13th May, 2013	Central Coast 8th May, 2013
Newcastle 8th May, 2013	Port Macquarie 17th June, 2013	Shoalhaven 17th June, 2013
Dubbo 16th May, 2013	Orange 20th June, 2013	
ACT		
Canberra - Phillip 14th May, 2013		
Victoria		
Burwood (am session) 1st May, 2013	Burwood (pm session) 9th May, 2013	Mordialloc 11th June, 2013
Docklands 11th June, 2013	Frankston 24th May, 2013	Cranbourne 8th May, 2013

Lilydale 24th May, 2013	Macedon Ranges 18th June, 2013	Geelong 11th June, 2013
Point Cook TBA	Cobram 13th May, 2013	Sale 9th May, 2013
Western Australia		
Balcatta 20th May, 2013	Bunbury 4th June, 2013	Melville 1st May, 2013
Joondalup 20th May, 2013	Midland 8th May, 2013	
South Australia		
South Adelaide 2nd May, 2013	Henley Beach 17th May, 2013	Para Hills 15th May, 2013
Unley 18th June, 2013	Mt Barker TBA	
Tasmania		Northern Territory
Hobart 13th May, 2013	Launceston 30th April, 2013	Darwin TBA

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 Rick Van Dyk at rick@icb.org.au



ICB Network Meetings are proudly supported by MYOB

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Other things happening in the world

Survey from the TPB

Tax Practitioners – an opportunity to give your view

During April, the Tax Practitioners Board (TPB) is conducting research, through an external research company — Newspoll. A random selection of tax practitioners will receive an email inviting them to take part in an online survey.

The new Board is keen to hear the views of tax practitioners to understand how they can better support you to comply with your obligations as a registered Tax or BAS agent.

The results will be available later this year and the TPB will be keeping you informed about the results and what they will be doing in response.

Read more about the Tax practitioner research 2013:

http://www.tpb.gov.au/TPB/About_us/Newsroom/0503_Tax_Practitioner_Research_2013.aspx

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Interesting employment / contractor stats (From the ABS)

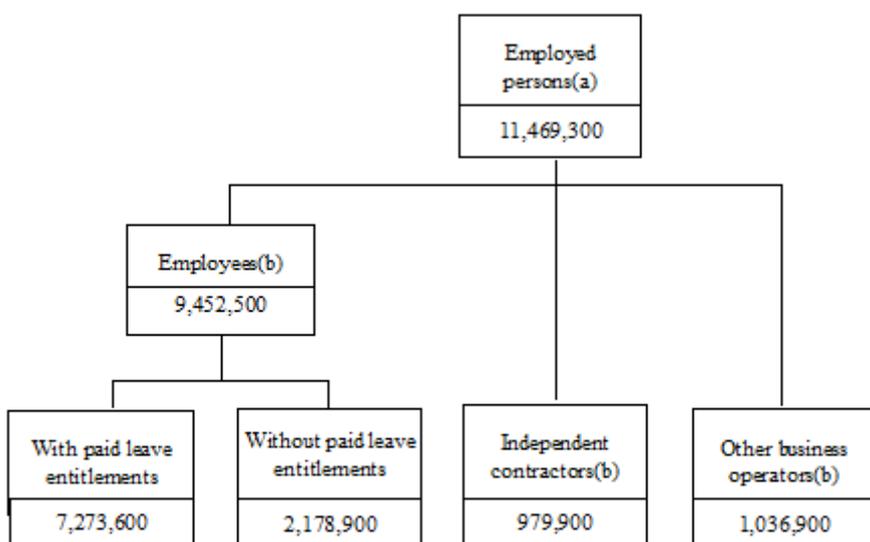
Employment in Australia – interesting stats mostly about contractors

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6359.0?OpenDocument>

Based on Australian Bureau of Statistics data (November 2012 survey data)

In November 2012, the ABS “Forms of Employment Survey” (FOES) found there were nearly 11.5 million employed persons aged 15 years and over. 1 Of these, 7.3 million (63%) were employees with paid leave entitlements in their main job, that is, they were entitled to paid sick and/or paid holiday leave. Of the remaining employed persons:

- nearly 2.2 million were employees without paid leave entitlements (19%);
 - 980,000 were independent contractors (9%); and
 - just over 1.0 million were other business operators (9%) (Table 1).
- Employees are then further classified according to whether they had paid leave entitlements, that is, whether they had paid sick and/or paid holiday leave.



(a) Excludes persons who were contributing family workers in their main job.

(b) In main job.

ALL EMPLOYED PERSONS

Employed men were more likely than women to be independent contractors (12% compared to 5%) or other business operators (10% compared to 8%). As a result, employed women were more likely to be employees (87% compared to 78% for males).

Younger persons were most likely to be employees rather than independent contractors or other business operators. As age increases, generally the proportion of employees decreases, while the proportion of independent contractors and other business operators increase. However, being an employee was the most common form of employment for employed persons for all age ranges. For example:

- 96% of employed persons aged 15-24 years were employees, 3% were independent contractors and 1% were other business operators;
- 79% of employed persons aged 35-54 years were employees, 10% were independent contractors and 11% were other business operators; and
- 59% of employed persons aged 65 years and over were employees, 16% were independent contractors and 25% were other business operators.

EMPLOYEES

Of the 9.5 million persons who were employees, 52% were male.

Of the 7.3 million employees with paid leave entitlements, 54% were male. Four out of five (80%) male employees had paid leave entitlements, compared to three out of four female employees (74%).

Full-time/Part-time Status

An estimated 6.6 million (70%) employees worked full-time in their main job. Most employees who worked full-time in their main job had paid leave entitlements (90%). By comparison, of the 2.8 million part-time employees, less than half (47%) had paid leave entitlements.

Other employment characteristics

Other characteristics of employees in November 2012 included:

- 22% had been with their current employer for less than one year, while 21% had been with their current employer for 10 years or more;
- 19% were aged 15-24 years, and 15% were aged 55 years and over;
- 39% had some say in their start and finish times;
- 69% worked weekdays only in their job/s2, while a further 30% worked both weekdays and weekends; and
- Only 4% worked on a fixed-term contract, of whom 53% were in the occupation of Professionals.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

Independent contractors made up 9% of all employed people. The number of independent contractors had declined by 47,000 since November 2011, after a decline of 83,600 between 2010 and 2011.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of independent contractors were male.

Hours Worked

Almost half (47%) of all independent contractors worked 40 hours or more in their main job in the week before they were interviewed (56% of males and 23% of females). While male independent contractors were more likely to have worked 40 hours or more compared to male employees (56% compared to 50%), female independent contractors were not more likely to have worked 40 hours or more than female employees (23% compared to 25%).

Male independent contractors were more likely to have worked longer hours than females. For example, 29% of male independent contractors worked 49 hours or more in their main job in the week before interview, compared with 12% of female independent contractors. This was higher than for employees (18% of men and 6% of women).

Industry

Independent contractors were most prevalent in the Construction industry (29%) followed by the Administrative and support services industry (21%). The industries with the highest proportion of male independent contractors were Construction (31%), followed by Administrative and support services (25%). These industries also had the highest proportion of female independent contractors (17% for both).

Other employment characteristics

Three-quarters (76%) of independent contractors were usually able to work on more than one active contract at a time, however only just under half (48%) of all independent contractors had more than one active contract in the week before interview.

Other characteristics of independent contractors in November 2012 included:

- 61% had authority over their own work (62% of males and 58% of females);
- 63% were able to (sub)contract their own work (66% of males and 57% of females);
- 80% had no employees (77% of males and 86% of females);
- 14% had been with their current business for less than one year, while 37% had been with their current business for 10 years or more;
- 83% had some say in their start or finish times; and
- 58% usually only worked weekdays in all of their job/s2, while a further 42% usually worked on both weekdays and weekends.

OTHER BUSINESS OPERATORS

There were just over 1.0 million other business operators in November 2012 or 9% of employed persons, of whom 61% were male.

The most common occupation of other business operators for both males and females was Managers (43% and 31% respectively). This is in line with the definition of other business operators - that they operate their own business and generally generate their income from managing their staff or selling goods or services to the public.

Over a quarter of all managers were other business operators (29% of males and 25% of females).

Other employment characteristics

Other characteristics of other business operators in November 2012 included:

- 57% actually worked 40 hours or more in their main job in the reference week (71% of males and 34% of females), while almost two-thirds (65%) of these actually worked 49 or more hours in the reference week;
- 8% had been in their current business for less than one year, while almost half (49%) had been with their current business for 10 years or more;
- 87% had some say in their start or finish times; and
- 46% usually only worked weekdays in all of their job/s2, while a further 53% worked on both weekdays and weekends.

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PhD candidate needs SBR Information

A PhD candidate from the Australian National University is seeking participants for interview to discuss issues on the impact of adopting SBR-enabled systems on bookkeepers' business process and interaction with accountants.

This study is associated with a larger project funded by the Australian Government and the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

If you are willing to participate, please contact Mayada Hansnata on mayada.hansnata@anu.edu.au.

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This month...

Business Newsletter - eBrief - April 2013

Welcome to the ICB April 2013 Bookkeeping eBRIEF, YOUR newsletter for YOUR business

Bookkeeping eBRIEF is a business newsletter - Bookkeeping eBRIEF is published by ICB to provide information your business on a monthly basis.

Keeping you and your business in front.



Click the button to subscribe now and each month you will receive the Bookkeeping eBRIEF directly to your inbox

You can download the April newsletter for your business here:

- [April 2013 Bookkeeping eBRIEF](#)

[Back copies are available here](#)

"The best bookkeepers using the best resources".

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What's new this month

New Resources

- Taxable Payments Reporting - [Link](#)
- Motor Vehicles and GST - [Link](#)
- Assets and Depreciation Checklist 2013 - [Link](#)
- Assets and Depreciation Guide 2013 - [Link](#)

News Items

- [What is a bookkeeper in 2013](#)
- [TPB - An opportunity to give your view](#)
- [From the ATO - Small Business Super Clearing House](#)
- [ICB's June End of Year Workshop 2013](#)
- [Jobs Bonus for Australian businesses](#)

ICB Q & A Space News

During April the big topic is the increase in superannuation to 9.25% in July, [follow the thread here](#).

We have also seen a lot of interest in [Travel](#), and [More Travel!!](#) and [Novated Lease for a new vehicle](#) generate a lot of interest also - what are your thoughts on these issues?. Keep asking your questions on things you are not sure of. Remember there is no such thing as a stupid question.

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](#)

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Products and Solutions



eCollect

Do you or your clients have bad Debtors?

ICB with the support of eCollect can provide you or your clients with the ability to send that bad debtor a letter of demand direct from eCollect demanding payment within 10 days. eCollect will print and mail this letter at no cost to you or your clients.

****As an ICB member this service is free ****

You have full control.

- If the bad debtors pay within 10 days, nothing further is needed, Simply notify eCollect of this.
NO CHARGE TO YOU or your Clients
- If the bad debtors haven't paid within the 10 days OR contacted you with a payment arrangement eCollect will automatically commence further recovery action on a **NO COLLECT – NO FEE** payable basis for you
- They only charge 20% (Ex GST) of what they collect - **No collection - No fee**
- eCollect will arrange for your own dedicated Account Manager
- View the progress of your file online and in real time
- Communicate with eCollect electronically via your own secure login
- You determine how aggressive you want eCollect to be



Note only 1 letter per individual debtor

For more information on this great offer, click here
http://www.icb.org.au/Products_and_Solutions/eCollect

OR Contact:



Peter Zambi – General Manager
03 8611 2602
peter.zambi@eCollect.com.au

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GovReports CLM – phase 1 is out, information to follow.

GovReports CLM has been released and integrates with the core GovReports product.

It works and many members have been testing it, working with it and helping with its development. Today 26th April I have been notified by GovReports of the development steps achieved and their next steps based on feedback and our wishlist.

Watch ICB News items for CLM specific news and training. During May, webinar based training will be provided: How to use, how to get started, what not to do.

A hint of where GovReports are going

Today's steps:

Register for GovReports (as an ICB member)

Register for CLM (6 months free)

Set up clients 1 at a time by capturing base contact client information

For each client at the time of setup – establish the list of Jobs you do for that client that you wish to track, includes a rough schedule of when you might do them and what the deadline is (don't get too paranoid about the scheduled date yet and just put in the date – when the schedule is confirmed we add the time of day)

- to speed things up ignore (today) the “checklist of processes and thoughts...”
- consider the template engagement letter (maybe customise it to suit a restatement position with all clients)
- Consider saving “Templates” of the job

Then commence a review of the calendar

- deadlines are deadlines so those events should stay
- your scheduled dates will be all day events and marked accordingly – when you confirm the work then set it for the time of day so there is a difference between work you have booked in and the theoretical schedule.

Daily operation

- review the calendar and the work list

[For further information regarding GovReports, click here](#)

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From the ATO

ATO uses collection agencies

Important information from the ATO

Pilot – referring details of taxpayers with overdue lodgments to collection agencies

The ATO are commencing a pilot where the details of taxpayers with overdue lodgment obligations will be referred to external collection agencies, using the same processes they use for referring taxpayers with overdue debts. The ATO will be targeting those taxpayers who, despite previous requests, have failed to lodge their overdue documents.

At the end of April 2013, letters will be sent to affected taxpayers to provide them with an opportunity to lodge their overdue documents prior to referral to the collection agency. If you receive letters for any of your clients, ensure the required action is taken to prevent the matter progressing further.

For more information about the pilot and what to do, refer to

<http://www.ato.gov.au/taxprofessionals/content.aspx?doc=/content/00351015.htm>

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When the ATO make contact

ATO guidelines when contacting clients of tax practitioners.

Details the situations where we may contact your clients directly and how we will inform you of that contact.

<http://ato.gov.au/content/00337331.htm>

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Taxable Payments Reporting – who is next? Cleaners?

Nobody really thought it would stop at the Building and construction industry and little snippets keep indicating it will go wider.

In the Small Business Consultative Forum of the ATO they recently discussed the Taxable Payments reporting regime. Right down the bottom (not quite in small print) was the comment “The Government is consulting with the commercial cleaning industry.”

hmmmm.... who is after that?

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ICB Links

- [Apply for ICB Membership here](#)
- [Renew your ICB Membership here](#)
- [ICBenefits - Cashback and Savings for ICB Members](#)
- [BAS Agent updates and information](#)
- [Other Newsletters](#)
 - [The BAS Agent](#)
 - [ATO Small Business Newsletter](#)
 - [Workforce Education News](#)
 - [The Association of Payroll Specialists \(TAPS\)](#)
 - [Calxa](#)
 - [Xero Bookkeeper News](#)

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ICB Membership Statistics

3,582

2,217 Members maintain Fellow, Member, Associate, Affiliate and Educator membership, ICB also has 1,308 Student Members and 57 Subscriber Members.

During April we have admitted 29 new Members, upgraded 14 Students to Member status. We have also renewed 137 Members.

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ICB Supporters and Sponsors

MYOB has sponsored the ICB Network meetings as a direct support of the need for members of the ICB and other bookkeepers to get together for development and networking.

Xero proudly supporting ICB as a major sponsor to assist ICB in providing bookkeepers to their business and clients

GovReports simple and secure compliance reporting

Intuit QuickBooks Online accounting software - the quickest way to track GST

Insurance Made Easy ICB preferred provider of PI Insurance for bookkeepers and BAS Agents

Thomson Reuters have partnered with ICB to bring resources to bookkeepers

ICB Global continues to support ICB Australia through the provision of web resources, database infrastructure, bookkeeping resources, information and IT support.



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Please note that, in between newsletter issues, articles may be published straight to the *Latest News* section of the website. Please check the headlines which can be found in the top right of the website homepage, to ensure you stay up-to-date.

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

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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.

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