



Prepared by Maria Benardis

AAPB BAG Meeting Notes November 2006

Maria Benardis attended the BAG meeting in Sydney on Wednesday 29 November 2006.

The main issue discussed was in relation to ATO products and services. The ATO will be issuing detailed meeting notes in the near future that we will publish in the newsletter.

The ATO did not discuss or have on the agenda any of the issues raised by AAPB. The ATO made it clear at the meeting that only “product and services” related issues will be discussed at the BAG forum.

To date AAPB has received no formal responses on the issues raised (please see the last newsletter for the issues that were raised). It would appear that there is no ATO forum where bookkeeper issues can be raised other than “products and services”.

AAPB is extremely concerned about the limited charter of the BAG committee and the inability to raise issues affecting its members with the ATO. AAPB will be pursuing this issue further.

The ATO provided an update to AAPB on 19 December 2006 on the progress of a number of ATO measures re: co-designing to engage more closely with BAS service providers (BSPs).

The ATO has outlined the following:

“One of the initiatives discussed was the BSP Advisory Program.

Last Friday we e-mailed 260 BSP users of the ECI lodgement platform. We are inviting them to request a visit by one of our Advisory Program team members. The program aims to provide a free, more personalised level of service for BSPs that:

- *increases awareness of our products and services, with a focus on those specifically designed to meet their business requirements*
- *encourages their participation in co-designing tailored products/services for BSPs*
- *raises awareness of significant legislative and procedural developments*
- *identifies challenges/issues facing bookkeepers in undertaking their role – and provides - guidance on escalating issues where appropriate, and*
- *seeks to improve their overall experience of working with the Tax Office.*

We will use the next two months to trial and refine the advisory product. As such this email should not be forwarded for mass distribution to your members at this time. An appropriate awareness strategy will be developed for a product launch in February/March '07.

In the interim, the objectives of the advisory program will be published on the Bookkeeping essentials page on our web site.

We are also developing another page which invites BSPs to subscribe to the monthly BSP eNewsletter product. Publishing this web page shortly increases the subscription period prior to our anticipated launch in March '07.”



The ATO has released the 29 November 2006 BAG meeting notes in which Maria Benardis represents AAPB members.

The main topic of the meeting was working with the ATO to develop new tailored products for bookkeepers who provide Business Activity Statement (BAS) services for a fee.

One of these initiatives is a subscription email newsletter 'The BAS service provider' which will be launched next month.

To raise awareness of this new product the Tax Office is mailing promotional postcards to approximately 18,000 potential subscribers this week to invite them to register their contact details to receive the free newsletter.

The ATO has also commenced trialing their BAS Service Provider Advisory Program. The ATO reported 50 visits were undertaken in January 2007. The feedback from industry has been very positive.

The ATO has also forwarded a powerpoint presentation to AAPB that was tabled at the ATO's Tax Practitioner Forum. The presentation provides information relating to the bookkeeping industry.

The powerpoint presentation can be found in the library in members area of the website.

On 8 March 2007 the ATO held a telephone hookup for the BAG meeting. The ATO advised the draft bill will be released sometime between late March and early April. As soon as the draft is released we will advise the members immediately.

Another BAG meeting has been scheduled for April.

If members have any agenda items please email these to aapb@aapb.org.au

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