

Minister for
Treasury and Resources



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Senator K Moore
Chairman
Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

25th of March 2020

Follow Up to Quarterly Hearing

Dear Senator Moore

Thank you for your letter dated the 3 March 2020 requesting further information following the hearing held on the 11th of February and further to my response on the 27th February 2020.

It was noted in your response that under 7% of 2018 tax returns remain to be assessed. Can you please provide comparative analysis of this rate of assessment for the last 5 years?

Data is not held with which to make a statistical comparative analysis over the requested time period. Generally speaking, each year's tax returns in recent years have been substantially processed by the following December or January at the latest.

For the 2017 year of assessment, the vast majority of returns were processed by October 2018 as part of the deliberate push to make way for the extra work planned for 2019 to support revenue transformation, including the roll out of new computer systems.

In respect of the 2016 year of assessment, returns were substantially processed by the end of January 2018.

For the avoidance of doubt, it is not unusual for a number of returns to remain unprocessed for considerably longer periods of time: for example where returns are subjected to compliance enquires before assessment. In those cases, affected taxpayers are individually apprised of not having received a final assessment.

The response received in relation to exit interviews for the finance directors was that exit interview notes would not be disclosable as this would breach Data Protection (Jersey) Law 2018 (Parts 2,3, 4 and 6).

The Panel is not satisfied with this response and again requests that all exit interviews (i.e. for officers and finance directors) are provided by the date set out below. The Panel acknowledges that the information may need to remain confidential and be anonymised

but does not believe this is a barrier to it being provided to Scrutiny, as per the Scrutiny Code of Practice.

I requested extra time to return to you as I am awaiting advice through Senior HR colleagues regarding your request to obtain redacted copies of exit interviews for the Officers and Directors who have left the Tax Office/Revenue Jersey. This is likely to raise GDPR and wider confidentiality issues, in part due to the small numbers involved.

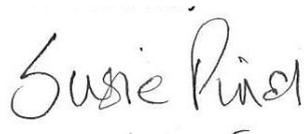
Despite the additional time of seven days given to me by the panel, I have still not received the confirmation I was seeking, largely due to the rapid development and changing priorities we have been facing in relation to the island wide impact of the of the corona virus.

Revenue Jersey does, routinely, offer exit interviews and two people took up the offer of an exit interview during 2019. Both were leaving for new jobs in the private sector and both were complimentary about their colleagues and their working lives in the tax department. One offered critical feedback regarding the current work pressures in tax operations; the quality of their work environment/ accommodation and the level of pay. The same person also spoke about their perception of overloaded managers who did not spend enough time with their staff. The second left during his/her probationary period for another role in the private sector.

I do hope this additional information is helpful and provides the information you were looking for.

The Comptroller has asked me to clarify certain facts which may possibly have been misconstrued by the Panel or misreported by the media. He has previously told you that – for a time – the personal-tax section of Revenue Jersey had run at around 50% of complement – not half of Revenue Jersey. The large number of vacancies being filled in Revenue Jersey is not solely related to filling existing vacant posts but to filling new posts, created by the Government Plan 2020.

Yours sincerely



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