

6 Taxpayer Services

IRD Website www.ird.gov.hk

The IRD website serves as an effective platform for providing the public with updated information on Hong Kong taxation. Its content covers:

- information on tax law, tax returns, tax obligations and other hot topics;
- answers to frequently asked questions;
- IRD software and tax forms;
- interactive programs for calculating salaries tax and tax under personal assessment.



To facilitate taxpayers to locate the relevant tax information, there are thematic content pages for individuals, businesses, employers, tax representatives etc.

The IRD website conforms to web accessibility guidelines and there is also a mobile version to enable all users to have quick and convenient access to tax information.

Electronic Enquiry Service

Instant electronic enquiry services are provided to eTAX users at www.gov.hk/etax. They can view their tax position in relation to their returns, assessments and payments, etc.

Enquiry Service Centre

The Department's Enquiry Service Centre handles telephone and counter enquiries. The Centre is equipped with a computer network linked to the Department's Knowledge Database to enable our staff to provide, as far as possible, an immediate "one-stop" service.



Telephone Enquiry Service

The Centre operates an Interactive Telephone Enquiry System (ITES) with 144 telephone lines. Callers can have access on a 24-hour basis to a wide range of tax information by listening to recorded messages. Besides, callers can obtain facsimile copies of information sheets and forms through the system. A "Leave-and-call-back" facility, for recording information requests, and a "Fax-in enquiry" service are also available. The telephones are manned during office hours by staff



who would readily serve the callers. The Centre also provides an eTAX help desk hotline to handle enquiries on eTAX services and provide technical support.

The statistics of services provided through ITES during 2014-15 are shown in **Figure 32**.

Figure 32 Statistics of services provided through ITES

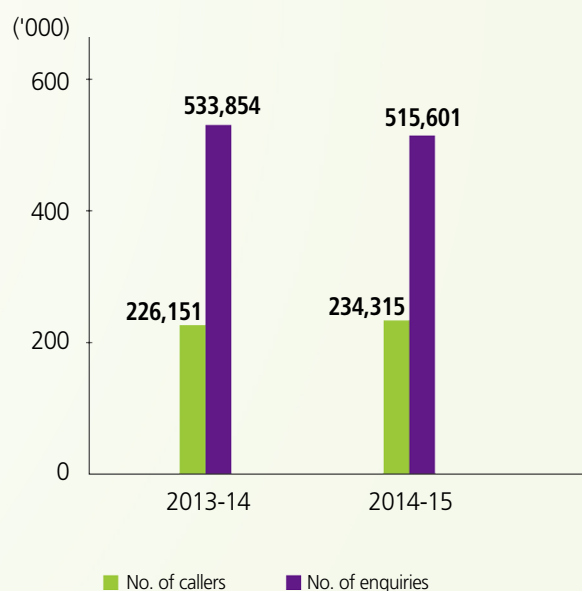
	2013-14 Number	2014-15 Number	Increase/Decrease
Calls answered by staff	704,034	704,281	+0.04%
Calls answered by system	709,379	707,575	-0.25%
Leave-and-call-back messages	34,886	36,455	+4.50%
Documents supplied by fax	3,540	3,878	+9.55%

Counter Enquiry Service

Generally, the counter staff of the Centre is able to handle enquiries, collects mail items and issues forms all by themselves without the need of referring callers to other sections in the Department for attention. The number of counter enquiries handled and forms issued during 2014-15 was about 0.52 million (**Figure 33**).

Information leaflets on topics of general interest are available for collection at the two form stands located on the ground floor and first floor of Revenue Tower. The public may also obtain general tax information and download forms from the IRD website and GovHK's website <www.gov.hk>.

Figure 33 Counter enquiries



Tax-help Services for Completion of Tax Returns

On the IRD website, e-Seminars are provided for employers, property owners and individual taxpayers. Information on how to complete tax returns, fulfil tax obligations and overcome difficulties in compliance is uploaded to the website. After reading the information, taxpayers can raise enquiries electronically at the "Q&A Column". The Department will reply the questions on a regular basis.

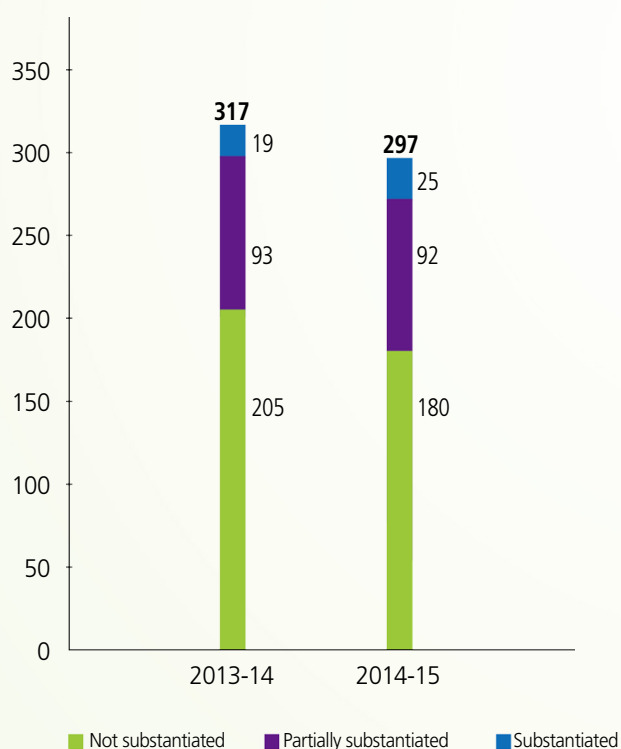
The Department issued 2.37 million Individuals Tax Returns for the year of assessment 2013-14 on 2 May 2014. To assist the taxpaying public in completing tax returns, the Department extended the service hours of telephone enquiry services in May 2014. Service hours from Monday to Friday were extended by one and a half hours till 7:00 pm and additional service was also provided on Saturday from 9:00 am till 1:00 pm. During peak periods, the Department also redeployed manpower resources and employed part-time staff to strengthen daytime telephone enquiry services.

Complaints and Compliments

If taxpayers are dissatisfied with the services provided by the Department or their problems cannot be solved satisfactorily through normal channels, the Complaints Officer may be approached for assistance. The complaint channel provides taxpayers with the means of having individual grievances dealt with independently at a senior level. This ensures that such cases are properly handled in a fair and impartial manner. During 2014-15, 297 complaints cases were received (**Figure 34**). This represents a decrease of 6.3%, as compared with the previous year.

If taxpayers are dissatisfied with any administrative action taken by the Department, they may refer the matter to the Ombudsman. During 2014-15, the Ombudsman sought written comments from the Department in respect of 19 cases. In the light of these cases, the Department has reviewed relevant operations with a view to improving them.

Figure 34 Complaint cases





Taxpayers may compliment the service of the Department. During the year, 164 Letters of Compliments were received.

Performance Pledge

The service standards a taxpayer can expect from the Department are set out in the performance pledges. The Department has achieved all the targets of performance pledges and excelled in some of the targeted performance with remarkable results during 2014-15.

