

6 Taxpayer Services

IRD Website

www.ird.gov.hk

The IRD website is a very effective channel for disseminating tax information and providing electronic services to the public. With continuous enrichment and updates, the website enables taxpayers to obtain the most current information about Hong Kong taxation in a fast and convenient manner.



Through the website, members of the public can:

- obtain information on tax law, tax returns, tax obligations and answers to frequently asked questions;
- use IRD software and download IRD public forms;
- run the interactive program to calculate their liability under salaries tax and personal assessment; and
- access to the personalised on-line tax services provided by the Department under eTAX.

To facilitate all sectors of the community to locate the relevant tax information, there are thematic content pages for individuals, businesses, property owners, employers, tax representatives, etc.

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The IRD website has adopted responsive web design, which enables users to have quick and convenient access to tax information.

Electronic Enquiry Service

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. at any time.

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 2019-20 are shown in **Figure 31**.

Figure 31 Statistics of services provided through ITES

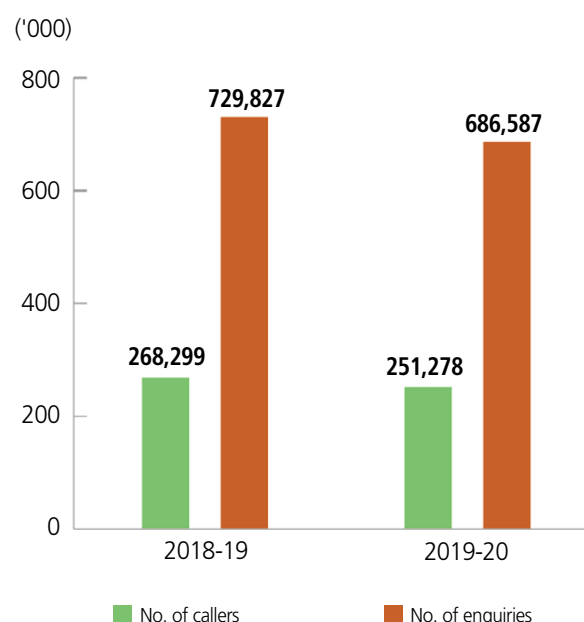
	2018-19 Number	2019-20 Number	Increase/ Decrease
Calls answered by staff	712,790	598,368	-16.1%
Calls answered by system	792,473	1,158,198	+46.1%
Leave-and-call-back messages	53,316	64,822	+21.6%
Documents supplied by fax	4,303	7,896	+83.5%

Counter Enquiry Service

Generally, the counter staff of the Centre is able to handle enquiries, collect mail items and issue forms on the spot without the need of referring callers to other sections in the Department for attention. The number of counter enquiries handled and forms issued during 2019-20 was about 0.69 million (**Figure 32**).

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

Figure 32 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 Corner”. The Department will reply the questions on a regular basis.

The Department issued 2.68 million Individuals Tax Returns for the year of assessment 2018-19 on 2 May 2019. To assist the taxpaying public in completing tax returns, the Department extended the service hours of telephone enquiry services in May 2019. 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.

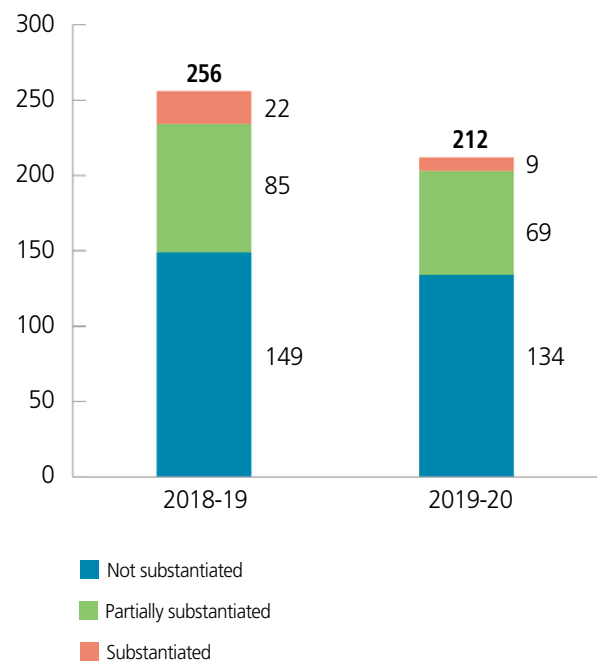
Complaints and Compliments

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 2019-20, 212 complaints cases were received (**Figure 33**).

If taxpayers are dissatisfied with any administrative action taken by the Department, they may refer the matter to the Ombudsman. During 2019-20, the Ombudsman sought written comments from the Department in respect of 21 cases. In the light of these cases, the Department has reviewed relevant operations with a view to improving them.

Taxpayers may compliment the service of the Department. During the year, 403 Letters of Compliments were received.

Figure 33 Complaint cases



Performance Pledge

The service standards a taxpayer can expect from the Department are set out in the performance pledges. The Department has achieved most of the targets of performance pledges and excelled in some of the targeted performance with remarkable results during 2019-20.

