

User Guide of Employer's Return e-Filing Services

For more information, please visit the webpage about the **Employer's Return e-Filing Services**.

Preface

This user guide is to provide step-by-step instructions on how to prepare and submit the BIR56A, IR6036B and IR56 Forms data file via Employer's Return e-Filing Services ("ER e-Filing Services"). It specifies:

- (a) how to prepare a data file by Direct Keying, and
- (b) how to submit or upload a data file, which can be prepared by different means, via the two modes of submission, namely, the Online Mode and Mixed Mode.

This guide is provided for reference only, and is subject to changes without notice. Screenshots contained in this guide are intended for illustration only.

Enquiries may be made to the Inland Revenue Department ("the Department") by email to taxctr1@ird.gov.hk.

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User Guide : Version 6.00 Date : April 2023

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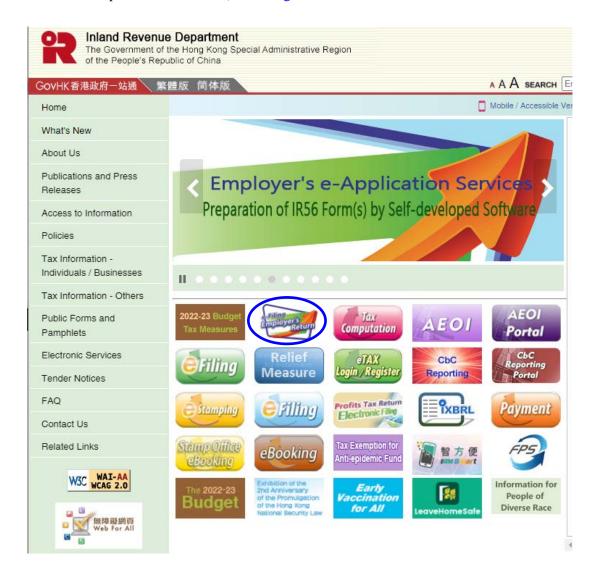
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1. Basic Requirement

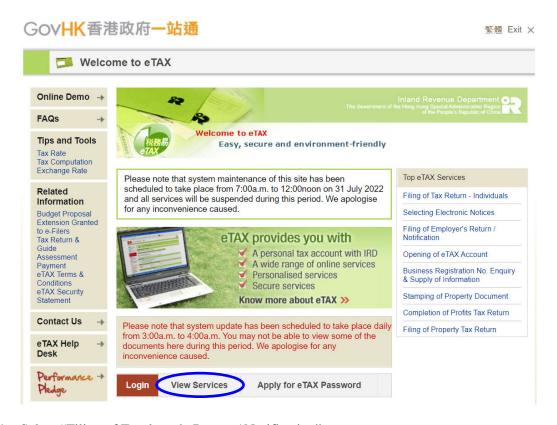
For system requirements of the ER e-Filing Services, please refer to the link below: www.gov.hk/en/about/helpdesk/softwarerequirement/onlineservice.htm

2. Get Access to "Employer's Return e-Filing Services"

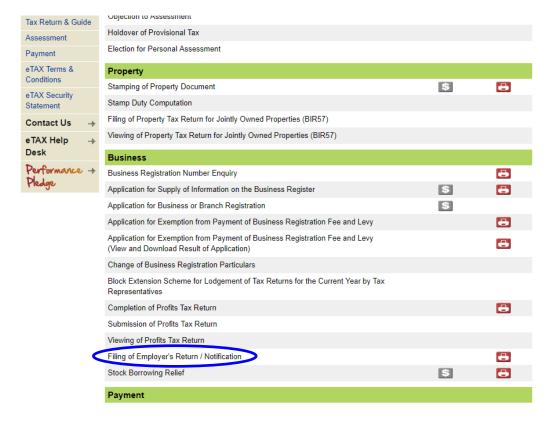
2.1 You can access the "Employer's Return e-Filing Services" by clicking the ER e-Filing Services icon at the Department's website (www.ird.gov.hk).



- 2.2 Alternatively, you can access the ER e-Filing Services through eTAX.
 - (a) Select "View Services" at the welcome page of eTAX.



(b) Select "Filing of Employer's Return / Notification" at menu page.



3. Read Step and Important Notes

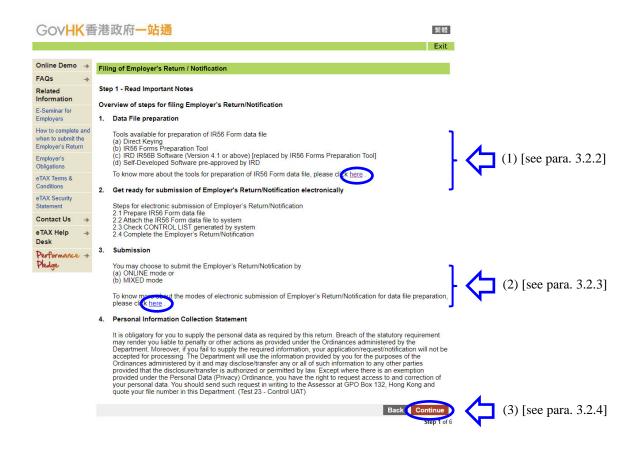
3.1 Read Step Page

3.1.1 Click **Continue**> after reading the steps.



3.2 Read Important Notes

3.2.1 You should spend some time to read the Notes so as to have an overview of the ER e-Filing Services and then choose the appropriate tools for preparing the data file and mode of submission.

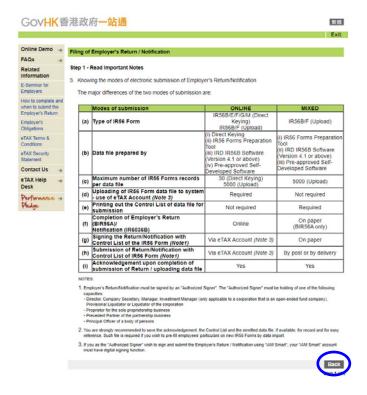


3.2.2 You can click the link in note (1) [see para. 3.2.1] to know more about the various tools for preparing the data file.



Click **<Back>** to back to the "Read Important Notes" page.

3.2.3 You can click the link in note (3) [see para. 3.2.1] to know more about the two modes of submission under the ER e-Filing Services.



Click **<Back>** to back to the "Read Important Notes" page.

3.2.4 After reading the notes, click **Continue**> to proceed.

4. Data Preparation - Direct Keying

- 4.1 You can prepare all types of Employer's Return and Notifications, i.e. BIR56A, IR6036B, IR56B/E/F/G/M (up to 30 sets of IR56 forms) through Direct Keying.
- **4.2** The data file prepared by Direct Keying can ONLY be submitted via Online Mode, which requires the logging in of an eTAX account, "iAM Smart+" account (with digital signing function) or recognized personal digital certificate by an Authorized Signer*.
- 4.3 There are two options under "Direct Keying", namely "Prepare and Submit NOW" and "Prepare NOW and Submit Later".



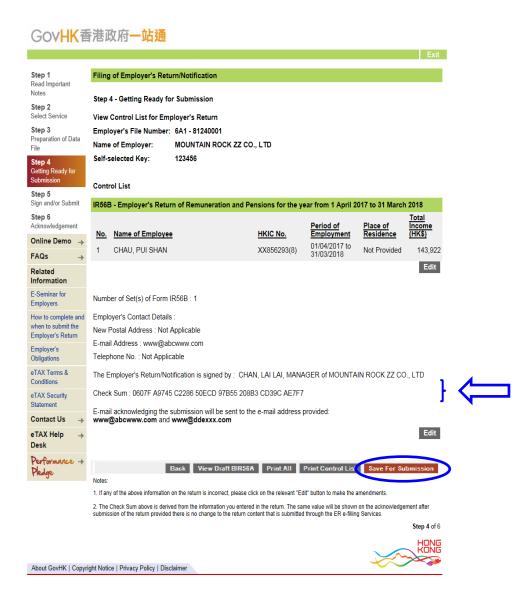
4.3.1 If you want to choose "**Prepare and Submit NOW**", you must be both an Authorized Signer and eTAX account holder, so that you can prepare and submit the Employer's Return / Notifications by logging in your own personal eTAX account, "iAM Smart+" account (with digital signing function) or recognized personal digital certificate.



- An Authorized Signer must be holding one of the following capacities:
 - Proprietor for a sole proprietorship business.
 - Precedent Partner for a partnership business.
 - Director, Company Secretary, Manager, Investment Manager (only applicable to a corporation that is an open-ended fund company), Provisional Liquidator or Liquidator for a corporation.
 - Principal Officer for a body of persons.

4.3.2 Under "Prepare NOW and Submit Later", you do not need to be an Authorized Signer nor an eTAX account holder. After preparation of all the Employer's Return / Notifications, click <Save for Submission> to save the data file for submission at a later time. An Authorized Signer can choose to carry out the submission process at a convenient time by using his/her personal eTAX account, "iAM Smart+" account (with digital signing function) or recognized personal digital certificate.

The Check Sum is derived from the information you entered. If there is no change to the content of the Employer's Return / Notifications, the same value will be shown when you submit the data file.

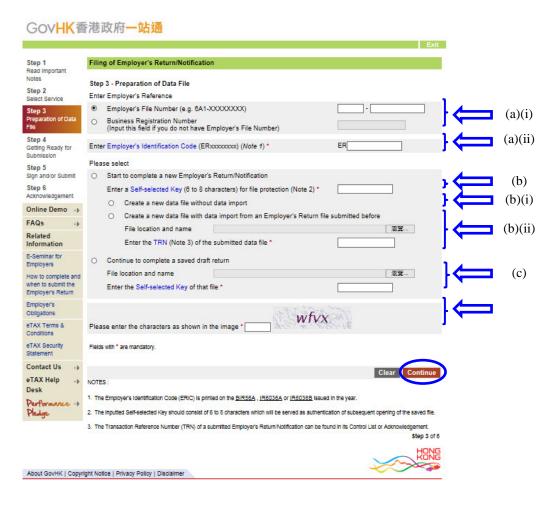


4.4 Prepare a Data File for Submission

4.4.1 Select the Way to Prepare a Data File

- (a) Before selecting how the data file is prepared, you have to input the following information:
 - (i) Employer's Reference ("ERN")
 - Input your Employer's File Number. If you do not have an Employer's File Number, input your Business Registration Number.
 - (ii) Employer's Identification Code ("ERIC")
 - The ERIC is a unique security code allotted to each employer's file to facilitate employers to use the ER e-Filing Services. The ERIC will be updated every year, and the currently valid ERIC is printed on the latest BIR56A or IR6036B issued to you (near the top of the BIR56A or IR6036B).
- (b) If you want to create a new data file, you are required to input a Self-selected Key* by your own choice of 6 to 8 characters. Then you can select one of the following two ways to prepare the data file for submission:
 - (i) "Create a new data file without data import"
 - You will create the new date file by keying in all the data.
 - (ii) "Create a new data file with data import from an Employer's Return file submitted before"
 - You will create the new date file by first importing the personal particulars of the employees from a previously submitted data file.
 - Only previously submitted annual Employer's Return file prepared by this Direct Keying method can be used for the import, and the TRN [see para. 4.4.9] of the submitted file (with file name:dat) is required.
 - You can select the employees to be imported and type of form to be created. After import, a "Control List" page will be displayed showing the selected records. You can then edit the records accordingly.
- (c) If you have saved a partially completed data file prepared by Direct Keying which has not yet been submitted ("draft data file"), you can continue to edit or add new records by selecting "Continue to complete a saved draft return".
 - To open a draft data file, you have to input the Self-selected Key of that file.
 - After opening the file, a "Control List" page will be displayed showing the records stored in the file. You can then edit or add records accordingly.
- (d) Input the Captcha by reference to the 4 characters being displayed.
- (e) Click **Continue**> to proceed.

The Self-selected Key, which is used to protect the data file from unauthorized access, is required for subsequent opening / submission of the data file. Thus, you are strongly advised to keep proper record of the Key. The Department has NO mean to reset or retrieve the Key to open the saved data file which is only stored in your own computer.



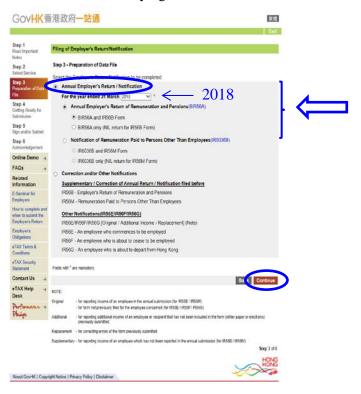
4.4.2 Confirm the Business Name

- (a) The business name of the employer in accordance with the Department's record for the ERN inputted will be displayed for confirmation. If the business name displayed is correct, select "Yes" and then click **Continue**> to proceed.
- **(b)** If the name is incorrect, select "NO" and quit the application.
- (c) If you want to amend the inputted ERN and ERIC, click <**Back**> to re-input the correct ERN and ERIC. If there is any enquiry regarding the business name, please contact us at 187 8022.



4.4.3 Select the Type of Form for Completion

- (a) Select the type of Employer's Return / Notifications to be completed and click < Continue>.
 - If you want to prepare a data file for annual submission of BIR56A/IR6036B and whether with/without form IR56B/M, please select the relevant option under "Annual Employer's Return / Notification".
 - If would like prepare you to data file for additional/replacement/supplementary* IR56B/M form or original/additional/replacement* form IR56E/F/G, please select "Corrections and/or Other Notifications".
- (b) An illustration on completion of the Employer's Return (BIR56A) with Form IR56B for the year ended 31 March 2018 is shown below.
- (c) Select "BIR56A and IR56B Form" under "Annual Employer's Return of Remuneration and Pensions (BIR56A)" of "Annual Employer's Return / Notification". Select the year "2018".
- (d) Click **Continue**> to start keying in the data of the form IR56B.



[^] Original

- for reporting income of an employee/a recipient in the annual submission (for IR56B/M).
- for form not previously filed for the employee concerned (for IR56E/F/G).

Additional

for reporting additional income of an employee/a recipient that has not been included in the form previously submitted (either paper or electronic).

Replacement - Supplementary -

- for correcting errors of the form previously submitted.
- for reporting income of an employee/a recipient which has not been reported in the annual submission (only applicable to IR56B/M).

4.4.4 Input IR56 Form Details

- **4.4.4.1** There are three input pages for completing an IR56 Form, namely,
 - (a) Employee's Details;
 - (b) Income Details; and
 - (c) Place of Residence.
- **4.4.4.2** You need to fill in all the required details of each page and pass the validation check before proceeding to the next page. If any error is found, the error message will be shown at the top of the screen.
- **4.4.4.3** When completing the Form IR56B in this example, some points to note are highlighted.

(a) Employee's Details

(i) Language for printing the form

It refers to the language when the IR56 form record is printed. It will not affect the language of the input screen.

(ii) Employee's Details

Surname / Given Name in English – Surname and Given name should be the same as that shown on the Hong Kong Identity Card / Passport of the employee.

H.K. Identity Card No. / Passport No. & Place of Issue – You must provide the employee's H.K. Identity Card No. Only if the employee does not have a Hong Kong Identity Card, input the Passport No. and the place of issue instead.

Residential Address – You can either provide the employee's residential address in fixed format or free format. For free format, it allows input of a maximum of 3 lines with 30 characters in each line. For non-Hong Kong address, the postal code should also be provided, and "Others" (under "Area") should be selected.

Postal Address – It is defaulted as "Same as Residential Address". If the employee's postal address is different from the Residential Address, please provide the postal address in this part.

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	Exit
Step 1	Filing of Employer's Return/Notification - IR56B
Read Important Notes	
Step 2	Employee's Details Income Details Place of Residence
Select Service Step 3	Step 3 - Preparation of Data File
Preparation of Data File	Employer's File Number: 6A1 - 81240001 ATTENTION:
Step 4 Getting Ready for	Please provide a copy of the completed Form IR56B to your employee and retain a copy for reference.
Submission	Language for printing this form * O Chinese • English
Step 5 Sign and/or Submit	Type of form Original
Step 6 Acknowledgement	NOTE: If an additional sum is payable to the employee for whom you have filed an IR56 form, please furnish an "Additional" form and insert the additional amount in the appropriate item under the Income Details.
Online Demo	Employee's Details
FAQs	Salutation \bigcirc Mr. \bigcirc Mrs. \bigcirc Ms. \bigcirc Miss
Related	Surname in English * CHAU
Information E-Seminar for	Given Name in English * PUI SHAN
Employers	Full Name in Chinese
How to complete and when to submit the	H.K. Identity Card No. XX856293 (8)
Employer's Return	Passport No. & Place of Issue (If Employee has no H.K. Identity Card)
Employer's Obligations	Sex [★] ○ Male ● Female
eTAX Terms & Conditions	Marital Status Single/Widowed/Divorced/Living Apart O Married
eTAX Security	Spouse's Name (Surname first, e.g. Chan, Tai Man)
Statement	Spouse's H.K. Identity Card No.
eTAX Help -+	Spouse's Passport No. & Place of Issue
e IAX Help	Residential Address*
Performance + Pledge	Address in English Flat / Room Floor Block
11119	Name of Building
	No. & Name of Street
	District
	Area*
	Address either in English or in Chinese
	FLAT A,1F,123 HONG KONG ROA
	Area* ● Hong Kong ○ Kowloon ○ New Territories ○ Others
	Postal Address (Complete if different from the Residential Address above)
	Same as Residence Address
	O Address in English
	Flat / Room Floor Block
	Name of Building
	No. & Name of Street
	District ON Total ON
	Area* ○ Hong Kong ○ Kowloon ○ New Territories ○ Others
	Address either in English or in Chinese
	Area* ○ Hong Kong ○ Kowloon ○ New Territories ○ Others
	THE STRONG WINDOWS WITH TORRIDGE S CHIEFS
	Fields with * are mandatory.
	Clear Discard Save Draft Continue
	Step 3 of 6
	HONG

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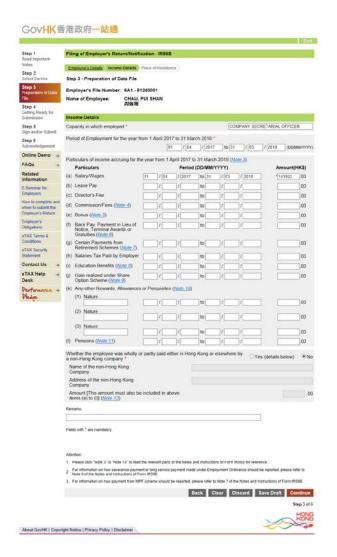
(b) Income Details

(i) Period of Employment

The period fields will be filled automatically by reference to the reporting year selected. For example, if the year "2018" is selected, the period fields will be pre-filled with "01/04/2017" and "31/03/2018" accordingly. You can amend the period fields, if necessary.

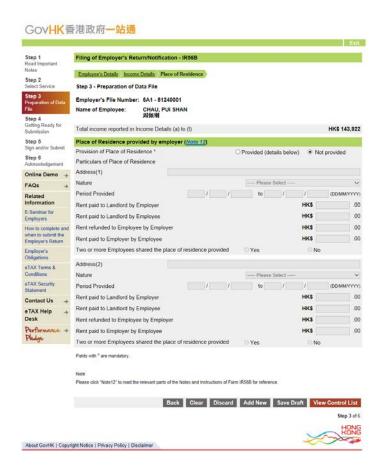
(ii) Particulars of Income

- You can click the "note" to see the relevant parts of the Notes and Instructions of Form IR56B for reference.
- If the total income of the employee exceeds \$999,999,999, you are required to submit a paper IR56 form for that employee.
- If the emoluments paid / payable to the employee is in non-Hong Kong currency, the emoluments must be converted to Hong Kong dollars. Average exchange rates of major currencies can be found in the Department's website (www.ird.gov.hk/eng/tax/ind_stp.htm).



(c) Place of Residence

- You are required to select whether a place of residence is provided to the employee.
- If place of residence is provided, you have to input the details of the place of residence provided.
- If more than two places of residence were provided to an employee in the same reporting year, you are required to submit a paper IR56 form for that employee and supply the details of the places of residence provided in the same format on a separate sheet.



(d) Function Button

On the input pages for completing an IR56 Form, you may click the following function buttons:

<Clear>

- Only the data you have just inputted **for this page** will be cleared and NOT retained if **<Clear>** is clicked. The data of the employee inputted in other pages, if any, will not be cleared.

<Discard>

- The data you have just inputted for **this employee record** will be cleared and NOT retained if **Discard** is clicked. The "Control List" page will then be displayed.

<Save Draft>

- Click **Save Draft**> to save the data file in your own computer/removable storage device.
- Please note that before your submission of the data file to the Department via the ER e-Filing Services is completed, the Department does not retain the information you keyed in. You are strongly advised to save the draft data file from time to avoid any loss of inputted data.

<Continue>

- Click **Continue**> to go to the next page.

<Back>

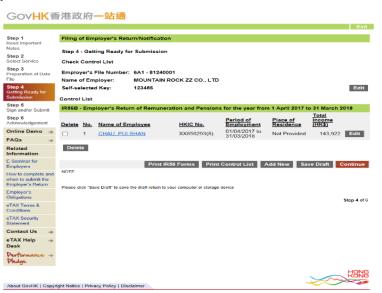
- Click **Back**> to go to the previous page.

<Add New>

 Click < Add New> will retain the record temporarily and a blank form will be displayed. You can then input the data of another employee.

4.4.5 View Control List

(a) At the "Control List" page, a summary of the IR56 records already inputted will be displayed.



(b) In addition to **Add New** and **Save Draft**, the following buttons are available:

<Edit>

- Click the corresponding **Edit**> to amend the Self-selected Key or edit the IR56 form record.

<Delete>

- If you want to delete one or more records, you can tick the box(es) on the left hand side of the records and then click **Delete**>.

<Print IR56 Forms>

- Click **Print IR56 Forms**> to print the draft IR56 forms for checking.

<Print Control List>

- Click **Print Control List>** to print the draft Control List for checking.

<Continue>

- Click **<Continue>** to proceed to the preparation of the BIR56A and submission process.

4.4.6 Input Employer's Contact Details

- (a) Enter the new postal address (if necessary), e-mail address and telephone no. of the employer.
- **(b)** Click **Continue**> to proceed.



4.4.7 Input Details of the Authorized Signer

- (a) Input the designation of the Authorized Signer and e-mail address for receiving the acknowledgement.
- **(b)** Click **<Continue>** to proceed.



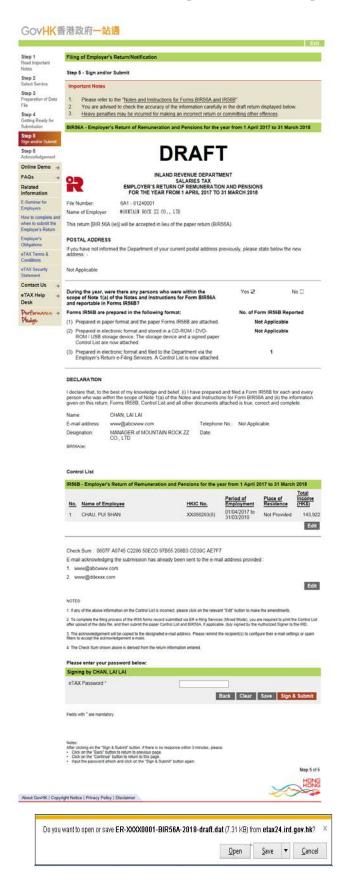
4.4.8 Get Ready for Submission

(a) The following screen will be displayed for your checking before proceeding to the "Sign and/or Submit" page.



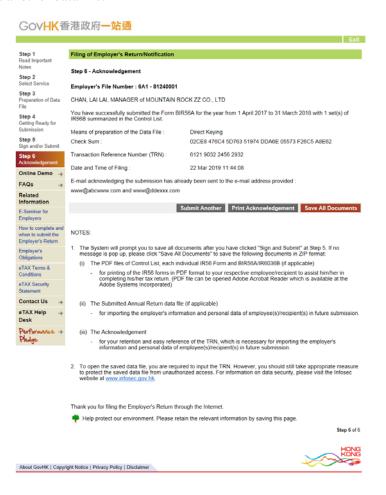
- **(b)** If error is found, click the corresponding **Edit**> to amend the IR56 records or employer's contact details.
- (c) If all the information is correct, click **Submit** to continue the submission process.
- (d) You will be requested to save a draft data file in your computer before submission to avoid any data loss during the submission process.
- (e) The appropriate signing method will be displayed according to the authentication means used for login by the Authorized Signer. For example, if eTAX account is used during the login, you will be required to input your eTAX password again to sign the Employer's Return electronically.

(f) If the details of the inputted details are in order, input your eTAX password and then click **Sign & Submit>** to complete the submission process.



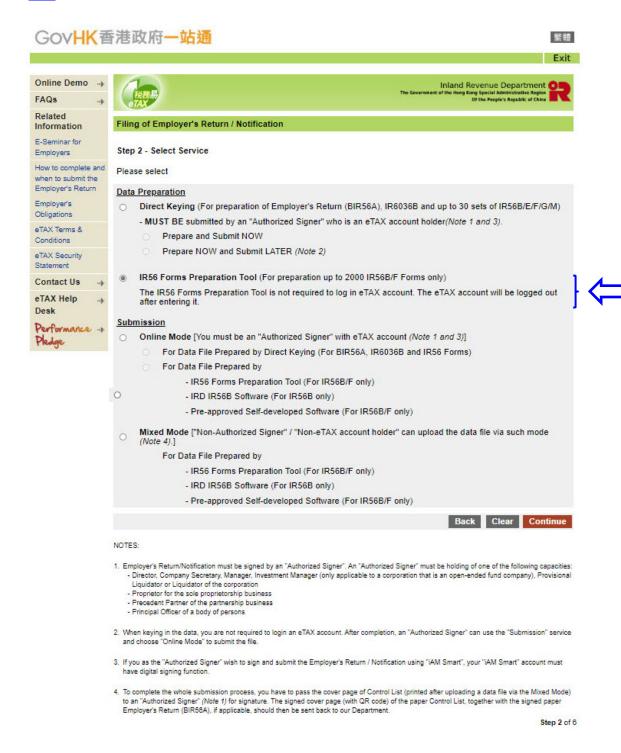
4.4.9 Acknowledgement

- (a) The system will prompt you to save all documents after submission. If no message is pop up, please click "Save All Documents" to save a ZIP file in your computer for your record. The ZIP file will contain the soft copy of the followings documents:
 - (i) The Acknowledgement;
 - (ii) BIR56A/IR6036B (if appropriate);
 - (iii) Control List; and
 - (iv) IR56 forms (in PDF format), to facilitate your distribution to employee/recipient in soft copy.
 - (v) For annual submission of BIR56A and IR6036B, the ZIP file will also contain a submitted data file which can be used for importing the personal particulars of the employees/recipients to prepare IR56 forms under this "Direct Keying" method. Please note that you are required to input the Transaction Reference Number ("TRN") when creating a new data file by importing.
- (b) If necessary, you can print the Acknowledgement page with the TRN by clicking <**Print Acknowledgement>**.
- (c) Click **Submit Another>** to go to the screen as shown at para. 4.3 to prepare or submit another data file.



5. Data Preparation – IR56 Forms Preparation Tool

- **5.1** Employers can use the IR56 Forms Preparation Tool ("Preparation Tool"), which is a web-based application, to prepare up to 2000 sets of IR56B or IR56F records in a file.
- 5.2 The data file prepared by the Preparation Tool can only be submitted via ER e-Filing Services, using the Online Mode or Mixed Mode. Submission of removable storage device (e.g. CD-ROM) containing the data file prepared by the Preparation Tool will not be accepted.
- **5.3** For details of the Preparation Tool, you may read the <u>User Guide of IR56 Forms Preparation Tool</u>.



6. Submission – **Online Mode** (Login of the eTAX account, "iAM Smart+" account with digital signing function or recognized personal digital certificate by an Authorized Signer is required)

There are two submission services in the ER e-Filing services, namely Online Mode and Mixed Mode.

Online Mode allows the Authorized Signer to complete the submission process of Employer's Return and Notifications online using his/her eTAX Password, MyGovHK Password, "iAM Smart+" account (with digital signing function) or recognized personal digital certificate through the ER e-Filing Services.

Data file prepared by the following means can be submitted via the Online Mode:-

- Direct Keying (all types of Employer's Return and Notifications)
- IR56 Forms Preparation Tool (Forms IR56B and IR56F)
- Pre-approved self-developed software (Forms IR56B and IR56F)

Mixed Mode allows employer to designate a person to upload a data file containing IR56B/F records through the ER e-Filing Services. After successful uploading of the data file, a paper Control List (with Transaction Reference Number and QR code) will be generated from the system. The Authorized Signer needs to sign and submit the cover page of the paper Control List to the Department to complete the submission process.

Data file prepared by the following means can be submitted via the Mixed Mode:-

- IR56 Forms Preparation Tool (Forms IR56B and IR56F)
- Pre-approved self-developed software (Forms IR56B and IR56F)

For more details regarding Mixed Mode, please refer to para. 7.

6.1 Submission of Data File Prepared by Direct Keying

(a) Select "For Data File Prepared by Direct Keying" under "Online Mode" of "Submission".



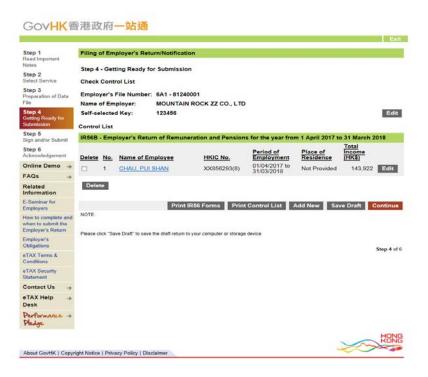
(b) The Authorized Signer can choose to login his/her eTAX account to perform the submission.



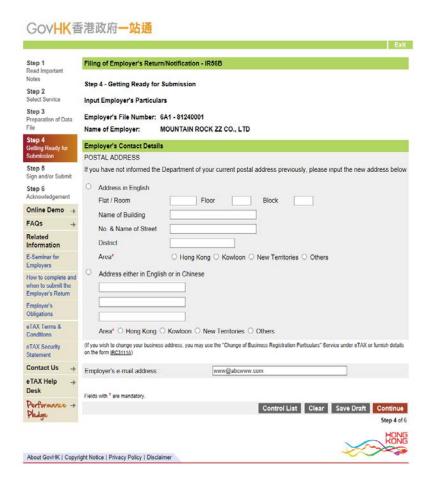
- (c) Input the followings:
 - (i) Employer's File Number. If you do not have Employer's File Number, please input your Business Registration Number.
 - (ii) Employer's Identification Code ("ERIC").
 - (iii) Select the data file to be submitted and input the Self-selected Key of that data file.



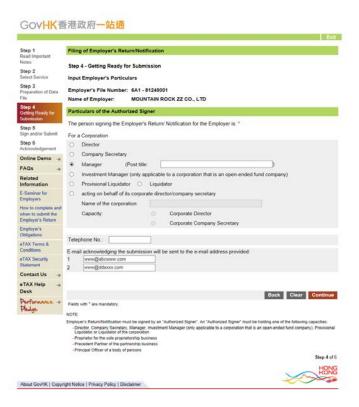
(d) The "Control List" page will be displayed. Please check the summary of the data file before clicking **Continue**.



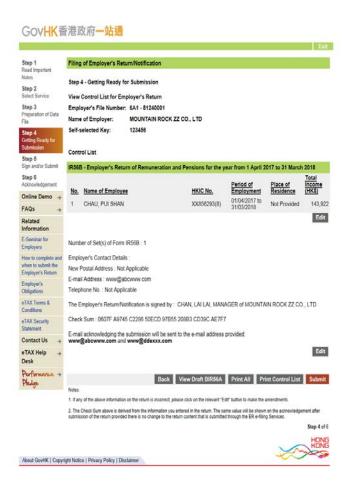
(e) The Employer's contact details previously entered will be shown for checking. Amend or input if necessary and click **<Continue>** to proceed.



(f) The details of the Authorized Signer previously entered will be shown for checking. Amend if necessary and click **<Continue>** to proceed.

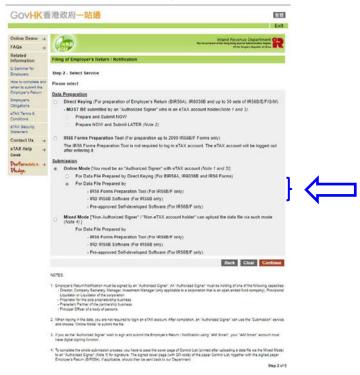


(g) Click **Submit**> to proceed and follow the steps as mentioned in para. 4.4.9.



6.2 Submission of Data File Prepared by

- IR56 Forms Preparation Tool
- **Self-developed Software** (Pre-approved by the Department)
- (a) Select "For Data File Prepared by...." under "Online Mode" of "Submission".

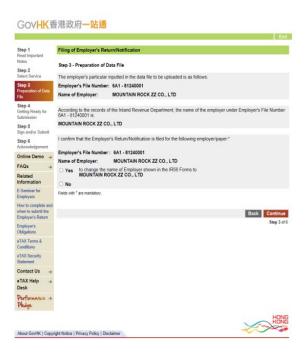


- **(b)** The Authorized Signer can choose to login his/her eTAX account to perform the submission [see para. 4.3.1].
- (c) Input the Employer's Reference and ERIC, select the Form Type to be uploaded and select the data file.
- (d) Input the Captcha by reference to the 4 characters being displayed.
- (e) Click **Continue**> to proceed.

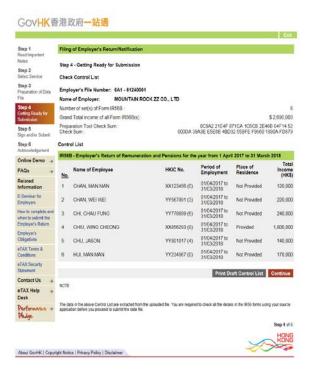


(f) The system will check the name of employer of the data file with the name of employer of the Department's database. If the names are different, you will be asked to confirm if you are submitting a data file for the employer under the file number/business registration number that you entered. Select "Yes" and then click **Continue**> to confirm and proceed.

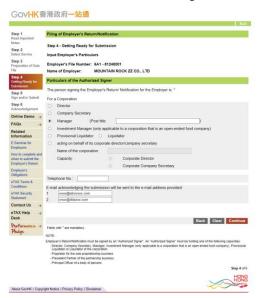
If the name is incorrect, select "NO" and quit the application. If you would like to amend the inputted ERN and ERIC, click **Back**> and re-input the correct ERN and ERIC. If there is any enquiry regarding the business name, please contact us at 187 8022.



(g) The "Control List" page will be displayed showing a summary of the IR56 records stored in the data file. If any of the information found to be incorrect, you are required to amend the data by using the application that creates the data file.



(h) Input the details of the Authorized Signer and then click **Continue**>.



(i) A drafted BIR56A will be displayed. If the details of the IR56 forms to be submitted are in order, tick the confirmation box at the top of the draft. Input the eTAX password and then click **Sign & Submit**> to submit. Please note that the submission cannot be reverted, thus, you have to make sure all the inputted details are in order before inputting the password and click **Sign & Submit**>.



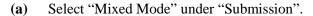
7. Submission - Mixed Mode (Login of eTAX account NOT required)

You may designate a person to upload the IR56 form data file through Mixed Mode. The designated person is required to input the Employer's Identification Code ("ERIC") and the Self-selected Key (if the data file is prepared by the Preparation Tool) of the data file when uploading the data file. The Authorized Signer is then required to sign and submit the cover page* of the paper Control List (with Transaction Reference Number and QR code) generated from the system to the Department to complete the submission process.

Start from 14 August 2022, employer is only required to sign and submit the cover page of the Control List and is no longer required to sign on each and every pages of the Control List after uploading the data file under the "Mixed Mode".

It accepts data file prepared by the following means:-

- IR56 Forms Preparation Tool (Forms IR56B and IR56F)
- Pre-approved self-developed software (Form IR56B and IR56F)





(b) Input the Employer's Reference, select the Employer's Return / Notifications to be uploaded and select the data file.



(c) The business name of the employer in accordance with the Department's record for the ERN inputted will be displayed for confirmation. If the business name displayed is correct, select "Yes" and then click **Continue>** to proceed.

If the name is incorrect, select "NO" and quit the application. If you would like to amend the inputted ERN and ERIC, click **<Back>** and re-input the correct ERN and ERIC. If there is any enquiry regarding the business name, please contact us at 187 8022.



(d) At the "Control List" page, a summary of the IR56 records already inputted will be displayed. Click **Continue**> to proceed if there is no error.



(e) Input the details of the Authorized Signer who will sign the cover page of the paper Control List. Click **Continue**>.



(f) Check the information as shown. If the details of the IR56 form to be uploaded are in order, tick the confirmation box at the top of the draft Control List and then click **Submit**> to confirm uploading the data file.



(g) After successful uploading of the data file, an "Acknowledgement" page will be displayed and the system will prompt you to save all documents. If no message is pop up, please click the <Save All Documents> to save the Control List and the Acknowledgement Page to your computer for reference and printing.



(h) Please click **Print Control List>** to print the Control List.



- (i) The Authorized Signer must sign and submit the cover page of the Control List to complete the submission process. If the submission is for annual IR56B, the signed paper Control List (cover page) must be submitted together with the duly signed paper BIR56A. The mere uploading of the data file containing IR56 form records will not be regarded as having complied with the employer's obligations as stipulated in the Inland Revenue Ordinance.
- (j) If an incorrect data file is wrongly uploaded via the Mixed Mode, the Authorized Signer should complete and submit Form IR1472 to the Department by post or in person to cancel the uploaded data file. However, if the signed Control List (cover page) for the incorrect data file has already been submitted (that is, the whole submission process has been completed), you are required to submit the replacement/additional IR56 forms to amend the incorrect information reported.

8. Online Demonstration

To let you have a better understanding of the steps of the submission of various Employer's Return and Notifications via the ER e-Filing Services, some online demonstrations have been prepared. You can click here to view the Online Demonstration.