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AAPB BAG Meeting Notes May 2008

Maria Benardis of AAPB attended the BAG meeting on 20 May 2008. Key issues discussed at the meeting included:

1. ATO product and service initiatives for BSPs

The ATO provided an update on some of the products and services it was offering bookkeepers and other products and services it was working for the bookkeeper industry. This included the upcoming seminars, the BAS service Provider newsletter, BAS Advisory Programme and the BSP helpline for portal users.

2. Workshop – BAG self evaluation – A report card

The ATO conducted a survey with the BAG committee on its performance. The survey addressed, how members rated the effectiveness of the committee, what new situations we needed to address and whether the BAG membership composition right to take us forward.

AAPB expressed concerns with the membership of the committee and the need to have consistent and equal appointment practices as adopted in other ATO committees. AAPB also expressed an interest in nominated a bookkeeper member to join the BAG committee.

A concern was also raised in relation to the need for the ATPF committee to interact more with the BAG committee and vice versa. There are many issues that affect bookkeepers being discussed at the ATPF committee that the BAG committee is not involved in or not made aware of. This issue was also raised at a previous meeting by AAPB.

3. Workshop – Key Issues

There was discussion on the key issues the committee needed to focus on going forward. The top 5 issues were:

1. The new legislative framework – industry capability and preparation.
2. Section 251L breaches and compliance
3. The Bookkeeper environment
4. BAG membership and the general administration of the Committee
5. Tools, products and services for bookkeepers



4. Technical issues escalation

AAPB spoke to this item. Concerns were raised in relation to the inability to raise bookkeeper related issues at the BAG meeting. In particular AAPB raised the following:

- no response had been received from the ATO on many issues raised by AAPB
- some issues raised were flagged as complete when they were still active and awaiting an ATO response
- a GST issue was escalated to the NTLG-GST committee and AAPB was not advised. This item was flagged as completed by the ATO
- the need to properly structure the committee and the need for it to run along the same lines as other committees
- the need for agenda items raised to be circulated to other BAG committee members. There is also a need to publish issues resolved on the ATO web-site as is the protocol and procedure for the ATPF issues log. It is important to have visibility and transparency

5. Treasury Exposure Draft – update

It is likely that a further exposure draft will be released in the second half of the year for public comment.

6. GST and property transactions

The ATO tabled a proposed new fact sheet dealing with property transaction. AAPB will be forwarding comments on this fact sheet to the ATO.

The next meeting will be held on 15 August 2008. If members have any issues they would like us to table at the meeting please email these to: aapb@aapb.org.au

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