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more in tax refunds compared to this point last year and more U.S. taxpayers used their home computers to file their returns, according to a report published today by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), which oversees the IRS.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • Apr. 16, 2014

Even with the 10-day delay to this year's income tax filing season, the IRS has issued more in tax refunds compared to this point last year and more U.S. taxpayers used their home computers to file their returns, according to a report published today by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), which oversees the IRS.

The data is not final, however. The latest information reported by the IRS was as of March 7.

“The filing season at the Internal Revenue Service is critical because it is during this time that most individuals file their income tax returns and contact the IRS if they have questions about specific laws or filing procedures,” said J. Russell George, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. TIGTA plans to issue the final results of its review of the 2014 Filing Season in September 2014, he added.

As a result of the 16-day Government shutdown at the beginning of the fiscal year, the IRS delayed the start of the filing season from January 21, 2014, to January 31, 2014. As of March 7, 2014, the IRS had received more than 67.1 million tax returns—more than 62.2 million (92.6 percent) were filed electronically and less than five million (7.4 percent) were filed on paper. During this period of time, more taxpayers used their home computers to file their returns in 2014 (27.4 million, up from 25.9 million last year) and fewer used tax preparers (34.8 million used preparers, down

from 35.6 million last year). The IRS has issued more than 55.4 million refunds

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The use of the split-refund option to direct-deposit a refund into multiple bank accounts continues to grow. Through March 6, 2014, a total of 585,331 individuals chose to split refunds totaling more than \$2.6 billion into multiple accounts. However, TIGTA continues to identify that some taxpayers and return preparers misuse this option to direct a portion of a tax refund to a preparer for payment of services.

TIGTA also found that some paid tax return preparers continue to be noncompliant with Earned Income Tax Credit due-diligence requirements, but the number has decreased substantially when compared to the same period last filing season.

Finally, the IRS plans to assist 5.6 million taxpayers through face-to-face contact at the Taxpayer Assistance Centers during Fiscal Year 2014, which is one million fewer taxpayers than were assisted during Fiscal Year 2013. As of March 8, 2014, approximately 46.3 million taxpayers contacted the IRS by calling one of the various toll-free Customer Account Services lines.

The IRS continues to offer more self-assistance options that taxpayers can access 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including its IRS2Go app; YouTube channels; interactive self-help tools on IRS.gov; and Twitter, Tumblr, and Facebook accounts. However, the IRS did not always ensure that the self-help tools were updated with the most current tax information before the start of the filing season.

Income Tax • IRS

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