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## Preparers

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is not processing complaints against tax preparers in a timely manner, according to the latest report publicly from the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA).

**Isaac M. O'Bannon** • Sep. 14, 2014

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The IRS processed about 77 million individually electronically filed (e-filed) Federal income tax returns prepared by paid tax return preparers in 2013.

Identifying problem preparers through the complaint process is an essential component of the IRS's oversight responsibilities. Therefore, the IRS developed processes and procedures through which taxpayers can file a complaint with the IRS.

The overall objective of this audit was to determine whether the IRS's tax return complaint process is effective.

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resolved.

“Tax return preparers play an increasingly important role in helping taxpayers to comply with the tax laws,” said J. Russell George, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. “Unqualified or unethical tax return preparers can negatively impact taxpayers as well as tax revenue if the tax returns they prepare are incorrect and/or fraudulent.”

TIGTA made eight recommendations to the IRS, including that it establish goals and procedures to ensure that complaints are timely processed; develop a process to ensure that complaints are recorded in inventory records; ensure that criteria for referring complaints to business functions are appropriately applied and that the business functions' resolution of complaint referrals is tracked; and establish procedures to contact taxpayers for missing information.

IRS management agreed with six of TIGTA's recommendations and plans to take corrective actions. With respect to the recommendation with which IRS management partially agreed and the other with which IRS management disagreed, TIGTA continues to believe that the IRS should track how the business functions resolve referred complaints.

Income Tax • IRS

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