

Minister
of National Revenue



Ministre
du Revenu national

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A6

MAR 7 5 2015

Mr. Dom Mancuso
Chair
Mr. Ken Kobly, FCGA
President and Chief Executive Officer
Alberta Chambers of Commerce
1808 - 10025 102A Avenue Northwest
Edmonton AB T5J 2Z2

Dear Messrs. Mancuso and Kobly:

Thank you for your correspondence of January 20, 2015, asking to meet with me to discuss the issues you raise. Unfortunately, I am unable to meet with you at this time.

In your letter, you say the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is under no set timeline to assess income tax returns for individuals, corporations, and trusts. I asked senior CRA officials to review your comments and they tell me that the CRA has service standard timelines for assessing all types of returns.

The CRA's goal is to assess electronic T2 corporation returns in 45 days or less and paper returns in 90 days or less. For self-employed individuals, the CRA is committed to assessing electronic income tax and benefit returns within an average of two weeks and paper returns within an average of four to six weeks. For T3 trust returns, the CRA's objective is to assess these returns within four months.

I note your comment on the CRA's timeline for reassessments. The CRA can reassess a return only within certain time limits, and these limits vary depending on the type of return and the nature of the reassessment.

To find out more about the CRA's service standard timelines under normal circumstances, please go to www.cra.gc.ca/servicestandards.

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I understand that you believe the CRA needs to improve its communications with business representatives. The CRA wants to offer accessible yet cost-effective telephone services to Canadians. This is why it developed its toll free networks to distribute calls to its agents across Canada, offering callers equal access to its telephone services.

Nevertheless, there are periods when the telephone lines are very busy. During these periods, the demand for service can be greater than the CRA's ability to answer on every caller's first try. These periods present a challenge to the CRA because it has to balance accessibility and available resources. I shared your comments with the senior officials responsible for the telephone services to make them aware of your concerns.

Please note that businesses can ask account-related questions online through My Business Account, and the CRA will answer them online. Businesses can use the "Enquiries service" to make an online request or submit a question about their T2 return. The CRA's goal is to respond within 10 business days, depending on the complexity of the question.

In terms of burden reduction, the CRA has played an active role in minimizing the burden related to the administration of tax laws and improving service delivery to contribute to business competitiveness. The CRA has put in place significant red tape reduction measures. You can find more information on the CRA website at **www.cra.gc.ca/redtapereduction**.

Concerning your proposal of new legislation that would require the CRA to assess income tax returns within 120 days, CRA officials tell me that the late Honourable James M. Flaherty answered your proposal in his letter of November 29, 2011. I have enclosed a copy of the letter my predecessor, the Honourable Gail Shea, received.

I trust the information I have provided is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay, P.C., Q.C., M.P.

Enclosure