



2003 Meeting Minutes Area 3

- December 19, 2003
- November 21, 2003
- October 4, 2003
- September 19, 2003
- August 22, 2003
- July 18, 2003
- June 20, 2003
- May 16-17, 2003
- April 25, 2003
- March 21, 2003
- February 7, 2003
- January 17, 2003

Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes December 19, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Charlotte Cassady
- Helen Curol
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Carolyn Lewis DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez TAP Program Analyst
- Nancy Ferree TAP Program Manager

Welcome

Committee Chair George Sullivan welcomed everyone to the December meeting.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Review of November 21, 2003 Minutes

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that she was not aware of the previous meeting (October) minutes being approved. She said she had some corrections. TAP Staff will send her a copy of the approved minutes for her review.



Committee Member Gwen Handelman asked if this would be the correct time to make a suggestion about the minutes. She would like to see a list of assignments at the end of the minutes. This way everyone will know what he or she is assigned for the next meeting.

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated he had a couple of changes for the minutes. The minutes were accepted by consensus, after several corrections are made.

Communications

Committee Chair George Sullivan asked if everyone had received the email concerning the new Director. Everyone had.

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that there was a recent resignation from our committee. Committee Members Keith Johnson has resigned as of January 1, 2004. Committee Chair asked TAP Analyst Sallie Chavez to take the appropriate action and send him a thank you letter for participating on the TAP.

Office of Notice Gatekeeper Request for Assistance

Committee Chair George Sullivan asked if everyone had received a copy of the request. Everyone confirmed they received it. Committee Chair Sullivan does not think it fits in with Area 3. He suggests that maybe it be sent to the Ad Hoc Issue Committee. He asked for comments.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman agrees that it is more of an issue for an issue committee than an area committee. The Ad Hoc Issue Committee seems like the appropriate place to send it. It is not a grass root issue.

Committee Member Agnes Tillerson stated that there are reports that address these issues. Committee Member Gwen Handelman reminded her that this request was only about the website.

TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree stated that she has sent the information to other committees to see if they are interested in pursuing it.

Committee Chair George Sullivan requested TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez to contact Steve Bayder and thank him for the information and tell him we are going to be referring this to the Joint Committee to possibly be reassigned to the Ad Hoc Issue Committee.

Area 7 Offer in Compromise

Committee Chair George Sullivan asked if everyone had received this recommendation. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez stated that she only sent it to the sub-committee dealing with the OIC issue. He would like the entire committee to have a copy. TAP Program Analyst Chavez will forward to the entire committee.

Confirmation on 1040X Direct Deposit

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that this proposal was raised to the Joint Committee and was accepted and forwarded to the appropriate organization.

3rd Party Authorization Form

Committee Member Ed Hanna wants to know if the committee still wants to proceed with this issue. He stated that council had responded that the checkbox was good for one (1) year. Does the committee want to pursue all the open years?

There was much debate about this. It was not clear that council had answered this question. There was discussion as to whether this was a legislative proposal. After all the discussion it was decided that Committee Chair George Sullivan will contact TAP Joint Committee Program Analyst Barbara Toy



and ask to have this put on the agenda for the Joint Committee call for next month. Committee Member Ed Hanna will send information to Committee Chair Sullivan so he will have the proper questions to ask.

Outsourcing

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that he had a telephone conversation with Designated Federal Official (DFO) Carolyn Lewis about this. DFO Lewis stated that this issue is either legislative or not a panel issue. She has reviewed all the information. She feels it is a good proposal. She talked to Committee Chair Sullivan about it and they agree that the taxpayer should be informed. However, is this an issue the IRS can do anything about?

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated that Code Section 7216 (Disclosure or Use of Information by Preparers of Returns) and the regulations under this section provided a reasonable basis for the Internal Revenue Service to respond to this issue. Regulation 301.7216-2(h), which deals with disclosures by tax returns preparer to tax return processor was cited. There would be a reasonable basis for IRS to respond. DFO Carolyn Lewis stated she has done some research on this. IRS disclosure only gets involved after the tax return is filed. Circular 230 does address the requirement of the practitioners. The IRS, however, doesn't legislate to preparers. She does feel taxpayer should be told if a return is being sent to a 3rd party. Committee Member Owen Oatley explained that Code Section 7216 and Treasury Regulations Section 301.7216(2)(h) prescribe criminal penalties for unauthorized disclosure of return information by preparers. Thus the IRS does regulate relations between taxpayers and their preparers with respect to privacy of return information.

There was much discussion about this issue. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that this issue was discussed at the Low Income Tax Clinic (LITC) conference. She said that there is a proposal to change the regulations in 2004.

Committee Chair George Sullivan suggested that Committee Members Owen Oatley, Agnes Tillerson and Gwen Handelman work with DFO Carolyn Lewis to look into this issue and rewrite the proposal. They will address this issue as 3rd party outsourcing instead of foreign country outsourcing.

Area 3 TAP Issues

Schedule K-1

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated that he rewrote the previous recommendation that the Joint Committee did not accept. Committee Member Gwen Handelman asked if this was the same proposal that was made before. Committee Member Oatley said basically it was the same proposal. Since the individual on the Joint Committee who was against the recommendation is no longer on the Joint Committee it may go forward. Committee Member Ed Hanna said they do have support from other members. Committee Chair George Sullivan asked if it had been changed enough. Committee Members Oatley and Hanna stated it had.

Committee Member Buck Paolone asked if the Barriers could be expanded. Committee Member Owen Oatley stated that it involved contribution to capital. A taxpayer would have to look at appropriate places in his books to find the information. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that it doesn't involve reviewing prior years. Committee Member Oatley stated that was correct. The way it is now a taxpayer may have to go back 10 years to get information. Committee Member Gwen Handelman suggested changing the Barriers to Approval to:

Some individuals might believe that the extra work reviewing the current year tax years business records involved in providing this additional information does not outweigh the benefits.

TAP Program Analyst will make this correction. It was agreed by consensus to forward this recommendation to the Joint Committee.



Walk-in Office Review

Committee Chair George Sullivan thanked Committee Member Ed Hanna for the list of items for the criteria on the walk-in office visits. Committee Member Ed Hanna stated he wanted approval from the TAP Staff and DFO before the committee begins using it. DFO Carolyn Lewis states she did not receive it. Committee Chair George Sullivan will send it to TAP Analyst Sallie Chavez who will forward it to the entire committee.

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated he received Committee Member Charlotte Cassidy's review and was very impressed with it. It was a very good review. Committee Member Charlotte Cassidy stated she had visited the office in previous years but hadn't been there recently. She was very impressed with the look of the new space. She was especially impressed with the improvements made to the privacy.

Refund Check Envelope

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that he had requested this issue be put on the agenda for the Joint Committee call on Tuesday but he had to leave the call early and he wasn't sure if it was discussed or not. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that it was not and will be taken up at the next meeting.

New Issues/Referrals from Taxpayers

Contact #822 This is an old issue that was previously presented to the committee in March. It has to do with Service Center losing Form 2553s (Election by a Small Business Corporation) . This issue was put on hold until the next fiscal year. Revisited it to see what committee wants to do with it. This was discussed. It was decided that DFO Carolyn Lewis will work with TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez on this issue.

Contact #990 This issue (concerning putting telephone numbers on the bottom of tax returns) was discussed at a previous meeting. It was decided that this could not be done because of budgetary reasons. TAP Program Analyst will contact taxpayer and close the issue.

Contact #2379 This issue (concerning a hold on fund from the sale of an IRA in a brokerage account) was discussed. The TAP Program Analyst was not certain whether this was an IRS regulation or a brokerage regulation. TAP Program Analyst will research in more detail.

Contact #2387 This issue was suggested by Committee Member Keith Johnson. He suggested a central location for addresses and phone number on the IRS website. This information is on the website however not in a central location. TAP Chair George Sullivan asked TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez to forward this information to IRS Manager Steve Bayder.

Citizen Input

There were no citizens on the call.

Meeting Close

Committee Chair George Sullivan thanked everyone for his or her time. The next meeting is schedule for the January 16, 2004 at 11:00am EDT. He wished everyone a happy holiday.

Meeting was adjourned.



ASSIGNMENTS

TAP Program Analyst

1. Send copy of October meeting minutes to Committee Member Gwen Handelman.
2. Send thank you letter to Keith Johnson.
3. Send letter to Steve Bayder thanking him for the information and telling him it will be referred to the Ad Hoc Committee.
4. Forward Area 7 OIC recommendation to entire committee.
5. Make corrections on the K-1 recommendation and send it out to all committee members.
6. Forward email from Committee Member Ed Hanna concerning the TAC Office Visitations to all committee members.
7. Contact #822 DFO Carolyn Lewis and TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez will work on this issue.
8. Contact #990 send contact letter to taxpayer and close issue.
9. Contact #2379 research more on issue.
10. Contact #2387 forward this information to Steve Bayder.

Committee Chair George Sullivan

1. Contact TAP Program Analyst Barbara Toy about the 3rd Party Authorization.

Committee Members

1. Forward to Committee Chair George Sullivan information about the 3rd Party Authorization.
2. Committee Members Owen Oatley, Agnes Tillerson and Gwen along with DFO Carolyn Lewis will look into rewriting the outsourcing proposal.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes November 21, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Phil Bryant
- Charlotte Cassady
- Helen Curol
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Steven Wood
- Carolyn Lewis DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez TAP Program Analyst
- Nancy Ferree TAP Program Manager

Guests:

- Steve Bayder, Program Supervisor, Office of Notice Gatekeeper
- Karen Kiekenapp, Program Analyst, Office of Notice Gatekeeper

Welcome

Committee Chair George Sullivan welcomed everyone.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Introduction of Guests

Guests introduced themselves. Steve Bayder is a Program Manager in DC in the Office of Notice Gatekeeper and works for Betsy Kinter. He would like to solicit support for the TAP in looking at the Frequently Asked Questions from IRS.gov website. It has been found to not be user friendly to taxpayers. His office is doing an analysis but would like TAP's point of view. He would like to join the committee at their face-to-face meeting to get their help.

Karen Kiekenapp introduced herself. She is the Program Analyst in the Office of Notice Gatekeeper and works for Steve Bayder. She gave a brief overview of their office. The Office of Notice Gatekeeper is responsible for the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the IRS website as well as the tax topics on the Teletax phone line.

She stated they have several questions they need to have answered such as:

- What drives taxpayers to contact the IRS?
- What are the differences between the types of contact?



- Is the information provided sufficient?
- What are the likes/dislikes of the information?
- What constitutes a complete tax law answer?

Committee Member Buck Paolone asked how many taxpayers use the website. Karen Kiekenapp stated that 75% of taxpayer use the phone or correspondence and 25% use the Internet. However this data is about two years old and may not be accurate. Steve Bayder added that the use of the web is growing but he doesn't have current data. Committee Member Helen Curol said she feels the majority of taxpayers do not use the web. Steve Bayder answered that the web was another service for those who do use it. It's more convenient than making a call. Karen Kiekenapp said that most of the taxpayers who use the Internet are business professionals who are familiar with taxes.

Committee Member Buck Paolone asked what mode is given to taxpayer. Karen Kiekenapp answer that it was via tax trails. There is email but it is not easily accessed. There is no immediate access. Committee Member Gwen Handelman asked if taxpayers could contact the IRS? Karen Kiekenapp stated that a taxpayer could send comments or technical questions via email. The FAQs were made up of these questions.

Committee Member Sharon Lassar stated that the search engines are bad and need to be changed. Karen Kiekenapp agreed that the search engines don't work very well. Committee Member Sharon Lassar asked where are the FAQ on the website? Karen Kiekenapp explained where they are.

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated if the committee takes this up it will be assigned to a subcommittee. Steve Bayder stated that they want to get a feel for the next filing season. This information is for the long haul. It is very early in the planning right now.

Committee Chair George Sullivan requested that the questions and the plan be emailed to the committee. At that point a subcommittee can be set up and then Steve Bayder and Karen Kiekenapp can come to the face-to-face meeting in April. Steve Bayder agreed and would also like to attend interim meetings.

Committee Member Owen Oatley asked if they were the individuals we talk to about adding things to the website. Steve Bayder said they were. Committee Member Owen Oatley said that he had heard the information on the advance refund for childcare was no longer on the web site. Karen Kiekenapp stated that is at the end of the process. The site is gearing up for the new filing season. The information is there but down a couple of links.

Committee Member Buck Paolone asked if the telephone number could be put on the bottom of forms? Steve Bayder said it would be a wonderful idea but the IRS does not have the resources, the people, to answer the phones. This is outside of his expertise. He would like to stick to the Internet.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman explained how Area TAP offices work. They get information from taxpayers. IRS does not usually come to TAP for information except through the issue committees.

Steve Bayder said he will have his request put in writing and then the Area can see if they want to assist.

TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree asked if this was the only outside group being asked these questions. Steve Bayder said he doesn't know yet. He just wants some outside vision.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that maybe Committee Chair George Sullivan should take this to the Joint Committee. Committee Chair George Sullivan said he would like to see the proposal first.



Committee Member Sharon Lassar said that she appreciated them coming and asking for the committee's support. TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree said after the proposal is put in writing, it will get to the right place.

Review of October 4, 2003 Minutes

The minutes were accepted by consensus, after one correction is made.

Report on Staff Support

Committee Chair George Sullivan thanked everyone for responding and he will be sending all the responses to TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree next week.

Review of Calendar

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that because of budget, there would only be one (1) face-to-face meeting for the Area. Also the meeting in January is scheduled for January 16, which is the Friday before the Martin Luther King holiday. Is that a problem for anyone? It was not so the date stays.

Since the committee can only have one face-to-face meeting is April 23 & 24 still a good time? Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that she would not be able to make it to that meeting if it was on those dates. Committee Member Owen Oatley stated he would prefer it to be later in May. There was much discussion about the date and it was decided to hold the face-to-face meeting on June 11 - 12, 2004 in New Orleans. If New Orleans is not available committee requested TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez to pursue Nashville or Memphis.

Area 3 TAP Issues

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that Committee Member Sharon Lassar's issue on the electronic deposits on Form 1040X was forwarded to the Joint Committee and was accepted.

Refund Check Envelope

Committee Member Owen Oatley requested the approval of the committee on his issue concerning the back of refund envelopes. He would like to suggest that the printing be eliminated. He feels it flags the envelope as a refund. No need to put this on the envelope, as it doesn't serve a purpose. He suggests the back be left blank. There was consensus on this issue.

Abatement on late filing penalty

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated that a practitioner requested an abatement of a late filing penalty and was told he needed to file a Form 843 to request the penalty abatement. He would like to know if this is a change in procedure. He does not think that it was being done in Florida. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez will check on this. Committee Chair George Sullivan asked for this to be put on the agenda for the December meeting.

Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that one of the telephone issues has been forwarded to the Joint Committee and accepted. He congratulated Committee Member Buck Paolone and former Committee Member Tim Jarrell for their efforts toward this issue. The subcommittee had a conference call with an IRS individual who has charge of putting Taxpayer Assistance Office telephone numbers in the telephone directories. This will be discussed at the December meeting.

Outsourcing

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that this issue is in the parking lot. It was discussed during the Joint Committee meeting.

Committee Member Agnes Tillerson said that she had been reading that information was being sent out asking for personal information as thought it was from the IRS.



Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that the Ad Hoc Issue Committee was working on protecting taxpayer privacy. Committee Member Agnes Tillerson stated she was interested in this and would like to be connected with the Ad Hoc Committee. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez will get her information from the Ad Hoc Committee.

The outsourcing of collecting taxes will be dropped, as Congress has rejected the outsourcing of collecting taxes.

OIC

This is still in the parking lot.

Checkbox

This issue has been sent to District Counsel. Still no answer.

Identifying and Processing of Questionable W-4s

Nothing new.

Walk-in Office Review

Committee Member Ed Hanna will get something out to everyone so they can set up the reviews.

Schedule K1

This issue is being revisited. It needs to be rewritten. Committee Member Owen Oatley will write up.

Change Date on Quarterly Estimated Tax Payments

Committee Member Ed Hanna states that these payments are in the code and can't be changed. This issue will be dropped. TAP Program Analyst will send a letter to the taxpayer who suggested this idea.

Health Insurance Benefits

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that she found a survey that stated 57% of employers don't know health insurance benefits are deductible. She will put something together and have a proposal ready for the December or January meeting.

Military Information

Still in the parking lot.

Refund Check Envelope

This was elevated.

Materiality

No report.

New Issues/Referrals from Taxpayers

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that since it was late, these issues will be discussed at the December meeting with any other new issues received.

Citizen Input

There were no citizens on the call.

Meeting Close

Committee Chair George Sullivan thanked everyone for his or her time.

The next meeting is schedule for the December 19, 2003 at 11:00am EDT.



Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2003

Washington, DC

Members in Attendance:

- Phil Bryant
- Charlotte Cassady
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Keith Johnson
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Steven Wood
- Nancy Ferree, Acting DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez, TAP Program Analyst

WELCOME

Committee Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone. Chair stated that the new committee member from Tennessee resigned so the committee has no new members.

REVIEW OF AUGUST 22, 2003 & SEPTEMBER 19, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

The meeting minutes for both meetings were accepted by consensus.

DISCUSSION OF AREA ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Committee Chair Ed Hanna said he would like to have the W-2 eliminated from the section discussing the Red Border Forms. Committee Member Owen Oatley said he would like to change number one under the disappointments. He feels assignments should have been made to work with committee members who did not feel comfortable with the committee. Committee Member Steve Wood agreed and stated that new members should have asked questions. Committee Chair Hanna stated he should have been more of a mentor to the newer members who were coming into the committee. Committee Member Phil Bryant stated he felt overloaded. He couldn't get a handle on it. Acting DFO Nancy Ferree stated that the section would be changed.

It was agreed that number one under disappointments would be rewritten.

A Committee Member stated that there was one additional point. It was the grading of the Chair. It was agreed that everyone would give the grades to TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez and she will compile them and add them to the report.

OUTLINE OF PLAN FOR CONFERENCE AND OBTAIN CONSENSUS

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated he likes the consensus method. He endorses the method and thinks it really helped the committee come to agreement.



Committee Chair Ed Hanna said there would be a break at about 10:00am so that everyone can check out of the hotel.

SELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON & VICE CHAIRPERSON

TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez announced that the TAP Staff had received a couple of nominations for Chairperson. They were George Sullivan and Charlotte Cassady. Charlotte Cassady declined. TAP Program Analyst Chavez asked if there were any other nominations. There were none. By consensus George Sullivan was elected Chairperson.

TAP Program Analyst Chavez announced that the TAP Staff had received a couple of nominations for Vice Chairperson. They were George Sullivan and Charlotte Cassady. Since George Sullivan was elected Chairperson, his name was withdrawn. TAP Program Analyst Chavez asked if there were any other nomination. There were none. By consensus Charlotte Cassady was elected Vice Chairperson.

REMARKS BY OUTGOING CHAIRPERSON

Former Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated he appreciated working with everyone and the input that was given to him by committee members. He said the committee is a bright and talented group of individuals including the staff. The committee received many referrals. It was because of all the hard work done by the members that made the committee successful. He will give his support to new Chairperson George Sullivan and Vice Chairperson Charlotte Cassady and he wished them good luck.

Committee Chair George Sullivan thanked everyone for their support. He thanked former Committee Chair Ed Hanna for his work in the last year. He will look to Committee Member Ed Hanna and the staff for support. He stated he would delegate much of the work. He states that the chair will not run the group; he will put it on the committee's plate. It will be the committee's responsibility to take it and run. He feels the group will improve upon mistakes made in the past.

REVIEW OF PRIOR YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

Offer-in-Compromise/Installment Agreements/Penalty-interest

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated that he would like to keep this in the parking lot. He thinks the Schedule C Non-filer Issue Committee is working it and he would like to wait and see what they recommend.

Eliminate Red copy W-2 Requirements

This issue was dropped after having an IRS representative advised the committee that this could not be changed until the IRS changed it's scanning system.

Notice Responses Timeframe

This issue was referred to the Notice Issue Committee so it should be removed from the Issue List.

Estimated Tax Payments Available on Internet or via Phone

TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez stated that she has been doing some research on this issue and found the exact issue on a Small Business/Self-employed tracking site. She will follow-up on it and get back to Committee Member Ed Hanna with what she finds.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman said that the Joint Committee was working on a Matrix of issues. She said the first step was describing issues so everyone will understand. Name of this Issue was changed to **Expand checkbox authority to succeeding years for estimated payments.**

Customer Fairness & Respect

This issue was elevated.



Processing W-4s

Committee Member Sharon Lassar stated she would like to take this out of the parking lot. She is going to be discussing this with Sue Sottile of Wage and Investment. IRS has a project and she is going to talk to Sue about the project. She gave a brief explanation of the issue and requested feedback. Committee Member Owen Oatley stated he did not agree with lowering the exemption level. That may cause more work for the IRS. Committee Member Gwen Handelman said she thinks more information is needed on what the impact of this issue is. What is the justification? Committee Member Lassar said it could be a burden on employers who will have to complete more paperwork. Committee Member Steve Wood added that there is some interest in having the W-4 automated so all W-4s would be reported. Acting DFO Nancy Ferree asked if this issue was related to payroll tax and if it is could it be referred to that issue committee? Committee Member Lassar said it could be but she would like to work it jointly or just write it up. Acting DFO Ferree asked if the committee wanted a Subject Matter Expert to talk to them about the issue. Committee Member Lassar stated she would write up a referral after she speaks with Sue Sottile.

Name of this Issue was changed to **Identifying and Processing of Questionable W-4s.**

Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Along with Area 2, several issues on the telephones have been elevated. Committee Member Ed Hanna said he and Area 2 Committee Chair Mary Balmer have been working together on this issue. Committee Chair George Sullivan asked to have the elevated issue sent to all committee members.

ACTION ITEM : TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez will send the elevated issue from Area 2 to all Area 3 committee members.

Committee Member Ed Hanna reviewed the elevated issue that was sent to the Joint Committee. He still would like to see the telephone numbers in the local directories so that taxpayers and practitioners can call and make appointments. Acting DFO Nancy Ferree stated she just received an email concerning the person who is response for this. Her name is Tina Meaux.

ACTION ITEM : Acting DFO Nancy Ferree will follow-up with Tina Meaux on telephone numbers in local telephone directories.

Committee Member Ed Hanna stated there are still a few more areas that need to be worked so this issue is still active. Committee Member Buck Paolone stated only a small amount has been elevated. He said he would like to tackle it from a broader approach. He would like to see feedback immediately instead of months later. He added that the Commissioner states that everything is good but that's not what he hears.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that this issue should be coordinated with the issues from the other areas. Acting DFO Nancy Ferree added that there are many other areas working on this issue. Committee Member Agnes Tillerson stated that she read a GAO Report that said there were great improvements. They are doing some of the same things as the committee is working.

Committee Chair George Sullivan suggested that this issue be narrowed down to the four (4) or five (5) point needed to elevate it to the Joint Committee.

Committee Members Keith Johnson and Charlotte Cassady joined the subcommittee.

Walk-in Office Review (Taxpayer Assistance Centers)

Committee Member Ed Hanna said members would have to coordinate visits to the offices with TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree, TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez and DFO Carolyn Lewis. Contact the staff with the date you would like to make the visit and they will schedule the appointment. Give them more than one date so that it will make it easier to schedule. He will complete the questionnaire



and send it to all committee members. After the visit, complete the questionnaire and mail it to the TAP Staff.

Need for Specialist for clergy returns and information

After having a Subject Matter Expert discuss this issue it was decided to drop it.

Schedule K-1s

This issue was elevated to the joint committee and it was rejected. Committee Member Ed Hanna stated that there were only one or two that were against it. This issue may be able to be revisited as the Joint Committee has new members and they may be more receptive to the issue. Committee Member Agnes Tillerson has a GAO report on this issue and will forward to member.

Quarterly Estimated Tax Payments

Committee Member Ed Hanna states that this issue has merit. He will write it up and submit it for the next meeting. The name of this issue has been changed to **Change Date on Quarterly Estimated Tax Payments**.

Health Benefits

Committee Member Gwen Handelman has CDs for small business. There is not much on them. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez has done some research on this but is waiting for additional information. Committee Member Handelman will schedule a meeting with TAP Program Analyst Chavez to discuss this issue. She thinks there is a need for more information on it. The name of this issue has been changed to **Educate Business on Tax Treatment of Health Benefits**.

Electronic Deposit on Form 1040X

Committee Member Sharon Lassar wrote up a recommendation on this issue. By consensus the recommendation was approved. This recommendation will be elevated to the Joint Committee.

Military Special Information

Committee Member Owen Oatley along with Committee Member Steve Wood is still looking into this issue. They would like to keep it in the parking lot.

Refund Check Envelope

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated he sent a copy of the back of the envelope to TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez. She has not received it yet. Committee Member Oatley stated the envelope was a red flag. He will write up a recommendation for the next meeting.

Estimated Tax Penalty

Committee Member Steve Wood reported that Committee Member Owen Oatley has been helping him with this issue. He said it is ready to be written up. He feels that the minimum needs to be indexed but he found that this is legislative. Based on the fact that it's legislative, the committee, by consensus, agreed to drop the issue.

Materiality

Committee Member Phil Bryant said he has talked to preparers about this issue. He stated that there is a cost to prepare notices for small balances and common sense says that it may cost more to send the notice than the amount due. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez added that the IRS does have a tolerance level but that does not remove the balance due. Committee Member Bryant will work with staff on this issue.

Recordkeeping

Committee Member Ed Hanna stated that on the document that was included in the binder it said that there was a response to the recordkeeping recommendation. The staff was not aware of the response.



Action Item: TAP Staff will get a copy of the response from the IRS on the recommendation.

Outsourcing

Committee Member Agnes Tillerson stated she has been reading about the outsourcing of collection activities to private collection agencies. She wanted to know if there was still interest in this. Committee Member Keith Johnson said that the Ad Hoc Committee was working on the issue of certification of return preparers. Committee Member Gwen Handelman added that one area of outsourcing was that of accounting firms outsourcing return preparation out of the country. She wanted to know if that was the outsourcing that Committee Member Agnes Tillerson was referring to. Committee Member Sharon Lassar stated she was opposed to regulating return preparers outsourcing. She feels confidentiality would be a consideration. Ethical conduct should be considered as it is regulated under Circular 230. Committee Member Agnes Tillerson is concerned about taking return preparation out of the country. Acting DFO Nancy Ferree stated this is not IRS's responsibility. Committee Member Keith Johnson said that retailers prepare returns. The licensing process would weed out unauthorized preparers. Committee Chair George Sullivan said the committee could send a letter of support to the Ad Hoc Committee to show their support of licensing of non-professional tax preparers. Committee Member Owen Oatley would like to see a copy of the proposal. Committee Member Handelman stated that issue committees send issues directly to the IRS Program Owners not to the Joint Committee. Committee Member Lassar asked Committee Member Keith Johnson to get a copy of the Ad Hoc Committee proposal.

Action Item: Keith Johnson will forward copy of the Ad Hoc Committee's proposal on the Licensing on Non-Professional Tax Preparers.

Committee Chair George Sullivan asked to have Outsourcing put on the Issue list. There was much discussion about both of the Outsourcing issues. Some committee members were for and some were very much against. Committee Chair Sullivan asked Agnes to put something in writing about the outsourcing of collection for TAPSpeak. The other issue can be put in the parking lot. A recommendation to the Office of Professional Responsibility could be written in the future.

PLANS & TIME TABLE FOR CURRENT YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that currently meetings are held on the 3rd Friday of the month starting at 11:00am ET. Committee agreed to keep the meetings at the same time. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez stated that this would be the October meeting. She went over the calendar and plugged in all the meeting dates. There was a lively discussion about face-to-face meetings. Practitioners on the committee stated they could not give up two (2) days for meetings and another for travel during January to April 15. It was agreed, by consensus, to have the first face-to-face meeting April 23 & 24, 2004 in New Orleans and the second face-to-face meeting July 16 & 17, 2004 in either Nashville or Memphis, TN.

REFERRALS

TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez stated there were no citizen referrals for this month however Area 1 has referred an issue to the committee. She handed out the referral from Area 1. After the committee read the referral they stated it was not something they were working. Committee Member Ed Hanna stated he thought that Area 2 was working this issue. TAP Program Analyst Chavez will advise Area 1 about this.

CITIZEN INPUT

There were no visitors at the meeting.

MEETING CLOSE

Committee Chair George Sullivan thanked everyone. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez reminded everyone to please complete the meeting evaluations.



Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Phil Bryant
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Keith Johnson
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- George Sullivan
- Carolyn Lewis DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez TAP Program Analyst
- Nancy Ferree TAP Program Manager

Guests:

- Nina from Microsoft

Welcome

Committee Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone. He announced that we have a new panel member coming on board at the October meeting, Larry Hayes from Tennessee.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Review of August 22, 2003 Minutes

Various corrections were made to the meeting minutes and not all members have been able to review them. Also, Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated she had corrections that she wants to make but she would like to review the most recent version before she made the correction. The minutes will be approved during the meeting in DC next month.

Report of Elevated Issues

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated he wanted to bring the entire committee up to date on elevated issues.

At the Joint Committee Meeting in Denver, Committee Chair Ed Hanna presented Committee Members Owen Oatley and Gwen Handelman's suggestions on the Schedule K-1. Several of the Joint Committee Members were against it because of the additional burden it would impose. The issue did not get approved.

The issue concerning Employee Contacts was approved and elevated. Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked Committee Members George Sullivan, Owen Oatley and Gwen Handelman for all their work on this issue. The second part to this issue concerning having the National Treasury Employee Union President addressing the panel met with opposition. All the Joint Committee Chairs except for Ed Hanna and Gwen Handelman voted against it. However, the



Panel Chair, Tom Seuntjens, will try and have the union president address the Joint Committee at a later date.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated Committee Members Buck Paolone and Tim Jarrell worked very hard on the telephone issues. The ideas were good. Area 2 formalized excellent proposals; these were accepted with the proviso that Area 3's proposals be combined with those of Area 2. Also Area 6 is also coordinating their Telephone Listing/Answering Quality recommendation and elevating it as a separate Issue. The Joint Issue from Areas 2 and 3 will encompass numerous recommendations and is the first joint Areas elevated Issue.

The issues concerning the Check-the-Box was not accepted but the Joint Committee came back and asked for more research to be done. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez is working on getting this research done.

Committee Chair Hanna stated he wanted to review all the issues the committee has talked about in the last year.

OIC Committee Members Keith Johnson, Owen Oatley and Sharon Lassar are working this. This issue is in the **parking lot** . Committee Chair Hanna stated that he has recommended that this be converted into an Issue Committee but has not received any response.

Eliminate Red copy W-2 Requirements - There was a Subject Matter Expert who reported on this issue. It was decided to **drop** this issue.

Notice Responses Timeframe This issue was referred to the Notice Issue Committee. This issue should be considered **closed** .

Estimated Tax Payments Available on Internet or via Phone This issue is still being **actively worked** and researched.

Customer Fairness and Respect This issue has been **elevated** .

Processing W-4s Committee Member Sharon Lassar stated that she wanted to talk to one of the other area committees who is also working on this issue. She said it can stay in the **parking lot** for now.

Telephone Listing/Answering Quality Some of the suggestions are being incorporated in reports. The committee should hold off for now. The committee will be working with Area 2 on it.

Walk in Office Review (Taxpayer Assistance Centers) This issue will be discussed in more detail at the face-to-face meeting in Washington, DC.

Need for Specialist for clergy returns and information This is another issue where a Subject Matter Expert addressed the issue to the committee. Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked if it should be put in the parking lot or dropped. After some discussion it was decided to **drop** this issue.

Schedule K-1s This issue was presented to the Joint Committee. It will not be elevated.

Military Special Information Committee Member Owen Oatley stated he has additional



information and would like to put this in the **parking lot** .

Estimated Tax Penalty This issue is currently being researched. It will be put in the **parking lot** .

Quarterly Estimated Tax Payments This issue is **active** . Committee Chair Ed Hanna will handle it with the assistance of Committee Member Keith Johnson.

Health Benefits Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that she has asked for research into what IRS has on this issue. TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez stated that she has requested information from the IRS but has not received anything yet. She will try and get a subject matter expert to speak to the committee.

Tax Advice This issue falls into the category with the telephone and will be worked with Area 2.

Materiality Committee Member Phil Bryant stated that he has asked some questions about it but has not gotten together with TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez to do anything else. It is still being worked.

Refund Check Envelope Committee Member Owen Oatley stated that he recently saw a refund check envelope and it does indicate that it is a refund. He will forward the envelope to TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez for the committee.

Electronic Deposit on 1040X Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated he discussed this at the Joint Committee Meeting and they were supportive of the idea. Committee Member Sharon Lassar will write up a proposal for the October meeting.

Selection of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for fiscal year ending October 2004

TAP Manager Nancy Ferree asked if there were any nominations for Chair or Vice Chair. Committee Members George Sullivan and Keith Johnson stated that they would like to nominate Committee Chair Ed Hanna to remain as Chair. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that he couldn't continue. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated she would like to nominate Owen Oatley. Committee Member George Sullivan suggested that maybe it would be a good idea to have each committee member polled to see if they would be interested in being chair or vice chair and then to have the election at the meeting in Washington next month. It was decided that the TAP staff would contact each member and see if they are interested.

New Issues

TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez started the discussion with the new issues that have come into the program in the last month. The first one is **Contact #2306** . Member of NATP states that extensions are causing him problems. 1. Currently, when a practitioner phones in extensions to the IRS, the practitioner is required to call back with each separate taxpayer's extension. He suggests being able to phone in more than one at a time. 2. Allow the practitioner to send in (fax or mail) an abbreviated form, listing all of their clients requesting the extension, which would have columns for taxpayer's name, SSN, tax owed on return, tax paid and balance due.

3. Allow practitioner to electronically file, or file online, extensions including multiple requests at once. Each of these suggestions would: 1. Improve the efficiency of filing the extensions by the practitioner. 2. Provide the IRS with accurate information, which is already input to the computer, if allowed online filing. 3. Improve IRS efficiency if practitioners can input themselves. DFO Carolyn Lewis stated that there may be a case of disclosure if this is done.



Taxpayers are required to attached a copy of the extension to their return when they file. DFO will research this. Committee Members Owen Oatley and Sharon Lassar said that this is not required any more. Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked for a Subject Matter Expert to discuss this with the committee at a future meeting.

The next issue is **Contact #2332**. The checkbox on the 1040 is not being handled properly by IRS personnel. Practitioner states that he has been experiencing a lack of understanding of the checkbox procedures by IRS employees. Several of his clients have brought him in letters from the IRS on the processing of their return. He has never received anything from the IRS on these clients even though he checked the box on the 1040. He feels the IRS is not handling the checkbox correctly. If the IRS had contacted him directly, the problem would have been resolved immediately without the client even knowing there was a problem. Analyst advised him that the Area 3 committee was already working on a recommendation relevant to his suggestion. Committee Chair stated that this is a valid point. This issue has been elevated. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that it was forwarded to counsel for advice. TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree stated that this should be documented in the annual report.

Citizen Input

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked the visitor if she would like to address the panel. She stated that she was just listening.

Plans for October Meeting

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked if everyone had made their travel reservations. A comment was made about the hotel reservations. TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree confirmed that all hotel reservations have been made. Confirmation numbers will be forth coming. Committee Member Keith Johnson asked if he could get directions from the airport to the hotel. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that the metro goes from the airport to the hotel. TAP Program Manager Ferree stated that there was additional information about the hotel on TAPSpeak. If there are any other questions, just contact the TAP office. There is no problem taking a taxi from the airport to the hotel. The hotel is in downtown Washington. DFO Carolyn Lewis asked if the Agenda was final yet. TAP Program Manager Ferree stated it was not.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna advised the committee members that he would have to make a 10 minute presentation to the entire panel and he would like any of the committee members to contact him with any information for the report.

Meeting Close

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked everyone for his or her time. He looks forward to seeing everyone at the meeting in Washington, DC, October 2 - 4, 2003.

Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes August 22, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Phil Bryant
- Charlotte Cassady
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Keith Johnson
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- George Sullivan
- Carolyn Lewis DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez TAP Program Analyst
- Nancy Ferree TAP Program Manager

Guests:

- Dennis Chudoba, Analyst, Process Submission, Atlanta Campus

Welcome

Committee Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone. He announced that Tim Jarrell has resigned from the panel. Buck Paolone will take up the slot on the telephone issue however Buck just recently had a heart problem but is expected to recover nicely.

Roll call

Roll was taken. TAP Analyst Chavez announced that Larry Barnard has moved from Tennessee to Idaho and she is waiting for instructions on how to handle this slot. Quorum was not met originally but quorum was met before the meeting minutes were approved.

Review of July 18, 2003 Minutes

The minutes were accepted by consensus, after one correction is made.

Report by IRS Representative RE: Clergy Income Tax Returns

Dennis Chudoba is an analyst in Submission Process at the Atlanta Campus. He stated that Atlanta is one site that processes 1040s. He reviewed exactly what the Atlanta Campus Processing Center does. If during the processing of the return, the input by the IRS does not match what the taxpayer has input on their tax return, the return is rejected to Error Resolution. At that point an employee in Error Resolution can fix the return (either IRS error or taxpayer error). He explained that a Clergy return differs from regular return whereby EITC and the Child Care are computed differently. Error Resolution has instructions on how to fix these problems. The main difficulty would be a training issue. There are only a certain number of full-time employees and during filing season there are more seasonal employees.

After these returns goes through Error Resolution a notice is issues. Notice Review reviews 100% of the first 50 notices and then they review a determined percentage of errors found on the remaining notices issued.



At the end of the last filing season, experienced Error Resolution employees were assigned to review clergy returns to resolve the problem with these returns being processed incorrectly.

Committee Member Keith Johnson asked how clergy is defined. Mr. Chudoba stated that there is no audit target. The return is accepted as filed unless the computer kicks it out for an audit. They do keep a list of bogus religions from previous audits.

Committee Member Sharon Lassar asked if it was the professionally prepared returns that are causing a problem for the system? Mr. Chudoba answered yes and no. Certain line items cause problems. The biggest problem is the housing allowance. Professionally prepared returns are usually correct. It's the self-prepared returns that cause the most problems. Error Resolution can usually fix the professionally prepared returns.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman asked if the system could be fixed to some how identify clergy such as writing on the return CLERGY. Mr. Chudoba stated that wouldn't be caught at processing, only at Error Resolution.

Committee Member Sharon Lassar asked if putting a separate computation box on the Self-employment form could fix the problem? Mr. Chudoba said that Self-employment was not the problem. The problem is EITC and the Child Care Credit. The system doubles what it sees as earned income.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked if a 100% review could be done of clergy returns? Mr. Chudoba stated that there is really no way to identify clergy returns during processing.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked what is the answer? Mr. Chudoba stated the only answer is training.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman asked if an extra line could be added to the tax return or a check box? Mr. Chudoba stated that it could be done but the return should be evident to Error Resolution that it's a clergy return. Clergy isn't the only problem area in processing. There are others and it is overwhelming.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked Mr. Chudoba for his presence on the call and answers to all the committee's questions.

Area 3 TAP Issues

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked Gwen Handelman to discuss her referral. It has to do with health benefits for employees of small businesses. She explained the referral to the committee.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna would like input and to add it as an issue. He would like to see what Small Business Self Employees has put out on this issue. Maybe have a speaker (Subject Matter Expert) address the group. Committee Member Handelman will work with TAP Program Analyst Chavez to see what can be done.

Committee Chair asked is everyone has gotten their reservation information back to TAP Secretary Jenny Reyes for the Annual Meeting in October. TAP Manager Nancy Ferree stated that everyone has responded except for Larry Barnard. She thanked everyone for getting their information in so quickly.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that he had elevated the Check the Box issue to the Joint Committee. His request that the designee be able to inquire about estimated payments made in subsequently years would have to be a separate issue. The issue that is being elevated to counsel is that the Check the Box be used for all items except for Underreported Issues, Examination Issues, Appeals Processing or Collection Notices.



Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Committee Chair Ed Hanna is trying to work with Committee Member Buck Paolone with the assistance of Committee Member Owen Oatley on this issue. Committee Chair Hanna will try and have something out in the next week. He has checked in his telephone directory and found that the address for the local office is there but not the telephone number. This concerns him because last month Mr. Mainwaring stated that taxpayer could call in and make appointments but could not write for the appointment.

Offer In Compromise

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated that within a week he will be submitting questions to Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis concerning rejected Offer In Compromises. Designated Federal Official Lewis stated that it would be better to have a subject matter expert on a call to answer these questions. Committee Member Oatley stated the committee had a subject matter expert and it brought up more questions. Committee Chair Hanna stated that National Taxpayer Advocate Nina Olson has put this issue into several of her Reports to Congress. He would like to see an issue committee devoted just to Offers in Compromise/Installment Agreements. Many committee members, as well as Designated Federal Official Lewis, agree that it's large enough for it's own committee and too big for our area committee.

Customer Fairness and Respect

Committee Member George Sullivan stated that a recommendation was made a while back concerning the involvement with NTEU. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that she never saw this issued raised to the Joint Committee. She raised it to TAP Director Deryle Temple and TAP Chairperson Tom Seuntjens with a copy to National Taxpayer Advocate Nina Olson. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that how TAP can partner with employee union members was discussed at the July Joint Committee Meeting. It was also suggested that the President of the NTEU speak at the Annual Meeting. He stated that the National Taxpayer Advocate Nina Olson has raised the issue to Treasury.

New Issues

TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez started the discussion with the new issues that have come into the program in the last month. The first one is **Contact #2148**. Caller received Federal Tax Deposit Penalty after the change in the 3 day deposit rule. Based on advice given by IRS, employer made all their deposits in what they believed to be timely. They received a penalty notice for \$596.00. Called IRS, assistor told them based on their circumstances, penalty could be waived and all they needed to do was write a letter. Caller wrote letter and penalty abatement was denied. Now, caller has to go through penalty appeal process and has a concern that if they would not have relied on first employees advise, they would not have had to pay the penalty nor the interest that accrued. Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked Designated Federal Official if this was a case for TAS. She stated, It was. TAP Program Analyst stated that individual did not leave contact information that call was to advise committee that incorrect information was being given and causing additional penalty and interest. Designated Federal Official Lewis stated that based on the circumstances penalty could be abated based on ministerial act. The taxpayer however would need to get all information from the employee who gives the advise. In this case the taxpayer was told to write a letter.

Committee Chair Hanna stated that taxpayer need to be advised to get employee ID if they are going to use the information given by the employee. Committee agreed to take up this issue. Call it Tax Advise.

The next issue is **Contact #2210**. Practitioner completed suggestions at the Orlando Tax Forum as follows: I think there should be a "materiality factor" within the IRS. For instance, if an amount due is less than \$25, the service writes it off instead of spending so much more than that in budget dollars with correspondence to the taxpayer. I get paid for handling these small issues for my client but I think the service could use their limited funds for more potentially lucrative efforts. Committee Member Phil Bryant stated that this sounds like a fair and reasonable idean. Committee Member Owen Oatley stated it may not be easy. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated she would like to hear



what IRS has to say about it. Committee Member Bryant stated it may be constitutional. Committee Member Oatley said there are tolerance levels in audit. Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis stated she things there re tolerances in every area. Committee Member Bryant will work with TAP Program Analyst Chavez on this issue.

The next issue is **Control #2212**. It states Taxpayer received a refund check in a brown envelope that states on the back "THIS IS A TAX REFUND". She thinks it is very silly to have a refund check sent in a brown envelope that sticks out and to "advertise" on the back that it is a refund. She suggests that refund checks be sent in white envelopes and that the envelope not even say IRS on them. The brown envelope make it much easier to be stolen. There was much discussion about this. Everyone knows a brown envelope is a check. It was suggested to change the color of the envelope but then there is always the chance that the taxpayer will through away the check. TAP Program Analyst Chavez will get a copy of the envelope.

The next issue is **Control #2213**. Taxpayer noticed on the Form 1040X that there is not a way to have a refund deposited electronically. She would like that to be included on the Form 1040X. There was a bit of discussion about this. Committee Member Sharon Lassar pulled up a 1040X and confirmed it does not allow for this. It would not be practical to use bank information from the previous 1040 as bank information could change. Would seem to be a simple correction.

The next issue is **Control #2229**. Media's message to the public regarding the Advance Child Tax Credit -2003- was misleading according to this citizen; caller was very upset because "no where was it mentioned that the child must be born after 1986"- Her hopes were let down when after making many phone calls, she just learned that she was not eligible; had the Media emphasized this from the beginning, persons like her would not be misled. There was much discussion about this. There is not much that can be done about this at this point. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that there is a great deal of expectation if the press realises are not clear. Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis stated the comment was not clear as to whether the problem was caused by the IRS press release or the news media.

Meeting Close

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked everyone for his or her time.

The next meeting is schedule for the September 19, 2003 at 11:00am EDT.

Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes July 18, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Keith Johnson
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Steven Wood
- Carolyn Lewis - DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez - TAP Analyst

Guests:

- Don Mainwaring - Director, Field Assistance Area

Welcome

Committee Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone and thanked committee members for being punctual.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Review of June 20, 2003 Minutes

The minutes were accepted by consensus.

Report by IRS Representative RE: Local Offices

Don Mainwaring, Director, Field Assistance Area, gave a short background on the local offices. They are the only component within the IRS that meets with taxpayers face-to-face on a daily basis. There are 400 offices with 60 offices in the Southeast. There are 350 permanent employees and 50 part-time employees. These employees work on such things as tax assistance, return preparation, tax law questions, account issues (payments and notice questions), and now they are piloting compliance work in this area where the employees will be assisting taxpayers in collection work.

Mr. Mainwaring then went to the questions that were provided to him in advance and answered them.

Q1. What type of security is the norm for local offices? Is it the same in all local offices? If not, what factors determine the differences? There is none evident in the Lake Charles, LA office.

A. There is no single answer to this question. It varies. GSA makes that type of determination and it is based on location, occupants, equipment, etc. Lake Charles is small. At present there is work on having alarms at each position. They are also working on controlled security at each office but this is



based on funding. There is a "model" for each size office and the service is working to have all offices conform to this "model" as funding become available.

Q2. I heard in one of our teleconference meetings that there may be 45,000 "assistants" trained to help during the next tax-filing season. Will these individuals be volunteers or paid employees? Will they be assigned to local offices? Will there be input from the local offices RE their selection?

A. Can't answer that, as he doesn't have the information. There are only 2,200 people in the TAC (Taxpayer Assistance Centers) offices.

Q3. Is there a norm for the number of times the telephone rings before the message machine answers? When the local number is busy, why can't the answering machine answer with its message instead of my having to hear a busy signal & continue to redial to hear the message?

A. That depends on the phone line at the office. If it is a digital phone line then it can take more than one message at a time. Normally there are only one or two rings.

Q4. Why can't local offices be "one stop" assistance centers. It seems to me (with my limited knowledge) that there are different divisions & too much emphasis on Lafayette or New Orleans for answers to some questions.

A. He needs more information before he can answer this question. The centers strive to provide one stop service. They find it's more efficient that way. It's their goal. But some questions can't be answered and taxpayers are referred to telephone numbers where they can get answers. Some questions are outside the scope of assistors and they must seek assistance.

Q5. Are the days and hours of operation posted?

A. Yes. They are posted in the TACs, on the internet and on the telephone message.

Q6. Are IRS Agents available who speak Spanish?

A. Some offices do. It depends on the area. There are always the phone interpreters that can be called to assist.

Q7. Do the offices have translation services available in person or by phone?

A. There is a translation service available via the telephone if an employee is not available. Mr. Mainwaring will get a list of languages available for this service.

Q8. Are there separate cubicles? If so, how many are there at each location?

A. It depends on the office size. There is a template for offices depending on the size of the office. A small office has less than four (4) employees, a medium size office has five (5) to nine (9) employees and a large office has ten (10) or more. There are both counters and workstations in each office. Each office will be set up according to these templates depending on budget.

Q9. Can taxpayers or their representatives request conferences in private rooms?

A. Yes, depending on the availability of a room. Arrangements can always be made in advance.

Q10. Do the Agents have nametags?



A. All field assistance employees are required to wear name badges. Names badges have employee's name and employee number.

Q11. Is tax return assistance available? If so, is this posted?

A. Yes it is available. It is limited to income of \$35,000 or less. Return preparation will only be done electronically. Some is done by paper such as the Heavy Vehicle Use Tax. All return preparation is done by appointment.

Q12. Is e-filing available? If so, is this posted?

A. Yes. The IRS wants to only file electronically.

Q13. Are there posters advising taxpayers about TAP, TAS and multilingual services?

A. Each office has standard signage. There is a reference to the Taxpayer Advocate Service that states they will accept Form 911. There are no signs on the TAP. They previously had CAP signs but they were however removed when the CAP became the TAP. Some offices have multi-lingual signs that say they provide multi-lingual assistance.

Q14. Have Agents been instructed to be helpful and friendly?

A. Yes. There is a "zero tolerance" for discourteous service. Feedback received indicates very little problem in this area.

Q15. Is there a local telephone number and address shown in the directory?

A. Yes. This was mandated by the restructuring act commonly know as the "3709 lines" since 3709 was the restructuring section.

Q16. Are telephone messages in Spanish as well as in English?

A. Yes in area were there is a heavy Spanish population such as South Florida.

Q17. If there is a recorded message does it allow for a taxpayer to speak with a person or to leave a message to be returned within 48 hours?

A. There is no individual available to answer this line. Depending on the type of call, different individuals may be needed to make callbacks. Many of the calls need to be referred to the toll-free number.

Q18. Can a taxpayer call or write to schedule an appointment?

A. Taxpayer can call to make an appointment but no appointments will be taken in writing.

Q19. Is there on site security? If so, please describe it.

A. This question was answered in #1.

Q20. What provisions are there for communications in languages other than Spanish and English?



A. The Over the Phone Interpreter Service provides this service. Mr. Mainwaring will provide the languages used.

Q21. Can taxpayers get forms at the offices? If so, what is the procedure to obtain forms not on site?

A. All TAC offices have forms and publications available. Forms and publications are also available by using the internet, fax by phone or by calling the toll-free forms number.

Q22. What is the procedure and timing to get taxpayers' payments, stop action notices, powers of attorney, or other timely information into the system?

A. Payments are mailed to the servicing campus within 24 hours of receipt. It may take several weeks to be posted to the account. Power of attorney forms are processed within 24 hours of receipt.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna opened up the discussion to the entire committee for questions. Committee Member Gwen Handelman wanted additional information on questions #8. Are the cubicles "sound proof"? Mr. Mainwaring stated they are not sound proof. There is limited privacy in the new model. They will have noise reduction. Panel Member Handelman also wanted clarification on #11. Can the taxpayer be assisted in filing by paper such as with the new EITC precertification forms? Mr. Mainwaring stated that TAC employees will assist taxpayer with the EITC precertification forms. Committee Member Handelman also asked about #12. Is it posted that there is electronic filing available? Mr. Mainwaring stated he did not see that in the signage. He does not think it is posted. Committee Member Handelman asked about #17. Does the taxpayer have the option to leave a message? Mr. Mainwaring stated the taxpayer can leave a message. All calls are returned either within 24 or 48 hours. There was some discussion about the return calls. Two (2) members stated that they had called and left messages and received no call back. The problem offices were Tampa and Ft. Myers. Mr. Mainwaring requested specific information on both of these incidences.

Committee Member Agnes Tillerson asked about the Customer Satisfaction Survey. Mr. Mainwaring stated that every taxpayer is given a survey card to complete and either drop in a box at the office or mail in. The responses received at in the 4.5 range (out of 5). Committee Member Tillerson stated that the St. Mary's, Georgia telephone book had no IRS local office listed in it. Mr. Mainwaring stated that he doesn't think an IRS office will be listed if there is no office in that city.

Committee Member Buck Paolone asked if the survey was standardized or specific to each office. Mr. Mainwaring stated it is specific and standardized. Every taxpayer gets the same survey and can drop it off or mail it in. It is sent to a contractor who processes the survey results for the service. Committee Member Paolone asked how often the translator service is used. Mr. Mainwaring stated that it is under contract and he doesn't have the information but can get it from them. Committee Member Paolone asked if the local offices could post signs for TAP? Mr. Mainwaring stated that request would have to go through the Taxpayer Advocate Service. Committee Member Paolone asked how employees make suggestions. Mr. Mainwaring stated that they can use the website or they can make suggestions during employee/manager meetings.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked if there would be any objections to having TAP committee members go to offices. Mr. Mainwaring stated there would be no objections.

Committee Member Keith Johnson asked if there was a guarantee that the employees who answer the telephone calls would be friendly and give high quality service? Designate Federal Official Carolyn Lewis stated that this was not a question for Mr. Mainwaring, as he only dealt with field assistance not the toll-free telephones.

Mr. Mainwaring concluded by saying he would follow-up with the following items:



1. Tampa and Ft. Myers offices - please send him specific information on these calls and he will respond.
2. St. Mary's, Georgia telephone book listing - he will go to headquarters and pose the questions. He understands this is not unique to this area.
3. Customer Satisfaction Survey - Analyst Sallie Chavez will get this survey card from the local office.
4. Over the phone interpreter - he will try to get the volume of use for area and country.
5. TAS will request posting of TAP posters.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked Mr. Mainwaring for attending the meeting and answering the committee's questions.

Area 3 TAP Issues

Estimated Tax Payments

Committee Chair Ed Hanna discussed this issue. This issue would allow a practitioner on previous year to request information on a taxpayer's estimated tax payments. By consensus it was agreed to elevate this issue. Committee Chair Hanna will write it up and send it to the Joint Committee.

Offer In Compromise

Committee Member Owen Oately stated the information had been sent to committee members concerning a rejected Offer In Compromise. He would like the committee's opinion on this rejection. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Since Sub-Committee Chair Tim Jarrell was not able to attend the meeting, Sub-Committee Member Buck Paolone discussed the matrix on the telephone issue. He stated that he had requested the routing of telephone calls from TAP Manager Nancy Ferree but he has not received it yet. He feels the committee needs to call the 800 numbers and record the "branches". This is very labor intensive. What is needed is what is appropriate for taxpayer's needs.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna told Sub-Committee Member Paolone to go ahead and assign committee members to the issues. Sub-Committee Member Paolone stated that only two (2) people had volunteered. Committee Chair Hanna asked everyone to please volunteer to work on this issue. He stated no other new issues will be taken up until next fiscal year.

Sub-Committee Member Paolone state that he still needs to get information from TAP Manager Nancy Ferree about who does telephone listings. He also would like to have the information about they survey questions from the phone operating system. He has received the TAS survey questions. DFO Carolyn Lewis has sent these results to TAP Manager Nancy Ferree. Sub-Committee Member Paolone stated that Area 2 was also working on this issue.

Need for specialist on clergy returns

TAP Program Analyst Chavez has discussed this issue with an employee at the Atlanta campus. He would be willing to provide detailed information directly to the committee at the next meeting if the committee would like. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that would be a good idea. He asked that committee members provide TAP Program Analyst Chavez with any questions that they would like to have answered by this employee.

New Issues

TAP Analyst Sallie Chavez reported there were two (2) referrals this month but one (1) did not have enough information to be able to present it. A letter has been sent to the individual to request more specific information about her problem. The other suggestion was to have the 1040ES payments follow the business quarters - such as 1st quarter be due April 30 instead of April 15, 2nd quarter be



due July 31 instead of June 15, 3rd quarter be due October 31 instead of September 15 and 4th quarter be due January 31 instead of January 15. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that he thought the 1040ES dates were created for budgetary reasons however the taxpayer makes sense. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that it was a good idea to look into it. She feels it would be useful to get the "Criteria to Elevate Suggestions" from the Joint Committee. Committee Chair Hanna will send these out to all committee members.

New Business

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that the Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 1 - 4, 2003. The meeting will be held on the 2nd and 3rd (full days) and on the 4th for half of the day. The meeting will be held in Washington, DC at the Grand Hyatt.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna reminded everyone of TAPSpeak. The web address is:

taxpspeak@fedworx.org

Try and pull it up at least once a week and take a look at it. If you have any problems, contact TAP Analyst Chavez for assistance.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna discussed the "checkbox" issue. He wants to know how much we can do. He wants to have it expanded. A letter is being sent to counsel to see what can be done.

TAP Program Analyst Chavez will send out survey. Please respond directly to her.

Meeting Close

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked everyone for his or her time.

The next meeting is schedule for the August 22, 2003.

Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes June 20, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Charlotte Cassady
- Helen Curol
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Tim Jarrell
- Keith Johnson
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Steven Wood
- Sandy McQuin - Acting DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez - TAP Analyst

Guests:

- Cindy Travis - Analyst W & I, CAS
- Mike McAnnany - Florida Tax Preparer

Welcome

Committee Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Review of May 16, 2003 Minutes

The minutes were accepted by consensus.

Report by IRS Representative RE: Red Border Forms

Cindy Travis, Analyst with Wage & Investment (Customer Account Services) addressed the questions posed by Committee Chair Ed Hanna.

Question 1 - Can we dispense with the red border forms? If not, why not?

Ms. Travis answered "No". Red filtering scanners are used to read the forms. These scanners filter the red out and only read the black and white on the forms. The scanner doesn't see red ink. Script contractors would have to rewrite the information and there would be a charge for this service.

Question 2 - If we cannot, why have W-2s been allowed to be submitted in all manner and sizes?



Ms. Travis advised that W-2 are used by the Social Security Administration and are controlled by them.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that this confirms the information he received from the TAP staff. He thanked Ms. Travis for the information.

Area 3 TAP Issues

Committee Chair Ed Hanna discussed how he would like the next few meetings to go. He would like to finalize Committee Members George Sullivan and Owen Oatley's suggestions on Customer Fairness & Respect. Not all committee members received this email. Committee Chair Ed Hanna will send out again to all committee members. Please respond back to Chair when you get the email.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna would like a confirmation from the Notice Issue Committee that they have accepted the issue that the Area 3 Notice Subcommittee forwarded to them.

Action Item: Analyst Sallie Chavez will get confirmation from the Notice Issue Committee.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna would like to start no more new issues until the end of the fiscal year. This committee is one of the most active committees. The committee may be trying to do too much. Can't do everything. Biggest issue is telephone issue. He would like each member of the committee to become involved in this issue and send some recommendations up to the Joint Committee by September 1, 2003.

Chair asked Committee Members Tim Jarrell and Buck Paolone to assign work to everyone except Committee Members Gwen Handelman and Sharon Lassar, as they are Issue Committee Chairs.

Committee Member George Sullivan asked if the committee would still be working on other issues they are currently involved with. Chair said yes. Finalize them and get them out.

There was consensus on this item.

Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Sub-committee Chair Tim Jarrell stated he had a long conversation with Area 2 Committee Member Faith Vinikoor concerning what their committee was doing on this issue. She told him they were working on telephone answering and routing. He would like to try and coordinate and share ideas. They have drafted a report. He will send this report to all committee members.

Sub-committee Member Buck Paolone stated he requested information from TAP Manager Nancy Ferree. He asked for the IRS source responsible for telephone number listing. He also requested routing information. How calls are routed, see if they correspond with the taxpayer's needs. He also asked for information on the sampling of calls and the responses. There is a list of 15 questions that Area 2 has prepared. TAP Analyst Sallie Chavez advised that TAP Manager Nancy Ferree was in Philadelphia today for the Area 2 face-to-face meeting and that they were having a Subject Matter Expert at the meeting to answer those 15 questions. She is taping the session and will submit the finding to TAP Analyst Chavez for the Area 2 committee. TAP Analyst Chavez will send the information as soon as they are available.

Action Item: TAP Analyst Chavez will send all committee members the 15 questions and the answers.

Sub-committee Chair Tim Jarrell stated that he heard there was a video available on telephone training. TAP Analyst Chavez asked him to put a request in writing and we will see if we can get it.



Acting DFO Sandy McQuin stated there was a book on telephone answering available. It's a probe and response guide.

Action Item: Analyst Chavez will try and find this probe and response guide.

Sub-committee Member Buck Paolone stated he heard there was a test program where 45,000 taxpayers will be assigned an individual IRS employee to handle their problems.

Sub-committee Member Buck Paolone stated that TAP Manager Nancy Ferree sent him a package of information that he thinks that all the committee members should have.

Action Item: TAP Analyst Sallie Chavez will get the information from TAP Manger Nancy Ferree and send it to all committee members.

Sub-committee Member Buck Paolone suggested that committee members make calls to toll-free number and see where the call goes. Committee Chair Ed Hanna recommends the sub-committee members assign specific tasks. They have eight or ten issues. They should be able to get one or two of these completed and elevated. The rest can wait until next year.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that she heard about a problem out of Maine where the local IRS telephone number was in the telephone directory but it was a toll call. When the taxpayer called the number, it was a recording with the option of leaving a message. She would like to propose that a note be put in the directory when there is only a recording and not a live person to answer.

Sub-committee Member Buck Paolone said he still would like to suggest to have color cards in Post Offices, State Offices and IRS Offices of telephone numbers available to get help from the IRS.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna suggested three sub-committees on this issue: Telephone Listing, Telephone Routing and Telephone Quality. Please email Committee Member Tim Jarrell or Buck Paolone your preference of which sub-committee you would like to work on by Friday, June 27, 2003. Committee Chair Ed Hanna requested Committee Member Tim Jarrell to put out an email to everyone concerning this request.

Military Special Information

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked Committee Member Owen Oatley about this issue. He said there was a lot of information on it but he and Committee Member Steve Wood would like to hold on to it for a while.

New Issues

TAP Analyst Sallie Chavez reported that there were only two (2) new issues to present to the panel. The first dealt with the estimated tax penalty. The taxpayer stated that he was being penalized every year for not paying his taxes in advance. He is retired and doesn't think that a taxpayer should be penalized for pension income. He suggests "abolishing" the estimated tax penalty. The Committee already has an issue on this. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that he sent out an email stating 20% minimum federal income tax withholding is required of pension income. Sub-committee Chair Steve Wood said he would like to review this and hold on to the issue.

The other issue was an issue submitted by Committee Chair Ed Hanna from one of his partners. His partner called the IRS and tried to resolve a problem. He talked to a person who agreed that the IRS made an error but stated she could not correct it and suggested he call another number and tell them that she suggests they make the correction. When the preparer called the other number the person



told him he could not take the preparer's word. He was told to write to the IRS and request the change. This falls into two of the sub-committees issues (Quality and Routing).

New Business

Committee Member Gwen Handelman asked all of the preparers on the committee to respond to a request she sent out for feedback on the EITC forms. Please respond back directly to her as soon as possible.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna said that it was discussed with the Joint Committee about having a special session of the orientation to deal with IRS issues for non-tax preparer members. It would last about 2 hours. He wants to know how the committee feels about this.

Committee Member Owen Oatley said he thought that it would be a good idea to "buddy up" with non-practitioners.

Committee Chair Ed Hann did a role call of non-preparers.

- Committee Member George Sullivan - yes
- Committee Member Tim Jarrell - yes
- Committee Member Buck Paolone - mentor - he was afraid he might get too "institutionalized"
- Committee Member Helen Curol - yes
- Committee Member Agnes Tillerson - depends on what's on the program
- Committee Member Steve Wood - technical issues would be valuable but he would also like paring up with practitioner

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated there was a conflict with the staff during the schedule August meeting. He asked if it would be a problem to change the meeting from August 15 to August 22. There were no objections. Meeting will be changed.

Committee Member Buck Paolone wanted to report on his Ad Hoc Issue Committee Meeting last month. He said their issue on licensing of preparers had only a 57% approval rating. IRS thinks it should be a state issue. This is a dead issue. They also discussed "financial literacy". The IRS has a curriculum about this on the IRS web site. They are crafting a letter to executives to market this product to the schools. They also discussed a change of name for the TAP to the Treasury Advisory Panel. Committee Chair Ed Hanna and Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that the Joint Committee has discussed this change and has rejected it. The last thing they discussed was TAP marketing. They suggested having all the marketing items that CAP had including name badges. All the marketing items will be done in-house.

Committee Member Owen Oatley said he had a rejected OIC that he wanted to discuss. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that he would like the committee to have this type of information before the meeting not during. Please forward it to all the committee members and it will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Meeting Close

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked everyone for his or her time.

The next meeting is scheduled for the July 18, 2003.

Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2003
Atlanta, Georgia

Members in Attendance:

- Charlotte Cassady
- Helen Curol
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Steven Wood
- Carolyn Lewis

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez, TAP Program Analyst
- Nancy Ferree, TAP Program Manager

Guests:

- Vincent Balloon, GAO (May 16, 2003)
- Cecil Norris, NATP (May 16, 2003)
- Beverly Ratliff (May 16, 2003)
- Jane Brough, IRS, Government Liaison, Atlanta (May 16 & 17, 2003)
- Betty Allen, IRS, Local Taxpayer Advocate, Atlanta (May 16, 2003)
- Rob Casey, NATP (May 17, 2003)
- Sonja Ware, GAO (May 17, 2003)

WELCOME

Panel Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone. Chair requested the guests to introduce themselves.

CITIZEN INPUT

There was no input from the citizens in attendance.

REVIEW OF APRIL 25, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

The meeting minutes were accepted by consensus.

OUTLINE OF PLAN FOR CONFERENCE AND OBTAIN CONSENSUS

Committee Chair Ed Hanna reported on several of the issues from the Joint Committee meeting held earlier this month. Issues that come to the area committee which deal with changes to the code are not the primary responsibility of the committee. Issues that are elevated to the Joint Committee and then, eventually, to the IRS are not going to be completed quickly. It may take as long as 2 years or more. Any issue that is elevated to the Joint Committee must be well written and prepared. Area 3 was the first to elevate an issue to the Joint Committee (Recordkeeping Requirements). Committee Chair Hanna congratulated Committee Members Charlotte Cassady, Gwen Handelman and Sharon Lassar for their efforts on this issue.



Committee Chair Hanna stated the format for this meeting would begin with the sub-committees breaking into their groups to organize their issues and bring back the information to the committee so the committee can come to consensus.

There was a discussion about the Paid Tax Preparers. The IRS is against the licensing of paid tax preparers, the National Taxpayer Advocate is in favor and Congress is against the policy. The Ad Hoc Committee is actively working on this issue.

NEW VICE-CHAIR

Committee Chair Ed Hanna announced that Vice Chair Keith Johnson has just accepted a new job and will be unable to continue as the Vice Chair. He would like someone to volunteer for the position. There were no volunteers. Chair asked to consider this issue and he will bring it up again tomorrow at the meeting.

COMMITTEE BROKEN INTO SUB-COMMITTEES FOR APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

W-4

Sub-Committee Chair Sharon Lassar stated that the sub-committee decided to hold off on this issue and would like it to be put in the "parking lot" for the present. Sub-Committee Chair Lassar would like to get together with other area committees to see what they are doing on this issue. Sub-Committee Chair Lassar states the IRS is not in favor of raising the exemption limits. She feels that keeping the limits low will feed the Refund Anticipation Loans given by some accounting firms.

TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree stated she received information with a list of IRS resource people who the staff can contact for further information.

Red Border W-2s, etc.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that TAP Program Analyst Chavez has researched and found that the reason for the "Red Borders" is because of the optical readers used by the campus to convert the information to the IRS computer. TAP Program Manager Ferree stated she recently received a response from Gill Queen who would be willing to assist the committee with any questions they have concerning these forms. Committee Chair Hanna would like to proceed on this issue.

ACTION ITEM: TAP Program Manager Ferree will invite Gill Queen to an area committee telephone conference call.

Customer Fairness

Sub-Committee Chair George Sullivan stated that this issue is to encourage IRS employee to give TAP (anonymously) issues on how to change the IRS. There are five (5) or six (6) other means besides using the union that this can be done.

ACTION ITEM: Sub-Committee Chair Sullivan will prepare a recommendation for the June meeting.

TAP Program Manager Ferree explained that not every IRS employee is a union member. The issue is that employees need to hear about TAP. This can be done by using flyers in pay stubs and informing employees about the TAP web site. Union personnel are already overburdened and the TAP should not put another burden on them.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that the TAP should "Partner" with the unions. Both Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis and TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree stated that the proposal will go to the Joint Committee and, if approved, it will go to the National Taxpayer Advocate



and the union will get involved but at a different level. This is a "Service Wide" issue and it can't start at the bottom. Need to deal with Colleen Kelly, National Treasury Employee Union President.

Committee Member Buck Paolone would like to see exit surveys used by the IRS. He wants to find out where the problems are that taxpayers are having. TAP Manager Ferree asked to have him write up something and the staff can get the information.

ACTION ITEM: Committee Member Buck Paolone will write up request.

Committee Member Helen Carol thinks National Treasury Employee Union President should be invited to the Joint Committee Meeting.

Telephone List/Answering Quality/One Call/One Accountability

Sub-Committee Member Buck Paolone states he would like to get together with Sub-Committee Chair Tim Jarrell who was unable to attend today. He is hoping to be here tomorrow. He would like to re-write the proposal they have based on the information received during the tour this morning at the submission center and the joint operation center.

He has several questions still.

1. Telephone listing - who has responsibility of getting the numbers in the phone book?
2. Toll-free menu - there are many questions on how it is set up.

This issue will be discussed again tomorrow in more detail when Committee Member Tim Jarrell is present.

Walk-in Review

Chair Ed Hanna handed out "Review Sheets" that, after a discussion with Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis, TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree and TAP Program Analyst Sallie Chavez, it was decided that the managers in the offices could answer these questions and no office visit would be needed. Committee provided changes to the questions. TAP Analyst Chavez will re-type the forms and send them out to committee members. Designated Federal Official Lewis also stated that someone from Field Assistance could come to the conference call and the committee could ask them the questions and get expectations and see if they are met.

Committee Member Sharon Lassar wanted to know what the committee is trying to accomplish. Committee Member Helen Curol wants to know what field offices are giving out. TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree stated that the committee needed to be "educated" about field TAC offices and then pick out what is needed and make suggestions.

It was decided to hold off on the survey.

ACTION ITEM: The TAP staff will get a Subject Matter Expert on a call for the June 20 meeting.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated he would like to know what the committee thinks about face-to-face meetings vs. conference calls. He would like the committee to think about this and it will be discuss during the meeting tomorrow.

Schedule K-1s

Sub-committee Chair Owen Oatley discussed the issue. The requirements were that if the basis was \$250,000 or less, a schedule needed to be prepared. Without the schedule there could be arguments between client and practitioner as there would need to reconstruct the basis.



Committee Member Sharon Lassar asked if this meant that Sub Chapter S Corporations would be required to compute basis for each stockholder. She thinks taxpayers (stockholders) should keep track of basis. Practitioners may charge more to prepare returns (K-1s) with this information.

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that Sub-Committee Chair Oatley's proposal seems to be middle ground between nothing and a balance sheet.

Committee Member Lassar thinks that this will "increase" taxpayer burden and IRS will not entertain recommendation. Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated that the recommendation could be prepared stating benefits to show it isn't an increase in taxpayer burden.

Sub-Committee Chair Oatley reviewed previous options. Via consensus committee decided on option number one.

ACTION ITEM: Sub-Committee Chair Oatley will prepare recommendation to be forwarded to the Joint Committee.

Military Information

Sub-Committee Chair Owen Oatley read email TAP staff received concerning the phone number for military personnel. The number is not available to the general public. He still has a problem with this. Is this just for combat zone?

Committee Member Gwen Handelman stated she met with someone from SPEC and she recommends we get someone on a conference call to explain what IRS is doing for military.

Governmental Liaison Jane Brough volunteered some information she has on the military. All IRS issues are run through the Judge Advocate General (JAG) on all bases during filing season. There is an extensive VITA presence on all military bases during filing season. There is a web site for military that contains all the notices and news releases. This service is not available year round. The statute is extended for all military personnel.

Meeting was adjourned for the day.

MAY 17, 2003

INTRODUCTIONS OF GUESTS

Committee Chair allowed the guests to introduce themselves.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

OIC

Sub-Committee Chair Owen Oatley asked Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis for information on who is working on the Offer in Compromise for National Taxpayer Advocate in National Office. He reviewed the National Taxpayer Advocate's Report to Congress and some numbers from the IRS Data Book.

ACTION ITEM: Committee Chair asked Sub-Committee Chair Oatley to prepare a list of questions. Designated Federal Official Lewis stated a subject matter expert could either answer the questions on a conference call or via an email.



Telephone List/Answering Quality/One Call/One Accountability

Sub-Committee Member Buck Paolone reviewed the recommendations he and Sub-Committee Chair Tim Jarrell had previously discussed (since Committee Chair Jarrell was not in attendance).

1. "Geographic directories - printed on glossy plastic colored 7" x 5" cards, distinctive color for each region - with IRS phone numbers pertinent to the particular Call Center within that geographic region. These cards made available in Campus (assistance) Centers, at the IRS website, in post offices, in libraries, in state tax assistance centers. (This might be a precursor to facilitate geographically staggered tax filing deadlines.)"

Since there are no calls going to "geographic locations" which was discussed at the Joint Operations Center yesterday, this would not be a good suggestion. Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis stated that a directory based on specialties couldn't be done. TAP Program Manager Nancy Ferree stated there are only about 5 IRS public numbers.

2. "List phone number and extension (if appropriate) on each Schedule that is available to taxpayers, so that calls can be directed to a specialist for that specific topic. These listings to be also printed within Tax Return Booklets sent to taxpayers, and made available on the IRS website."

Since the tour yesterday, this also would not be a good suggestion and therefore it will be skipped.

3. "Enhance current blue-page listings, as well as white-page listings, in the directories of every town so that the above noted geographic centers are presented and easier to locate when using the phone book."

This refers to number one above.

4. "List the state Taxpayer Advocate by title in the blue pages and the white pages of directories in every town; also, have each state Campus Center assist the taxpayers by posting large placards noting this Taxpayer Advocate Service within their offices and their respective state. Utilize Taxpayer Advocate and staff for assistance on greater range of problems; expand eligibility criteria for acceptance into Program."

This is being worked on. There should be a listing in both blue pages and white pages. Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis stated that some of the phone books still list the Problem Resolution Office number. This is the predecessor of the taxpayer advocate.

5. "List phone number and extension (if appropriate) on notices/letters sent to taxpayer and that denotes the geographic Call Center corresponding to the geographic center where that taxpayer sends his/her return. This will enable the taxpayer to call his/her particular Center so that records are easily accessible by/to the IRS Assistor."

Based on the tour yesterday, this will be omitted.

6. "If a 24-hour service is advertised, then have Assistors available during 24/7 period. Otherwise specify hours when questions can be taken and allow taxpayer to leave detailed message for return call or e-mail reply."

The 24/7 is an automated system. The system needs to be improved not reinvented. It would be nice to be able to route a call back to a person you were speaking with previously.

7. "Provide for instant feedback to assess/evaluate quality of service by having an automated phone call system operate immediately after each call for assistance/information/request/inquire. The



automated call covers 5 topics: 'Problem Area' - 'Perception of Importance' - 'Contact(s)' - 'Result(s)' - 'Satisfaction Level'."

During the tour this question was asked and the committee was informed that a survey is conducted (by sample) before the call ended. Sub-Committee Member Paolone would like to have these survey questions. TAP Program Manager will get this information

ACTION ITEM: TAP Program Manager will get survey questions asked after a toll-free contact.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked Sub-Committee Member Buck Paolone for all his work even though some of the issues were eliminated by the information received yesterday during the tour to the phone center.

Committee Member Owen Oatley said options are still a problem. He would like to see them expanded as appropriate. Committee Member Gwen Handelman said taxpayers don't want more options. Committee needs to look at the "script" and see if what taxpayer's are asking for fits.

ACTION ITEM: TAP Program Manager will get toll-free "script".

ACTION ITEM: Sub-Committee Member Paolone will reformulate his recommendation.

Specialist for Clergy returns & information

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that clergy returns are different than a regular return. Committee Member Sharon Lassar asked if there were specialists? Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis stated there should be.

Find out if this is a systemic problem. Committee Member Lassar would like to know how many clergy returns are denied EITC because parsonage is included in self-Employment but not in income tax. EITC should be based on income not self-employment.

ACTION ITEM: TAP Program Manager will obtain statistics on this issue.

Estimated Tax Payment

Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated the IRS is working on this issue. He wants to wait and see what they do on it. This issue will be put in the parking lot.

Estimated Tax Penalty

New Sub-Committee Chair Steve Wood stated this came from a previous issue. The issue is to possibly raise the threshold of the penalty. Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis stated that the committee should determine what the amount of withholding is on pension income. When does the Form 2210 kick in?

OUTLINE AND DISCUSSION OF ISSUES SUBMITTED BY CITIZENS

403-5 - Taxpayer complained that she was having a difficult time getting an EIN (even got 2 EINs). She was given a long distance telephone number to call and check on her EIN.

Committee Chair stated that this does not happen often. Most time EINs are assigned within five (5) days. He was more upset about her being given a long distance telephone number and not the toll-free number. Maybe this service needs more publicity. Governmental Liaison June Brough interjected that Georgia was one of several states using a pilot program to get an EIN on the internet. It is scheduled to be released Nationwide in the next five (5) to six (6) months.



TAP Program Analyst Chavez will write a letter to taxpayer explaining the above information.

403-6 - Taxpayer was complaining about the service received by an IRS employee and how her issue was not resolved.

This should be forwarded to TAS.

TAP Program Analyst will contact taxpayer and handle the situation.

403-7 - Taxpayer feels those IRS employees are not knowledgeable enough on how to address 401K rollovers into IRSSs.

Committee discussed this issue. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated that this should be the employer responsibility not the IRS. It was decided that the taxpayer should be told that he should contact a "tax professional".

TAP Program Analyst will contact the taxpayer with the above information.

403-8 - Taxpayer would like to see the checkbox authority not be limited to the processing only timeframe.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna commented that this issue has already been elevated to the Joint Committee. Committee is awaiting their response.

TAP Program Analyst will advise taxpayer.

403-9 - Taxpayer states that he does not believe IRS employees have the knowledge they should in order to answer questions.

Committee discussed this and determined that IRS does studies and that the technical answers have been improving. Without specific questions no recommendation can be made. Committee does not want to pursue this issue.

No contact information to reply to taxpayer.

403-10 - Taxpayer wants a "National Retail Sales Tax".

Committee determined this would be a legislative issue.

TAP Program Analyst will advise taxpayer to contact his congressional office.

403-11 - This is an issue discuss last month (duplicate issue). It was dropped.

403-12 - Practitioner states that when he receives some sort of correspondence from audits he responds on time but he then gets a stat notice.

Designated Federal Official Carolyn Lewis states that practitioner is probably sending the information to the Service Campus with his correspondence on top. If you send the information back with the notice on top it will go directly to the unit that sent the notice. Practitioners probably do not know about this.



Refer this to the Notice Issue Committee.

503-1 - Taxpayer is complaining that the Taxpayer Assistance Center would not accept Military ID in lieu of a Social Security Card for return preparation.

There is not enough information here to do anything. Dropped issue.

503-2 - Taxpayer has 3 issues - (1) tax laws are too complicated, (2) not enough help on toll-free number, and (3) leaving a number and hoping to be home when the call is returned is poor service.

First issue taxpayer needs to write to his congressional representative. Other issues fall under the telephone answering and quality.

TAP Program Analyst will respond to taxpayer.

503-3 - Taxpayer needs help in filing out Form 1120. He thinks the instructions should be written better.

Committee discussed this issue. It was determined that this is not a TAP Issue and that the taxpayer should consult with a tax professional on a complex issue such as this.

TAP Program Analyst will respond to taxpayer.

Committee Member Steven Wood wanted to know if we are duplicating issues. Committee Chair Ed Hanna stated there was an Issue Matrix and that any issues that were duplicates should be referred to the committee who is working on that issue.

TAP Program Manager Ferree discussed the new Web based program called **TAP Speak**. This program is available to all committee members and is set up where you can have discussions about issues and read information from National Taxpayer Advocate.

ACTION ITEM: TAP Program Analyst Chavez will send out the web address for **TAP Speak**.

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED NEW ISSUES

Committee Chair Ed Hanna discussed an issue that was forwarded from Committee Member Agnes Tillerson. It concerns the outsourcing of tax preparation to companies in India. She feels there should be three (3) questions asked before it is sent there.

1. Did the practitioner notify the taxpayer that his/her return was being sent to India to be prepared?
2. Is the agency in India held to the same requirement to privacy as the practitioner?
3. Does the practitioner get permission from the taxpayer to outsource the return preparation?

There was much discussion about this issue. Governmental Liaison Jane Brough stated that the state of Georgia had been approached about this but had turned it down.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked if the committee wanted to pursue this issue. Since it is very close to the licensing of tax professionals, it was decided that it be forwarded to the Ad Hoc Issue Committee to be considered with their licensing issue.

ACTION ITEM: TAP Program Analyst will forward to the Ad Hoc Committee for their consideration.



Committee Member Owen Oatley read an article from the Orlando Sentinel about collection in the hands of a private collector. There was much discussion about this issue. In the end it was decided that it does not apply to the committee.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna again brought up the issues of combining Area and Issue Committee meetings. He would like a response from each member. Please respond as soon as possible.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna asked for volunteers to be Vice Chair. There were no volunteers. Committee Chair needs help so he will contact committee members and select a Vice Chair.

Committee Member Owen Oatley stated he was being interviewed by a newspaper and needed promotional information on the TAP. TAP Program Analyst sent him some information but he feels TAP needs more. Committee Member Buck Paolone stated the Ad Hoc Issue Committee is working on a National Media Campaign.

Committee Chair Ed Hanna thanked everyone for coming. He asked that everyone complete a meeting survey. The next meeting will be a teleconference on June 20, 2003.

Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes April 25, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Charlotte Cassady
- Helen Curol
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Tim Jarrell
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Steven Wood
- Carolyn Lewis - DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez - TAP Analyst

Welcome

Committee Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone and stated that we received some great suggestions this month.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Review of March 21, 2003 Minutes

There was a change in spelling for a committee person's name. After this change is made, these minutes are accepted by consensus.

TAP ISSUES

Committee Chair Ed Hanna said that the Recordkeeping issue has been forwarded to the Joint Committee for their consideration. Committee Member Lassar found that the IRS is proposing changes in the area but not as complete as the committee's changes. Chair congratulates the committee on their hard work on this recommendation.

Committee member Tim Jarrell has suggested that sub-committee chairs issue a report to the entire committee a few days before the actual meeting so that the committee will have the information in advance. This may save time in explaining what is proposed. Then during the meeting the report can be discussed. A discussion about this was held and it was agreed, by consensus, that this be done.

Notice Responses Timeframe

Sub-committee Chair Helen Curol had a conference call with her subcommittee and they put together information that they have asked to be sent to the TAP Notice Issue Committee. Analyst Chavez will send this information to all committee members as well as to the Issue Committee. This issue will be put in the "Parking Lot" awaiting a response from the Issue Committee.

W-4

No one from this subcommittee was on the call. No report.



Customer Fairness

Sub-committee chair Sullivan discussed the email that he sent to committee members. Several of the members do not have this email. He will get them the information. His email stated the following:

"As per your request below is a possible recommendation for the panel to consider to send to the Joint Committee. The writing was done by Owen Oatley at my request.

That the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel office contact the National Treasury Employees Union about setting up a process to facilitate communications between the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel and the employees of the Internal Revenue Service. One possibility would be for the employee to give information to the local NTEU Chapter President and then the NTEU Chapter President could then give suggestions for improved taxpayer service or other information to the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel. This could result in the NTEU Chapter President seeing a trend or pattern in suggestions, etc. among various posts of duty. He could then contact the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel about this. This could help the Panel gather information, suggestions, etc. and to recommend Systemic improvements which could result in improved taxpayer service

Ed this is only a rough draft and I am sure my committee is open for any and all suggestion, and if we can reach consensus we could send this to the Joint Committee for their review."

Committee Member Gwen Handelman made the following response:

"Hi All. As Ed requested, I am registering my endorsement of Owen Oatley's proposal of a process to facilitate and encourage communications between IRS employees and the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (and individual committees) through National Treasury Employees Union chapter presidents. I think the TAP Chair or his designee should work with the NTEU at the national level to agree upon a process. I agree that IRS employees have a wealth of experience and knowledge to share with us, including, for example, what sort of training they feel they need but are not getting, the practical impact on IRS employees of various TAP proposals, etc. The proposal also raises the question of how TAP may better partner with the NTEU in addition to IRS program managers. For example, it might be beneficial to include NTEU reps in at least some of the discussions that various committees have with W&I and SB/SE program owners, ask NTEU reps to participate in committee meetings and perhaps make presentations to committees. Either we could add a suggestion about exploring further partnering with NTEU to Owen's proposal (if he agrees) or I offer it as a separate proposal/inquiry to forward to the Joint Committee."

Sub-committee Chair Sullivan would like to coordinate the National and would like to forward this suggestion to the Joint Committee. Committee Chair Hanna questions whether the panel should do this. Committee Member Oatley gave an example. He feels employees may feel uncomfortable doing it internally. This would provide them with an outside source to make suggestions. Committee Member Tillerson feels employees should use internal means to make suggestions. The committee should not interfere with the internal structure. Committee Member Handelman discussed that employees don't always get the training they need. The committee should consider their concerns. She thinks the committee should have a relationship with the union. Committee Member Sullivan agrees with Handelman and Oatley. Committee Chair Hanna asked why couldn't they just contact the committee directly. Committee Member Handelman responded that the employees should have a direct contact with the committee.

Sub-committee Chair Sullivan explained that this was an "Old CAP" Issue. The CAP held meetings with employees and manager and got suggestions. Committee Chair said for Sub-committee Chair Sullivan to meet with TAP Manager Ferree and TAP Analyst Chavez about this and see if there are any objections.



Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Committee chair Ed Hanna said he would like to have more volunteers work on this issue.

Sub-committee chair Tim Jarrell stated he has asked for information from individuals at several events he has attended over the last couple of weeks about how they have been treated by the IRS on the telephone. He will have a report for the May meeting.

He said Area 2 was also working on this issues he would like to know what they are doing so we don't duplicate the process. Committee member Handelman suggests a memo to the other committee telling them what this committee is doing. Committee chair Hanna requested Sub-committee chair Jarrell to send a memo to Area 2 chair Mary Balmer.

One Call/One Accountability/Complaint Process Resolution

Sub-committee chair Buck Paolone said he faxed a memo to his sub-committee requesting feedback from the sub-committee meeting. He will have something for the May meeting. He would like to combine this issue with the telephone quality.

Walk-in Review

Committee chair Ed Hanna will get information out on this issue. He will work with Analyst Chavez and DFO Lewis for a presentation at the May meeting.

OIC

Sub-committee chair Owen Oatley stated he would really like some statistics on the OIC Program. He wants to contact the National Taxpayer Advocate to get the statistics from the Report to Congress. He wants to know who in National Office is working on this.

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez will discuss with manager on how to get this information.

Estimated Tax Payments Available on Internet or via Phone

This issue is on hold.

Eliminate "Red" copy W-2 Requirements

This issue is on hold.

Need for Specialist for clergy returns and information

This issue is on hold.

Schedule K-1s

Sub-committee chair Owen Oatley sent out information on this issue. This information was discussed. The question is should there be an addition to the instructions as to what needs to be included or should the balance sheet requirement that was eliminated be repealed? Committee chair Hanna will get something to Sub-committee chair Oatley on this issue and it will be addressed at the May meeting.

Other Issues

Outsourcing

Committee chair Ed Hanna reviewed an email that was sent out by Committee member Agnes Tillerson concerning tax return processing being outsourced. She said this was being done in India. Committee chair Hanna said he would like practitioners to advise individuals if a return is being outsourced. Several committee members said they had not received this email. Committee member Tillerson will resend and follow-up on this issue.



New Issues

Issue #10 - This individual would like his real estate taxes and mortgage interest he pays to be refundable even if he has non-taxable income. Committee states this is a legislative issue and they do not want to pursue.

Issue #11 - This caller shared his experience with assistors on the toll-free line. He experienced rudeness and the assistor hung up on him. This falls under the telephone quality issue. Committee wanted to know what happens to calls like this. Analyst Chavez advised that if the caller gets the name and badge number of the employee the citizen can contact TIGTA and make a report. Committee wanted to know what happens if that happens.

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez will get TIGTA procedures for committee.

Issue #12 - Woman complained about the complexity of forms and instructions when reporting dividends. Committee discussed that there has been a recent change in the requirements for reporting dividends. They do not want to pursue this issue.

Issue #13 - This citizen would like the estimated tax penalty to be eliminated if the tax is under a certain amount. Committee discussed this issue and said there was a limit but maybe the threshold should be raised. Committee decided to accept this issue. Committee member Gwen Handelman will work on this issue.

Issue #14 - Citizen wrote a letter stating that the \$3,000 limit for a capital loss should be raised due to inflation. Committee discussed and they thought that Area 4 and 6 were both working on this issue.

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez will determine if another area is working this and consider transferring this issue to one of them.

Issue #15 - Citizen states when you have a negative number you lose your depreciation. You lose the depreciation. Committee discussed and determined this is a legislative issue and they do not want to pursue. The citizen had a second issue of printing a phone number with an extension on each form so if you have a question you can call that number and get an answer. This falls into the one call accountability issue.

Issue 16 - Citizen called to complain about the IRS advertising "free tax filing". Area 5 is working this issue so this issue was transferred to Area 5.

Issue 403-1 - This individual had 3 suggestions. The first concerns spreading the filing over 12 months. The committee discussed this and determined it would be a difficult chore with fiscal year filings requiring overlapping of tax rates, deductions and credits for 2 years. The second issue concerns creating a tax credit for every day a person is well. This is a legislative issues and committee request he be advised to contact his congressional representative concerning this issue. His third issue concerns a county surtax on state income tax. This is a state issue and the committee has no jurisdiction for this issue.

Issue 403-2 - This taxpayer has several ideas however they are not very clear. Analyst tried to contact taxpayer without success. This suggestion came in from a contact with Committee Member Helen Curol. She will try and contact this individual and clarify the suggestion.

Issue 403-3 - Tax professional called concerning the check-a-box stating it is still not being honored. Committee chair Hanna stated this has been raised to the Joint Committee and they are still working on it.



Issue 403-4 - Preparer states he has a client whose return is rejected every year because someone else is using his child's SSN. Committee discussed. It was determined that the preparer should contact the local taxpayer advocate with the individual's information.

Issue 403-13 - This is an issue that was suggested by Committee member Owen Oatley. He would like to see the IRS have a special group that would have a high degree of expertise in tax problem of military personnel as well as a special telephone number just for military personnel tax questions. Committee member Oatley stated that TAP Manager Ferree and Analyst Chavez has sent him several items that indicate that the IRS does have some specialist working on this but he would like to pursue the issue of a special telephone number. This issue will be discussed in more detail at the May meeting.

Discussion for May 2003 Meeting

Analyst Chavez discussed the upcoming meeting in Atlanta. The meeting will be held at the Century Center Marriott. Air arrangements are being made now. If you haven't received your itinerary by next Tuesday please contact Analyst Chavez. Hotel reservations will be made by next Tuesday and you will get your confirmation numbers as soon as they are confirmed. Analyst Chavez is working with the Atlanta campus on tours of the submission center and the joint operation center (telephone center) for the meeting. The tours will probably be divided into 2 parts because it will be easier to take smaller groups into the areas. Final arrangements for the tours have not been completed but will be soon.

The next meeting is schedule for the May 16 & 17, 2003 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes March 21, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Phil Bryant
- Charlotte Cassady
- Helen Curol
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Tim Jarrell
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Steven Wood
- Carolyn Lewis - DFO

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez - TAP Analyst
- Nancy Ferree - TAP Manager

Panel Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone and introduced the new Designated Federal Official, Carolyn Lewis from New Orleans, LA. Carolyn gave the panel members a brief introduction of her background which includes more than 25 years of experience with the IRS and more than 14 years with Problem Resolution/Taxpayer Advocate. She said she is real excited to be a part of this group.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Review of February 7, 2003 Minutes

There were several corrections made to the minutes. After these changes are made, these minutes are accepted by consensus.

TAP ISSUES

Chair Ed Hanna stated he would like the issues to be worked in smaller bits. Just take a small item out of the bigger issues and work that item and make a recommendation on that small issue. Regroup the issues under broad items and work on pieces.

W-4

Sub-committee member Lassar said she found an Internal Audit Area that did a review on W-4s. It stated that IRS reviews questionable W-4s (a very small amount of them) and determines if they are legitimate. IRS is trying to automate this process. There are no plans to raise the threshold of the 10 exemptions.

She asked for member's opinion on whether or not to pursue and recommend a change. Suggested approaches included for IRS to send messages to employer to encourage employees to claim more exemptions or to change the instructions on W-4.



Customer Fairness

Sub-committee chair George Sullivan stated he sent a request to the TAP Staff for information on Union Presidents and IRS Office Manager and he received a response from TAP Manager Ferree that this was not within the purview of the TAP. He just wanted to advise these people that TAP was available for employee to provide information to the TAP. TAP Manager Ferree said she misunderstood what was requested. She also stated that IRS employee have other means to provide suggestion. Meeting with employees is not in TAP scope.

Sub-Committee member Handelman stated that TAP is not CAP. Even so, no issues should be lost.

Sub-Committee member Oatley stated that the idea was to have employees go to the Union President with ideas.

Sub-committee chair Sullivan requested Sub-Committee member Oatley to prepare an outline to go to the Joint Committee.

Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Sub-Committee chair Tim Jarrell stated his sub-committee has developed two major issues affecting telephone listing and answering quality.

The first is where the taxpayer is unable to reach a qualified person to discuss the notice they received. Possible solutions include listing the Taxpayer Advocate Service in the blue pages of each metropolitan phone book, list the Taxpayer Advocate Service in the white pages, list phone numbers on notices that refer the taxpayer to their geographic all center so their records are easily accessible to the IRS employee (this could also be a part of one call accountability), provide information via the e-filing website so a taxpayer can look up information on where their tax return was routed with the appropriate phone number, a national directory that has all of the IRS phone numbers by geographic regions, enhance the current white page listings to refer to numbers by geographic region, and list the Taxpayer Advocate Service information in the lobby of the local offices.

The second issue is the quality of service provided to taxpayer via the phone system. Recommended solutions include develop a survey with 4 or 5 questions to submit to taxpayer to help identify major areas that need improvement. The format of the questions would be a scale of 1 - 5. A suggestion was also made to have an automatic call come back to the taxpayer with a survey.

Committee member Handelman said she did not have the report and asked that it be sent out to all committee members. Sub-committee chair Jarrell will email it to all committee members today.

Walk-in Review

Chair Ed Hanna stated he has no report. This item is on hold until the May meeting in Atlanta.

OIC

Sub-Committee member Owen Oatley referred to the National Taxpayer Advocate's Report to Congress and her Address to the Ways and Means Committee. Nina Olson addresses the OIC problems in both of these reports. Committee chair Hanna state that this is one of those issue that needs to be narrowed down to work on a single area. This needs to be put on hold until that can be determined.

Committee member Lassar said that the panel needs to find the person on the National Taxpayer Advocate's staff who is working on this project. She said she has asked for information in the past and has not received a response. TAP Manager Ferree stated she forwarded all inquiries up to the appropriate individuals.



Committee member Tillerson stated if staff is having a problem getting information the panel should be forwarding the issue to TAP Director Daryle Temple.

Notice Response Timeframe

Sub-Committee chair Curol reported that her sub-committee met yesterday and had a very good meeting. They discussed the preparation of a survey to send out to all the Area 3 offices to determine how things are handled in the offices. Other things that were discussed during the meeting were the date on the notice, mailroom procedures and explaining the problem better.

Sub-Committee chair Curol asked the committee for suggestions for the questions. Committee chair Hanna asked the sub-committee to expand this issue to include all notices. He suggests that all committee members ask practitioner friends and anyone who gets notices about the timeframes on these notices. He states he thinks they are getting better.

Committee chair Hanna asked committee members to respond to either Sub-Committee chair Curol or Committee member Cassidy with any questions they would like to see on the survey.

One Call/One Accountability/Complaint Process Resolution

Sub-Committee chair Buck Paolone, along with Sub-committee members Jarrell and Sullivan will prepare a report on this issue for the next meeting

Recordkeeping

Sub-committee chair Charlotte Cassidy stated she forwarded her recommendation to Committee chair Hanna yesterday. The report was discussed and there were some problems with the wording. She will forward a request to the TAP staff concerning the code section.

Schedule K-1s

Sub-Committee chair Owen Oatley discussed his proposal. Committee chair Hanna asked him to draft a report to be sent to the committee. He as that all the committee member get back to Sub-Committee chair Oatley with their comments.

Other Issues

Committee chair Hanna requested a volunteer to write a recommendation concerning the "red" copy of the Forms W-2, W-3, 1096, 1097 and 1099. No one volunteer so Committee chair Hanna said he would create something for the next meeting.

Committee chair Hanna requested that everyone respond to his recent email concerning the time commitment of 300 hours per year for TAP members. He wants to present this information to the Joint Committee.

New Issues

Issue 1 - 10% income tax reduction for employees of charitable organizations. Committee discussed whether or not they want to pursue something that is legislative. They decide to advise this individual to contact his Congressman and Senators.

Issue 2 - can't get answers on a statue for an SFR. This appears to be an item for the Taxpayer Advocate Service.

Lost 2553 (S election). Need to find the office where this problem occurred. It may be a mailroom problem.



Issue 3 - appointments difficult to get - make it easier for the elderly to receive tax help. This falls under the Office Review issue. Will hold this for the face-to-face meeting in May.

Issue 4 - problem with toll-free number. There is already a sub-committee on this and it would be included with the Telephone List/Answering Quality issue.

Issue 5 - IRS date stamp envelope. This falls into the Notice Response Timeframe issue sub-committee.

Issue 6 - problem with returns filed by clergy. Committee discussed this issue. It appears there are 2 problems here. First is that a "specialist" is needed to work on this type of question. The other is that it appears there is a systemic problem with the processing of this type of return. Committee chair Hanna will work on this issue.

Issue 7 - wants IRS to allow taxpayer to e-file directly to the IRS without a middleman. Area 5 is working on this issue and has requested all suggestions that come in concerning this issue be forwarded to them.

Issue 8 - requests to be a member of the panel. Analyst has already responded to this individual and put his name on a list to be advised when recruitment begins again.

Issue 9 - offers help in writing and communicating on complex topics. The committee discussed this and determined that it was not the roll of the TAP to handle something like this.

The next meeting is schedule for the April 25, 2003 at 11:00 am ET.

Meeting was adjourned.



**Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2003
Jacksonville, Florida**

Members in Attendance:

- Larry Barnard
- Charlotte Cassady
- Gwen Handelman
- Edward Hanna
- Tim Jarrell
- Keith Johnson
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Nancy Ferree (acting DFO)

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez

Guests:

- Joe Wilson, IRS, Acting Area Director, SBSE Compliance Area 5, Jacksonville
- Danny Smith, IRS, Senior Tax Specialist, Jacksonville
- Carol Stephens, LBA Financial Group, Jacksonville
- Jennifer Jackson, citizen, Jacksonville
- Leonard Tillerson, citizen, St. Mary, GA
- Sandra Piquet, Central Florida Legal Services, Daytona Beach
- Hallie William Bey, Jacksonville Urban League, Jacksonville
- Mike Damasiewicz, IRS, Government Liaison, Jacksonville
- Edna Jarvis, citizen, Jacksonville
- John Harrell, IRS, OIC Specialist, Jacksonville
- Pat Kinghorn, IRS, Taxpayer Advocate Service Manager (representing the Local Taxpayer Advocate, Jacksonville)
- Debbie Crawford, IRS, Taxpayer Advocate Service Analyst, Jacksonville
- Mike McAnnany, Tax Preparer, Daytona Beach

Panel Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone. The Area 3 Panel introduced themselves to the visitors. Chair requested the guests to introduce themselves.

REVIEW OF JANUARY 17, 2003 MINUTES

There were minor corrections to the January minutes. Motion to accept the minutes was made and motion was seconded (after corrections made); no objections. These minutes were accepted by consensus.



OUTLINE OF PLAN FOR CONFERENCE AND OBTAIN CONSENSUS

Chair asked the member to stay on their issues. The meeting will run 50 minutes and then a 10-minute break. Chair asked for consensus for this and it was approved.

REPORT OF JANUARY 21, 2003 JOINT COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

Vice-Chair Johnson reviewed Joint Committee Conference Call. Most of the call concerned a recommendation of E-filing. There was a major item concerning W-4s, which will be discussed here later. They discussed the checkbox issue. There were concerns about the power of the box. How much can be discussed? Is it limited to "was it processed and was it correct"? The problem may be eliminated. It will be monitored to see if there is still a problem. Area 2 proposed to eliminate Capital Loss limit. The issue was referred back to the Area for further development.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

OIC

Panel Chair Hanna asked John Harrell (IRS OIC Specialist) to address the panel. Mr. Harrell distributed a package of information that he discussed in detail. Mr. Harrell discussed the processing of the offer. He answered many of the questions the committee had on the offer in compromise process.

Panel Member Oatley discussed the problem with offers. The IRS should let taxpayers know in the various publications that this is not a "quick fix". It (the offer) is difficult to get and many taxpayers may not qualify. This (letting the taxpayer know it is not a quick fix) could reduce the amount of offers submitted.

W-4

Panel Member Lassar explained the issues were two-fold. The first was when a taxpayer claims 10 or more exemptions on the W-4. The employer must forward the W-4 to the IRS. Some taxpayers feel it "red flags" them. She suggests the number of exemptions be raised. She would like to know what happens to the W-4 when it is submitted to the IRS. She will submit this questions to the Analyst and the Analyst will submit it and get an answer.

The second condition is when an employee claims "exempt" from withholding if wages are more than \$200 per week. An example of how this is a student who works part-time. They may not have to pay taxes at the end of the year therefore they could claim "exempt" but the W-4 must be sent forward. Panel Member Lassar suggests they try to get some more answers and pursue this issue.

ACTION: Analyst Chavez will find out what happens to W-4s (more than \$200 and exempt). Panel Member Lassar will forward something in writing.

Customer Fairness

Sub-Committee Chair Sullivan handed out an outline for how he would like to contact employees. He discussed how employees might be able to bring problems to the TAP. It was discussed and, by consensus, it was agreed to move forward. Mr. Sullivan requested a list of all NTEU Chapter Presidents. DFO Ferree requested his request be put in writing so the TAP staff can accommodate his action item.

Walk-in Review

Chair Ed Hanna handed out "Review Sheets" that were previously used by the Florida CAP. He suggested that panel members go to the walk in centers to see if they are in compliance with what the centers should do. The visit should not be confrontational. He asked for volunteers to do this. TAP Manager Ferree and Analyst Chavez will coordinate these efforts. TAP Manager Ferree will share this information with the TAP Director. The TAP Office will contact the manager of the center and the Senior Commissioner's Representative. By consensus it was agreed to move forward on this issue, however DFO Ferree advised that during filing season is not a good time to plan the visits.



Telephone List/Answering Quality

Sub-committee Chair Jarrell stated this was a large issue and may be too large for one sub-committee. He would like to have some statistics on telephone calls to the IRS. He will put this in writing to Analyst Chavez and she will get the information for him.

He feels there are two (2) separate areas, Performance Standards and Quality. Sub-committee Chair Jarrell suggests a separate committee on performance including no person to speak to. This may be part of One Call Accountability.

He asked how the IRS numbers are put in the phonebook? TAP Manager suggests a presentation by IRS subject matter expert be made so that they can ask all their questions.

There was a comment from one of the citizen about the calls being routed all around the country and never getting the same center. One of the IRS officials said that TAP should contact Judy Tomaso about IRS directory on-line. Another IRS official said that the telephone numbers for managers are already on the IRweb.

It was suggested that the sub-committee pick the biggest problem area and work on it.

Notice Response Timeframe

Panel Member Cassady reported on this issue for Sub-committee Chair Curol. She brought a notice she received from one of her clients stating the taxpayer had claimed a deduction and was told another person claimed the deduction. She said that was not a true statement. The deduction was not claimed by anyone else. They had filed a return but did not claim the exemption.

The panel discussed the timeframe of notices. Taxpayers receive the notice after the IRS deadline. The timeframe has gotten better. One of the members asked what are the qualifications of people working in the notice area? Another member stated that notices are computer generated. Someone else asked how much it cost to generate a notice since he received a notice for \$.60. IRS asks for a response in 10 days. IRS gets 30 days to respond and then may still not meet that goal. No one had any comments on this.

Another issue related to this is that a taxpayer goes to the local office to settle a balance due. The payment must be sent by FedX to the campus to be posted to the account. This can cause a delay to the taxpayer (i.e., for a real estate transaction). Several IRS employees stated that if the taxpayer uses certified funds a lien could be released immediately. The problem is that there are several "rural" area offices that may not be able to handle this situation. How many times does this issue come up in a rural area/office? Panel members agreed this issue would not be pursued, as the problem does not exist on a large scale.

Annualized Worksheet to Form 2210

Sub-committee Chair Barnard described the issue. The Form 2210 is for estimated tax penalty assessed. The form needs to be simplified to make it user-friendlier. After a discussion it was decided, by consensus to drop this issue.

One Call/One Accountability/Complaint Process Resolution Sub-committee chair Paolone discussed this issue. He wanted to know how do we evaluate? He could not get the information from the IRS. He would like to use surveys to send to taxpayers. It would be used to find out what kind of complaints the taxpayers have. He would like to use these surveys when panel members go on outreach activities. There is a survey at the taxpayer customer service centers. He would like to know how the Taxpayer Advocate uses their surveys.



ACTION: Sub-committee chair Paolone will get together with TAP Manager Ferree to discuss his plan. DFO Ferree will contact Mr. Paolone on Tuesday, 2/11/03 to discuss his needs.

Record keeping

Sub-committee chair Cassady distributed a recommendation on this issue. It was discussed by the panel and the panel agreed, by consensus, to forward the recommendation to the joint committee. Panel Member Handelman will get together with Panel Member Cassady to wordsmith the document before it goes forward.

Schedule K-1s

Sub-committee chair Oatley submitted a recommendation. The panel discussed the issue. The panel wants to know if the requirement needs to be revised or to drop the requirement. If effects a large amount of corporations. A list of pros and cons needs to be prepared and emailed to all panel members for the next meeting.

Copy of Tax Returns

Chair Ed Hanna submitted a recommendation on this issue. The issue was discussed and, by consensus, the panel decided to drop it.

Industry Percentages for Inventory Capitalization

Sub-committee chair Lassar summarized the issue. A new IRS Rev Proc (2002-28) states that companies with income of \$10M or less no longer have to account for inventory. After much discussion it was decided that Panel member Lassar and Chair Hanna would discuss this at a later date.

OTHER ISSUES

Panel Chair Hanna stated there were several issues that were discussed during the last telephone conference call. The first one was Estimated Tax Payments. The suggestion was to have it available (either on the internet or via telephone) for taxpayer's and preparers who forget what they have paid in. It was agreed by the panel to pursue this issue.

The other issue had to do with the "red" copy Forms W-2, W-3, 1096, 1097 and 1099. The panel wanted to know why the IRS could not use a black and white copy or a photocopy. Is there a need for the "red" copy? Analyst will follow up on this. Answer will be forwarded to member to consider at the next meeting.

Action: Analyst will find out why a "red" copy of the above forms is needed.

NEW ISSUES

Vice-chair Johnson raised the issue about unenrolled tax preparation by retail business (such as car dealers). It was discussed that the Ad Hoc Committee was already working on this issues. They are trying to have all unenrolled tax preparers licensed. This is an item on the National Taxpayer Advocates Report to Congress.

It was suggested that an agenda item should be added to the meeting for panel members to report on their issue committee.

CITIZEN INPUT

A citizen spoke to the panel about several issues. She spoke about going to the IRS to have payments taken out of her checking account. She said she visited the IRS local IRS office four (4) times before it got resolved. She ended up having to get it resolved through the Taxpayer Advocate Service. She complained that the processing was too slow.



Her next issue was concerning an audit. She was involved in an audit and the auditor was not familiar with her type of return (clergy). She suggests that the IRS have auditors who are familiar with the type of return they are auditing.

The next issue was with the time it takes to audit a return. She stated the length of time is too long.

Her last item was that the taxpayer should provide copies of the return at the audit. This was an item discussed earlier and was dropped.

Analyst had a file of referral issues to discuss with the panel but there was not enough time to go through them. Analyst Chavez will mail them out to everyone before the next conference call.

CONFERENCE CALLS

Panel Chair Hanna stated the conference calls will continue. He wants everyone to stick with the issues to save time. The end of the conference call can be used for any comments.

Meeting was adjourned.



Area 3 Committee Meeting Minutes January 17, 2003

Members in Attendance:

- Larry Barnard
- Mary Lou Beyreis
- Phil Bryant
- Helen Curol
- Charlotte Cassady
- Edward Hanna
- Tim Jarrell
- Keith Johnson
- Sharon Lassar
- Owen Oatley
- Buck Paolone
- George Sullivan
- Agnes Tillerson
- Steven Wood
- Nancy Ferree (acting DFO)

Staff:

- Sallie Chavez

Guests:

- Bill Garguilo - former CAP Chair
- Michael McAnnany - Practitioner
- Charles Rogers - Tampa Practitioner
- Mr. Y - Savanna, GA
- Janeene Culver - Melbourne, FL Practitioner
- Janice Flood - Price Waterhouse, Miami
- Tim Sosebee
- Lisa Jensen-Shaw - IRS Congressional Liaison, Plantation, FL

Panel Chair Edward Hanna welcomed everyone.

Roll call

Roll was taken. Quorum was met.

Overview of February meeting

Analyst Chavez went over the logistics of the February meeting. The meeting will take place at the Omni Jacksonville Hotel. All panel members were asked to return their TAP Travel Request forms to Jenny Reyes as soon as possible and to call with credit card information if they want Jenny to make the hotel reservations.



Review of December 20, 2002 Minutes

There were a couple of minor corrections to the December minutes. Motion to accept the minutes was made and motion was second (after corrections made); no objections. These minutes were accepted by consensus.

TAP ISSUES

W-4

Sub-committee chair Steve Wood reported that the committee had talked (along with Panel Member Oatley) about the issues. There are two (2). The first one deals with the exemptions listed on W-4. The committee thinks there may be a miscommunication about this issue. They think it only affects a small amount of taxpayers. They still have some questions about the issue like where do the W-4s go? This is not an urgent issue but one that should receive more attention. There is a possibility of raising the exemption limit from 10 to a higher number. Committee will continue to work this issue.

The second issue has to do with a correction that was elevated (from the Florida CAP) and the response received was not appropriate. The issue has come and gone and there is no need for this issue at this time. This issue is dropped.

Customer Fairness

Sub-committee chair George Sullivan wants to contact National Employee Union President to get information. Committee wants feedback from employees. They will develop an outline of how this will happen. They want feedback mostly from taxpayer assistors.

ACTION ITEM: Sub-committee chair will work with Analyst Chavez, Manager Ferree and DFO Moore.

Walk-in Review

Chair Ed Hanna will have additional information on this issue at the February meeting in Jacksonville.

Copy of Tax Returns

Chair Ed Hanna will have additional information on this issue at the February meeting in Jacksonville.

Industry Percentages for Inventory Capitalization

No Report

OIC

Analyst Chavez has arranged for a subject matter expert to attend the meeting in Jacksonville. Sub-committee chair Johnson questioned the penalty and interest accruing during the time the offer was being considered. He suggests a time limit while waiting for the offer to be worked. There was a short discussion about offers and the "NEW" Streamline OIC that takes a much shorter time. Subject matter expert can address these issues in February.

Financial Statement Standards

This is an issue that was raised by the former Florida CAP. It has to do with the financial disclosure for OICs and Installment Agreements. This may be better worked as a part of the OIC committee. It was moved to the OIC issue.

Notice Response Timeframe

Sub-committee chair Curol commented that IRS can accept payments but not post them. It can take several days to have a payment posted. This is very frustrating. She will have something written up for the February meeting.



One Call/One Accountability/Complaint Process Resolution

Sub-Committee Chair Paolone stated he has a meeting this Tuesday with the Local Taxpayer Advocate in Alabama. He told the panel about a discussion Nina Olson (National Taxpayer Advocate) had with the Ad Hoc Committee about expanding TAS authorities. He questioned the fact that the telephone number for the Taxpayer Advocate was not in the telephone directory. Acting DFO Ferree responded by stating that the number will be in the directories as the new one come out.

Recordkeeping

Sub-committee Chair Charlotte Cassady will have a report for the February meeting.

Schedule K-1s

Sub-committee Chair Owen Oatley will have a presentation for the February meeting.

Telephone Listing/Answering Quality

Sub-committee Chair Jarrell requests to visit a phone center. He will have more information at the February meeting

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez (along with Manger Ferree) will arrange for panel member to visit phone center.

Other Issues

It was pointed out that the April meeting was scheduled for Good Friday. The April meeting will be changed to April 25.

Chair Hanna reminded everyone about submitting speaker forms. Panel Member Lassar stated she has already submitted several. Panel Member Johnson said he has a couple of speeches coming up in January. Manager Ferree advised the panel about a meeting she and Panel Member Handelman attended on January 15 at the Ft. Lauderdale Mayor's office. She stated the meeting went very well and they are planning additional meetings.

Citizen Input

Several citizens have contacted the panel with issues and were unable to attend the meeting. Analyst Chavez presented the issues to the panel for the citizens.

A practitioner in Hollywood, Florida wrote to the panel about EINs. He states sometimes he needs an EIN in a hurry and can't get it. He would like to suggest that IRS provide a "Block" of numbers to practitioners to use. This was an issue that the Florida CAP addressed and decided not to pursue due to the new EIN process. Several of the panel members responded by stating that EIN can be obtained in one day and they did not think it was necessary for practitioners to have "Blocks" of numbers. Analyst Chavez also told the panel about a news article she read earlier in the week about the IRS possibly having an EIN request application on the Internet.

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez will respond back to the practitioner that the panel will not address this issue.

A practitioner in New Orleans, Louisiana suggested a way to access estimated tax information on the IRS Web Site similar to checking on refunds. The panel would like to pursue this issue.

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez will respond back to the practitioner that the panel will pursue this issue.



A citizen in Arkansas sent in an email (via the web site) asking about the EIN and questioning the Adobe fill-in documents. Analyst Chavez will address the EIN information. As far as the Adobe fill-in documents, the citizen probably does not have the Adobe version to be able to save the documents.

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez will respond back with the proper information.

A citizen in Georgia sent in an email (via the web site) commenting on why taxpayers have to pay a fee to submit their returns electronically. It was discussed that many do not have to pay the fee (depending on income level). Panel stated they would like to pursue possibly raising the income levels.

ACTION ITEM: Analyst Chavez will respond back to the citizen that the panel will pursue the issue.

One of the panel members brought up an issue of Form 1099s. Social Security does not require "RED" copies any more but IRS does. Panel Chair said to bring this up at the February meeting.

Meeting was adjourned.