



Practitioner lodgment service (PLS) working group

Terms of Reference

1. Context

The Practitioner lodgment service (PLS) working group is one of the Australian Taxation Office's (ATO) key engagement forums with the Digital Services Provider (DSP) industry. The group facilitates engagement between the ATO and the DSP industry that supports the implementation of Tax Time and other practitioner services via ATO's data exchange platforms.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Practitioner Lodgment Service working group is to:

- keep industry informed of key messages and decisions that affect the PLS product suite, including new initiatives and services
- keep DSPs informed of impacts and changes which impact their products as a result of federal budget announcements
- provide business guidance to DSPs relevant to PLS
- offer opportunities for DSPs to review and provide feedback on draft documentation and specifications, including Tax Time release details
- provide DSPs with a forum to discuss issues relevant to the PLS services and platform
- foster an environment that facilitates productive working relationships between the ATO and DSPs.

3. Membership

The PLS working group is open to all DSPs who have indicated they intend to develop or support tax and accounting services.

Those interested in joining the PLS working group can email DPO@ato.gov.au or submit an expression of interest via [Online Services for DSPs](#).

Membership is guided by the [ATO Consultation Protocol](#).

3.1 Expectations of Members

All participants in these consultations will:

- engage in good faith and a transparent manner, demonstrating mutual respect for the expertise, contributions and roles of other participants
- maintain confidentiality of information provided
- work together to bring a broad perspective to issues
- act in the best interests of the tax and superannuation system as a whole
- engage in constructive and open discussions to contribute to the effectiveness of the group in meeting its purpose
- work with the chair to identify top priorities and progress any action items assigned to them

Each person who represents a company or organisation on the group is responsible for making their company or organisation aware of the responsibilities associated with membership of the group.

4. Operations

4.1 Roles

Chair

The role of the Chair will be filled by the Digital Partnership Office (DPO), Australian Taxation Office (ATO)

The Chair will be responsible for (and supported by the Secretariat):

- ensuring that participants are aware of, and adhere to, the protocols of participation described in this Terms of Reference
- considering conflicts of interest and the appropriate course of action determined and noted in key messages
- approving the agenda and any associated documentation
- facilitating open and constructive discussion, and
- documenting all relevant discussions, advice and action points.

Secretariat

The Secretariat function for the working group will be conducted by the DPO, ATO.

The Secretariat can be contacted via DPO@ato.gov.au and is responsible for:

- scheduling meetings
- preparing and distributing agendas and relevant documentation
- ensuring outcomes are kept, records are maintained and the progress of action items is tracked, and
- supporting the Chair in the activities noted above.

5. Frequency and timing of meetings

Meetings will be scheduled fortnightly to be held via WebEx or Microsoft teams.