



## Key messages

UNCLASSIFIED External

<b>Title:</b>	COVID-19 DSP focus group		
<b>Issue date:</b>	29 April 2020		
<b>Venue:</b>	Webex		
<b>Event date:</b>	23 April 2020	<b>Start:</b> 3:00pm	<b>Finish:</b> 4:00pm

<b>Chair:</b>	Martin Mane	<b>Facilitator:</b>	Martin Mane
<b>Contact</b>	Scott Payne	<b>Contact phone:</b>	07 3347 6888

<b>Attendees: names/section</b>	<p>ATO:</p> <p>Martin Mane – AC, Digital Partnership Office &amp; e-invoicing David Baker – Director, Individuals &amp; Intermediaries Daren Glanville – Director, Single Touch Payroll Shane Moore – Director, Superannuation &amp; Employer Obligations Technical Standards &amp; Services Michael Job - Communications Director Andrew Watson – AC, Small Business Experience</p> <p>Industry:</p> <p>Chris Howard – ABSIA Mike Behling - MYOB Helena Bone - MessageXchange Max Ciereszko - FastTrack Chris Denney - SuperChoice Mike Denniss – Class Limited Grant Doherty - Qvalent Simeon Duncan - Intuit Simon Foster - Storecove Kevin Johnson - Reckon Matthew Prouse - Xero</p>
<b>Apologies:</b>	Natasha Davis – Director, Commonwealth Business Registry Service

<b>name/section</b>	Sally Bektas – AC, Marketing & Communications Andrew Watson – Kylie Johnston – Director, Digital Partnership Office Sonia Lark - Digital Partnership Office AC, Small Business Experience Kerry O’Loughlin – AC, Individuals & Intermediaries Larissa Evans – AC, Fund Services & Engagement Trent Jakubowski – AC, Individuals & Intermediaries, Engagement and Support Jason Lucchese – AC, Single Touch Payroll Ian Gibson - ABSIA Michael Roberts - TaxLab Michael Wright – Sage
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<b>Next meeting</b>	30 April 2020
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### Agenda item: 2 – Individuals & Intermediaries community update

David Baker advised that the systems handled the increase in load extremely well and that throttling was not required. The volumes were larger than any previous Tax Time day in 2019 and included:

- Over 2 million page views in Online Services for Agents, with the average time spent on a page was 15 minutes
- 9,000 to 10,000 calls were received by the contact centre per day

A fix was implemented in the enrolment form for sole traders to allow a zero entry.

### Agenda item: 3 – Small Business community update

Andrew Watson advised a large number of enrolments were received from sole traders with zero employees and also non employing entities. Updates to scripting and communications are continuing to address the most commonly asked questions.

### Agenda item: 4 – STP update

Daren Glanville provided an update on STP

- JobKeeper factsheet has been published and details were sent out in DSP newsletter today.
- Since the Government stimulus package was first announced in mid-March we have seen around 45,000 new employers start to report their tax and superannuation information through STP.
  - Large increase in Closely Held’s
  - Daily onboarding average as increased four-fold to around 1760 per day
  - Increased call volumes to link SSID

- Small employers have been granted an additional 12 months to start reporting their closely held employees. The start date is now 1 July 2021 unless they voluntarily choose to go 'live' earlier
- STP Phase 2 still being assessed, an update will issue shortly but current advice is to hold off for now.
- In claiming and notifying for JobKeeper there are options for those businesses that don't use STP

### Agenda item: 5 – Super industry update

Shane Moore advised they had received over a million EOIs for Early release of Superannuation to date.

- 456,000 applications sent to superannuation funds to release funds, estimate release of \$3.4 billion
- Systems have handled the increase in interactions well

It was confirmed that a breakdown of SMSF vs APRA requests couldn't be provided at this stage, but it was expected that SMSF numbers would be low.

### Agenda item: 6 – Communications strategy update

Michael Job gave an update on communications coming out of the ATO:

- Information on [ato.gov.au/coronavirus](https://ato.gov.au/coronavirus) was continually being updated and evolving rapidly
- Improvements to the navigation is occurring, including repositioning information and bringing questions and irritants up front so they are easier to find
- JobKeeper infographics and short videos were coming soon and will include:
  - Turnover test
  - How to pay employees
- The new [Timeline of updates](#) for JobKeeper page has received good feedback
- Martin advised that the Legislative Instrument for the [Alternative turnover test](#) has been published today and is available online.

### Agenda item: 7 – ABSIA update

ABSIA has been sharing the key messages with their members but have not received many return questions.

### Agenda item: 8 – Open floor to identify and respond to emerging issues

A few topics were discussed amongst the group:

- Sharing of STP data with the ABS
  - Can DSPs see a monthly report/update on what is being shared (**Daren Glanville to follow this up**)

- Kevin advised that Trusts being unable to link in RAM is something that should be resolved
  - Need to manually link
  - Need to call ATO for assistance on 1300 AUSKEY (ATO response)
  
- The group was asked whether they were willing to share insights:
  - MYOB is not seeing any system issues, but has seen increased BAS Lodgments
  - Xero is not seeing system issues, their software holding up very well, but they are expecting 2019 Tax return lodgements to increase next week
  - Intuit is seeing increased BAS lodgments

### **Agenda item: 9 – Other business**

David Baker advised that we have seen a lot of interactions through Online Service for Agents and the Activity Statement page on ato.gov.au was the highest viewed page.

Martin advised we expect May 4 to be a very big day and will be a great test as we get ready for Tax Time 2020.