

RUDD GOVERNMENT APPOINTS EXPERT TAX DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL

Assistant Treasurer, Senator Nick Sherry, today announced the composition of Tax Design Advisory Panel, delivering on the Rudd Government's commitment to enhanced consultation with the business community in the development and design of new tax laws.

The Panel comprises thirteen organisations, selected by public tender, and includes five accounting firms, five law firms, two economic research and modelling houses and one legal academic and research organisation.

The establishment of the Panel stems from a recommendation made in the earlier review of Government tax design and review processes which called for an increase in the use of external experts, including at the initial policy design stage.

"This is a major enhancement to the design of tax policy, formalising industry consultation as a vital early ingredient in the tax design process," the Assistant Treasurer said.

"The Panel will complement the resources available within Treasury and the Tax Office by providing ready access to some of the best private sector brains in the field."

"With the Panel now in place, important tax legislation will be developed by teams involving Treasury, the Tax Office and the private sector, as represented by the members of the Panel."

"This will, of course, still be followed by the use of full public consultation."

"The use of expert advice from the private sector is a common and long-running practice used by Government, but we're setting up a strategic and structured approach compared to the ad-hoc way of doing things in the past."

"This means better outcomes, better value for money and better quality."

The Panel will be engaged by Treasury through a case-by-case process in which the whole panel, or a subset of the panel, are approached for a particular task.

Panel members will nominate personnel they believe are best suited for the task and Treasury will select one or more experts. Where a known expert on a particular topic is available through one panel member, Treasury can approach just that organisation.

"The Rudd Government looks forward to ongoing consultation with industry, business and professional groups as we move down the road of reform and recovery," the Assistant Treasurer said.

As part of the consultation process, the Government now publishes a forward work program on proposed tax legislation. It is available on the Treasury website www.treasury.gov.au

The thirteen organisations successfully appointed to the Tax Design Advisory Panel are:

Organisation	Area of speciality
Access Economics	Economic research, modelling and quantitative analysis
ATAX - UNSW	Legal academic and research
Centre for International Economics	Economic research, modelling and quantitative analysis
Clayton Utz	Legal practice
Corrs Chambers Westgarth	Legal practice
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu	Accounting practice
DLA Phillips Fox	Legal practice
Ernst & Young	Accounting practice
Greenwoods & Freehills	Legal practice
Hall & Wilcox	Legal practice
KPMG	Accounting practice
Pitcher Partners	Accounting practice
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Accounting practice

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19 October 2009