

26 May 2015

Deputy Commissioner
Policy and Strategy
Inland Revenue Department
PO Box 2198
Wellington 6140

By email: policy.webmaster@ird.govt.nz

**SUBMISSION on
"Making Tax Simpler" Green Paper**

1. Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the "Making Tax Simpler" Green Paper. This submission is from Consumer NZ, New Zealand's leading consumer organisation. It has an acknowledged and respected reputation for independence and fairness as a provider of impartial and comprehensive consumer information and advice.

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2. Our submission

Consumer NZ supports the proposed modernisation and simplification of tax administration.

Our main concern is the impact that the proposed modernisation will have on individuals so we have focused our review on Appendix 5 of the Green Paper.

Our comments on Appendix 5 are as follows:

- (a) We agree with the objectives set out in clause 5.14.
- (b) The electronic filing system outlined in clause 5.16 will not work for individuals who do not wish to use, do not understand or do not have access to, digital services. Any new systems will need to provide for these individuals. We understand that the use of digital services is being dealt with separately in the "Better Digital Services" Discussion Document. We agree with the suggestion in that document that the Inland Revenue should provide specific assistance to enable these customers to use digital services. However, we also believe the Inland Revenue should provide non-digital services for any individuals who do not want to, or cannot, use digital services.

- (c) Currently, many individuals use tax refund organisations to file returns and request refunds from Inland Revenue. By using these organisations, many consumers are losing out on a portion of any refund they are owed. Some may not fully understand what they are signing up for when they engage these organisations. We would like to see a system that makes it easy for individuals to interact with Inland Revenue for simple transactions, without the need to engage the services of these third parties.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Green Paper. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Chetwin', written in a cursive style.

Sue Chetwin
Chief Executive