# ATT Welcome, December 2017

Welcomes

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## Santa has his ‘naughty’ and ‘nice’ list and I have mine

As another Christmas approaches, we all know that is a reminder of another significant tax return deadline that we have to meet. To those of you in compliance roles, how are you managing the process for the 31 January 2018 self-assessment deadline?

Santa has his list and I have mine; they are similar in that they both have the options of ‘naughty’ and ‘nice’ and both his list and my list are top secret.

Are you looking at your tax return control list only to find you could be using the same one as last year? I know I do. Every year I like to be able to swap a client from the ‘naughty’ list to the ‘nice’ list because of the welcome little surprise arrival of paperwork from them in September instead of receiving the papers on 27 January – very close to deadline day. Then we have the same culprits each year who give information close to the deadline and say ‘oh mine only takes a little while’; they stay on the ‘naughty’ list.

Human nature is often a mystery to me and I wonder if, when Making Tax Digital is with us, anything will change in regards to people’s attitude and planning for tax return deadlines. Will an increase in the number of deadlines make any difference to our clients’ approach and the functioning of their business? Although the start date has been delayed I am already reviewing the position for my clients to ensure that they are just as ready as I am for the big digital switchover. The ATT and CIOT continue to run briefing events on Making Tax Digital and with the support and regular updates in Tax Adviser from the technical teams at Artillery House our journey should be a little less rocky than we might have feared.

Something else I have to consider for the practice is the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements. The GDPR is the most important change in data privacy regulation in 20 years. It replaces the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC and was designed to harmonise data privacy laws across Europe, The enforcement date is 25 May 2018, at which time those organisations in non-compliance will face heavy fines.

As something of a squirrel that has run her own practice for over 14 years, I am not keen on considering the amount of data I have but I appreciate the need to do so and I know my practice will have a miniscule amount compared to others. The ICO website gives us all guidance. I have my reminder set for review as my first job for February.

What else have I been up to this month? I continue to be involved in the rewrite of PRPG – Professional Rules and Practice Guidelines. This is progressing well and we hope to have this ready for you all in 2018. The range of members in ATT and CIOT is vast. We have members in practice, members who work in commerce & industry and HMRC and we all know that one size definitely does not fit all.

Since the last issue of Tax Adviser we have seen the release of the Paradise Papers. This was a huge leak of financial documents that throws light on the top end of the world of offshore finance for members of the general public. Although this may sound like an Agatha Christie book, I am sure Lewis Hamilton wishes he knew ‘whodunit’ and released the information. We all now know about his private jet and how many holidays he has had in it. The public’s appetite for gossip on who spent what and what tax they did not pay seems greater than ever.

I write this column before I have heard Chancellor Philip Hammond’s Budget speech. If only my crystal ball was working and I knew what he has in store for us all. It has been a frenzied year with two Finance Bills already and various Brexit related bills. In that regard, the tax profession may not welcome too many rabbits being pulled out of the Chancellor’s hat. We will deal with the snowball from Parliament and continue to advise clients the best we can.

So, my friends, until next time. Back to my list – more tax returns to do. Please have a wonderful Christmas and my very best wishes to you all for 2018.

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