Spotlight on the Working Together technical sub-committee

General Features

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This month, in our series of articles about the CIOT technical sub-committees, Richard Wild outlines the work of the joint CIOT and ATT Working Together Sub-committee.

In his article in the February 2017 edition of *Tax Adviser*, Jon Stride explained the history of the Working Together initiative, how it was changing, and took a look at the new forum then being piloted (more on that below).

So, what do you do when you are frustrated by HMRC's systems, there are delays in progressing matters, or something just doesn't seem to be working efficiently? Grin and bear it? Bang your head on the proverbial brick wall? Well, there are other options.

The joint CIOT and ATT Working Together sub-committee seeks to help identify and gather evidence in relation to this 'grit' in the tax system, and pursue changes and improvements. It does this in a number of ways:

Representation on the Issues Overview Group, a forum comprising professional bodies and HMRC representatives where we seek to identify, address and/or escalate systemic problems with HMRC's systems.

Representation on the Virtual Communications Group, again a forum of professional body and HMRC representatives where we seek to ensure HMRC communications are as effective as possible and encompass issues relevant to agents and taxpayers.

Posting and reviewing issues on the Agent Forum with a view to understanding the issue, and communicating to the wider membership, gathering additional evidence regarding its impacts as appropriate.

Even though Working Together has moved to a more virtual environment, the Working Together sub-committee meets on a quarterly basis, giving members an opportunity to get together (physically or by conference call) to share experiences and agree its priorities. HMRC representatives often attend relevant parts of the meeting, enabling two-way direct feedback to be given.

The sub-committee is always keen to take on new members, helping us broaden our evidence base and enhance our engagement with HMRC. Have a look at the CIOT website or ATT website for more information.

Whether or not you can join the sub-committee, please do consider joining the Agent Forum. More details about what this does and how it operates can be found at https://tinyurl.com/agentforum. Where problems are being experienced by agents it is vital that they are captured and evidence is gathered as to its implications and whether it is widespread. We can only do that with your input.