Technical Newsdesk: May 2024

Welcomes



24 April 2024

Like many of my colleagues in the technical teams, I joined the CIOT to ‘give something back’. The CIOT and ATT are both charities, and we do our technical work in pursuance of our charitable objectives. Broadly speaking, the CIOT’s primary purpose is to promote education in taxation, with a key aim of achieving a more efficient and less complex tax system for all affected by it. The ATT’s primary charitable objective is to promote education and the study of tax administration and practice, with a strong emphasis on the practicalities of the tax system.

In my early years at the CIOT, when describing to people what we do, I would say that we try to make the tax system better. Eight and a half years later, I have become accustomed to saying that we try to make the tax system less worse.

I would like to think that this is not because I have become jaded or glass-half-empty about our role, but rather recognise the reality that each year (if not more often) governments keep changing and adding to our already complex tax system. In many cases, the best that we can do is to make sure that those changes land as smoothly as possible.

Against this backdrop, you can see why it is necessary to celebrate our ‘successes’. At the CIOT, we have started to capture these and will share them in Technical Newsdesk and on our website each quarter.

Our first article this month covers the first quarter of 2024. We have struggled to define what is meant by ‘successes’, but in brief they represent positive changes that we have influenced – either solely or in conjunction with others, or circumstances where our input has received specific mention or praise. In the greater scheme of things, some of the successes might seem small or niche – but as with anything tax-related, if they affect you they can have a huge impact.

If we had started work on this process last year, we would have included several elements relating to Making Tax Digital (MTD), such as the removal of the End of Period Statement and the move to making quarterly updates cumulative.

One of the first events I attended after taking up my role with the CIOT was a launch event of MTD in December 2015. I still have a copy of the document and road map that was shared during that event, and it is instructive for all policymakers to compare the ambition in 2015 with the reality eight years later. While we have had several ‘successes’ along the way, the government’s unyielding commitment to MTD has meant that our impact has necessarily been limited.

It is particularly topical to mention MTD again, as the ‘private beta’ testing (aka pilot) for Income Tax Self Assessment has just (re)opened. The tax year 2024-25 is the only opportunity for a full cycle of testing before the requirements become mandatory for businesses with a turnover above £50,000 in April 2026.

Most agents will have received emails from HMRC about the pilot already, and we recently held a webinar on MTD, a recording of which is on the CIOT and ATT websites.

If you have joined the pilot, we would like to hear from you – please contact us at technical@ciot.org.uk or atttechnical@att.org.uk.