Spotlight: The Virtual Communications Group

Briefings



21 August 2025

The Virtual Communications Group (VCG) brings together representatives from HMRC and professional bodies, including the ATT, the CIOT and the CIOT’s Low Incomes Tax Reform Group (LITRG), to discuss HMRC's communications with agents. It is operated and chaired by HMRC, with relevant HMRC teams attending to present on each meeting’s agenda items VCG meets online every month.

The meetings allow us to give upfront direction to HMRC as a ‘critical friend’ on how their planned communications are likely to be received by agents. How will messages land, is the tone and timing suitable, and what else might agents want to know? Communications can range from routine news pieces in Agent Update to announcements of recent guidance changes or of new HMRC policies, processes and systems.

The frequency of meetings allows agenda topics to be timely, and gives ATT, CIOT and other professional bodies a chance to influence HMRC’s upcoming strategy and

plans for communications. Advance notice allows us to provide feedback to help improve the content and delivery of those messages before they go out – as long as HMRC are willing to take our advice on board.

The meetings also allow us to help HMRC disseminate messages to the agent community. News from VCG is commonly shared via both the ATT and CIOT websites and in our weekly newsletters to help our members keep up to date with relevant information from HMRC.

Communication at VCG is a two-way process. Professional bodies can also use it to raise issues that our members have experienced with HMRC communications (or absence thereof!). Whilst the scope of the group does not extend to client-specific communications, we can raise concerns from members about wider HMRC communications to agents.

With frequent meetings and wide-ranging agenda items, VCG is attended by guest presenters from a whole spectrum of HMRC departments. This provides a good range of expert contacts who we can later reach out to for more technical queries based on issues raised by members.

If you have any concerns about HMRC communications with agents, please contact our technical teams via technical@ciot.org.uk or atttechnical@att.org.uk.

David Wright