Spotlight on HMRC’s Representative Body Steering Group

Briefings

June 2026



26 May 2026

HMRC’s Representative Body Steering Group (RBSG) is the overarching forum for professional bodies and software developers. It is positioned as the most strategic of the regular forums attended by professional bodies and is chaired by HMRC’s Director General for Strategy and Policy, Jonathan Athow.

RBSG’s remit spans HMRC’s performance, including customer service, digital strategy and the impact on agents. It also provides a good starting point to discuss cross-cutting issues and matters causing concern across the profession. The group originated in response to the need for public consultation on major policy and operational issues.

CIOT, LITRG and ATT are all represented on RBSG. Representatives respond to items raised by HMRC and other bodies, as well as requesting that items of importance are

added to the agenda for discussion.

The terms of reference set out HMRC's public commitment to 'consult with customers on all major policy and operational issues and put them at the heart of everything it does'.

Regular agenda items

Meetings usually include an update on HMRC's performance, particularly where results vary against targets. Attendees are then given the opportunity to comment, ask questions and raise concerns, often relating to live operational issues which HMRC may take away for further consideration if an immediate response is not available.

For example, a recent request focused on why agents were posting screenshots on LinkedIn showing lengthy expected response times from HMRC, when headline performance figures suggested improvements and significantly shorter waits.

Between meetings, RBSG members contribute to a dashboard which tracks activities that support key initiatives, in order to monitor progress. Updates may include educational events run by professional bodies or HMRC participation in events that contribute towards the goals of the group.

Other issues raised by HMRC may include early sight of proposals for future engagement, confidential testing and discussion of plans that could impact agents or taxpayers, or matters that sit over other groups.

Some agenda items are driven by working groups, such as reports from the Agent Digital Design Advisory Group (ADDAG), while others are raised at the request of members. For example, CIOT has requested that the new policy-making process is discussed, following concerns raised at our latest Technical Policy and Oversight Committee meeting.

Engagement outside the meeting programme

RBSG is supported by a secretariat within HMRC's intermediaries team. The group provides a useful avenue for raising queries that do not have an obvious route into HMRC, involve cross-cutting or strategic concerns, or require escalation.

For example, CIOT has recently gathered feedback from staff and volunteers regarding the confidentiality levels being applied across engagement groups, a point of concern for some firm volunteers. We have prepared and submitted a paper to HMRC setting out our concerns, including inconsistent application and a lack of clarity around categorisation. HMRC is now considering the issue and is expected to return to RBSG for further discussion.

More information on RBSG

The list of participating bodies, the terms of reference and meeting notes are published by HMRC on the GOV.UK website at: tinyurl.com/4drhxwms.