



News Release

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**IRS TEAMS TO GET INPUT FROM SMALL BUSINESSES,
TAX PRACTITIONERS TO IMPROVE AUDIT PROCESS**

WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service is looking to improve the audit process for the nation's small business owners and self-employed individuals. IRS teams working on the new initiative, called the Small Business/Self-Employed (SB/SE) Exam Reengineering Project, will be contacting members of small business and tax practitioner groups to get feedback and suggestions about the agency's exam process.

The project's goal will be helping reduce audit times, ensure fairness in the IRS process and encourage tax compliance.

"It's time to update and simplify our audit procedures so we keep providing top quality service to our customers – the American taxpayer," said Joe Kehoe, SB/SE Commissioner.

During the next several months, SB/SE teams will develop a host of recommendations to streamline the current audit process. As part of this effort, they are conducting interviews with IRS employees and members of several small business and tax practitioner organizations to gauge their opinions on the exam process and to hear about their expectations for the Exam Reengineering Project.

"By tapping the diversity and expertise of the private sector, we can start achieving significant improvements in the exam selection process in fiscal year 2002," Kehoe said. "Improving the audit process can be a win-win situation for taxpayers and the IRS."

The SB/SE Operating Division serves 45 million taxpayers including small business owners and self-employed individuals. These groups contribute \$915 billion in taxes annually. They include seven million small businesses, including corporations and partnerships and 33 million self-employed and supplemental income earners. SB/SE's mission is to provide their customers top quality service by educating and informing them of their tax obligations, so they understand and comply with applicable laws.

More information on this initiative and other educational information for understanding and complying with applicable tax laws may be found on www.irs.gov.

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