



# Accounts Management

Debra Holland, Deputy Director  
Accounts Management  
IRS Wage & Investment  
[Debra.S.Holland@irs.gov](mailto:Debra.S.Holland@irs.gov)



# Role of Accounts Management (AM)

- Primary IRS Customer Contact Organization with responsibility for handling:
  - Toll-free/International telephone calls
    - Both tax law and account calls
  - Taxpayer correspondence
  - Amended returns



# Accounts Management has 25 Sites

- 10 Campus Locations
- 15 Call Sites
- 17,400 employees overall
  - 10,800 permanent full-time
  - 6,600 seasonal/other

# AM Site Map

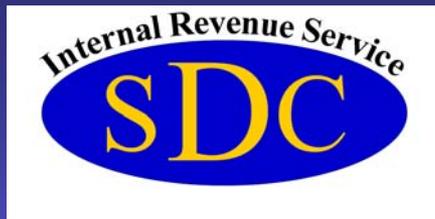




## Telephone and Web

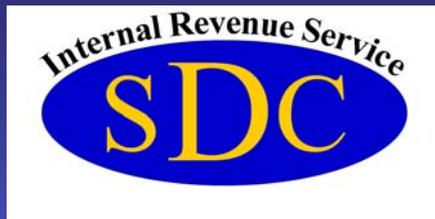
In FY 2009, AM handled:

- Telephone Contacts
  - 39 million assistor calls
  - 29 million automated calls
- AM Supported Web Services
  - 55 million – “Where’s My Refund”
  - 56 million – “How Much Was My Stimulus Payment”



# Paper Programs – 20.2 M Contacts

- In addition to answering taxpayer correspondence, Accounts Management employees also process individual and business:
  - Amended returns
  - Net Operating Losses/Carrybacks
  - Taxpayer Relations cases:
    - Refund inquiries
    - Statute cases
    - Internally generated transcripts
  - International inquiries and claims
  - Power of attorney authorizations
  - Employer Identification Number (EIN) requests
  - Preparer Taxpayer Identification Number (PTIN) requests
  - Employee Plans and Exempt Organizations



# AM Paper Receipts – FY 2009

	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Business</b>
<b>Correspondence</b>	3,141,025	2,209,575
<b>Amended Returns/Carrybacks</b>	3,771,445	1,683,320
<b>Taxpayer Relations Cases</b>	4,458,009	
<b>International Inquiries and Claims</b>	265,398	314,993
<b>Power of Attorney Authorizations</b>	3,488,468	
<b>EIN Requests</b>		431,994
<b>ITIN Requests</b>	117,838	
<b>PTIN Requests</b>	83,854	
<b>Employee Plans/Exempt Organizations</b>		358,515
	<b>15,326,037</b>	<b>4,998,397</b>



## In FY 2010 and subsequent years, AM faces several major challenges

- Address growing customer demand with a relatively stable budget
- Balance the delivery of the telephone and paper adjustment programs to ensure that all taxpayers receive a correct and complete response in a timely manner
- Continually improve processes to enhance the customer experience and improve efficiency and quality



## Electronic Filing Affect on AM Workload

- Fewer Math Errors
- Fewer Tax Law Questions
- Fewer requests for Tax Forms
- Increase in requests for prior year AGI or Electronic Filing Pin
- Increase in Amended Returns, and ...
- *Increased Customer Appetite for Refund Information*



## Customer refund experience has changed...

- Before Electronic Filing
  - Customers got refund in 6-8 weeks
- After Electronic Filing
  - Customers get direct deposit within 8-15 days; paper check within 15-22 days
  - Status available by telephone or web



## ...but customer expectations have also changed

- With faster refunds, we expected to receive fewer refund inquiries, but we have received far more:
- FY 2000
  - 22 million Refund Status Contacts
  - No automated Web application
- FY 2009
  - 83 million Refund Status Contacts
    - Includes
      - 55 million web contacts
      - 23 million automated telephone contacts
      - 5 million “assistor” telephone contacts



## Why? Confusion? Take a look...

- March 12 - John Doe and wife file their return electronically using approved software
  - March 14 – John receives a message from provider that return was accepted by IRS
    - Gets expected direct deposit refund date of March 26 OR
    - Is provided with link to IRS Refund Cycle Chart which shows direct deposit will be sent to account on Friday, March 26
      - He does not notice or does not understand the note\* located at bottom of the chart
- \* “The IRS does not guarantee a specific date that a refund will be deposited into a taxpayer’s financial institution account or mailed.”*



# IRS Refund Cycle Chart

PUB 2043.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Professional  
File Edit View Document Comments Forms Tools Advanced Window Help



## 2010 IRS e-file Refund Cycle Chart

Transmitted and accepted (by 11:00 am) between...	Direct Deposit Sent*	Paper Check Mailed*	Transmitted and accepted (by 11:00 am) between...	Direct Deposit Sent*	Paper Check Mailed*
Jan 15 and Jan 21, 2010	Jan 29, 2010	Feb 5, 2010	Jun 3 and Jun 10, 2010	Jun 18, 2010	Jun 25, 2010
Jan 21 and Jan 28, 2010	Feb 5, 2010	Feb 12, 2010	Jun 10 and Jun 17, 2010	Jun 25, 2010	Jul 2, 2010
Jan 28 and Feb 4, 2010	Feb 12, 2010	Feb 19, 2010	Jun 17 and Jun 24, 2010	Jul 2, 2010	Jul 9, 2010
Feb 4 and Feb 11, 2010	Feb 19, 2010	Feb 26, 2010	Jun 24 and Jun 30, 2010	Jul 9, 2010	Jul 16, 2010
Feb 11 and Feb 18, 2010	Feb 26, 2010	Mar 5, 2010	Jun 30 and Jul 7, 2010	Jul 16, 2010	Jul 23, 2010

**\* The IRS does not guarantee a specific date that a refund will be deposited into a taxpayer's financial institution account or mailed.**

Apr 1 and Apr 8, 2010	Apr 15, 2010	Apr 22, 2010	Sep 1 and Sep 8, 2010	Sep 15, 2010	Sep 22, 2010
Apr 8 and Apr 15, 2010	Apr 15, 2010	Apr 22, 2010	Sep 8 and Sep 15, 2010	Sep 15, 2010	Sep 22, 2010
Apr 15 and Apr 22, 2010	Apr 30, 2010	May 7, 2010	Sep 15 and Sep 22, 2010	Sep 22, 2010	Sep 29, 2010
Apr 22 and Apr 29, 2010	May 7, 2010	May 14, 2010	Sep 22 and Sep 29, 2010	Oct 6, 2010	Oct 13, 2010
Apr 29 and May 6, 2010	May 14, 2010	May 21, 2010	Sep 29 and Oct 6, 2010	Oct 6, 2010	Oct 13, 2010
May 6 and May 13, 2010	May 21, 2010	May 28, 2010	Sep 29 and Oct 6, 2010	Oct 6, 2010	Oct 13, 2010
May 13 and May 20, 2010	May 28, 2010	May 28, 2010	Sep 30 and Oct 7, 2010	Oct 15, 2010	Oct 22, 2010
May 20 and May 27, 2010	Jun 4, 2010	Jun 11, 2010	Oct 7 and Oct 14, 2010	Oct 22, 2010	Oct 29, 2010
May 27 and Jun 3, 2010	Jun 11, 2010	Jun 18, 2010	Oct 14 and Oct 21, 2010	Oct 29, 2010	Nov 5, 2010

### Refund Inquiries

Taxpayers who e-filed can get refund information 72 hours after the electronic return data is acknowledged as accepted by the IRS. To check the status of a refund go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and click on [Where's My Refund?](#) Taxpayers without internet access can get refund information by calling 1-800-829-1954 or 1-800-829-4477.

\* The IRS does not guarantee a specific date that a refund will be deposited into a taxpayer's financial institution account or mailed.





# Refund Tracking Process – Example

- March 18 - Customer checks *Where's My Refund?* on [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)
  - Web application shows refund should be *received* by March 30
    - This is still just a projection based on date of filing
    - *Where's My Refund* adds 4 days to the *sent* date from the cycle chart, to estimate expected *received* date



# Refund Tracking Process – Example



[Home](#)

[Get Refund Status](#)

[Refund Help](#)

[Take Survey](#)

[Log Out](#)

## Refund Status

Your Personal  
Tax Data

Social Security Number  
or IRS Individual Taxpayer  
Identification Number:

Filing Status:  
**Married-Filing Joint Return**

Tax Period Ending:  
**December 31, 2009**

Your Expected  
Refund Amount:  
**.00**

### Refund Status Results

[Print Now](#)

We have received your tax return and it is being processed. Unless we find mistakes or you owe other taxes, you should receive your refund by **March 30, 2010**.

**Please read the following information related to your tax situation:**

- [Tax Topic 152, Refund Information](#)

[Print Now](#)

[How Did We Do?](#)

[Log Out](#)

[IRS Privacy Policy](#)



# Refund Tracking Process – Example

- March 30 – No refund
  - John checks web for status
  - Receives message that refund will be direct deposited on April 2
  - Messages do not tell him that there has been a delay, or why
    - He doesn't know that a processing problem has caused a one week delay
- April 2 – No refund in his account
  - He doesn't know that his financial institution just hasn't posted it yet
  - Frustrated, he calls AM to ask an agent why his refund has been delayed 4 times
- April 3 – Refund posts to his account



How can we ensure our mutual customer's experience is as good as possible?

- Same message; two voices (IRS, you)
- Reduce Confusion
- Partner to make things better (e.g. Electronic Filing Pin)
  - Identify improvement opportunities
  - Implement and promote process changes



# What Is Accounts Management Doing?

- Goal: Identify process improvement opportunities to
  - Reduce customer confusion and burden
  - Reduce refund status calls
  - Focus agent resources on customers with complex issues which require agent contact for resolution
- Actions To Date:
  - Conducted extensive analysis of customer contacts
  - Reviewed customer feedback
  - Reviewed automated system messages
  - Working to improve/clarify customer messages on *Where's My Refund* and the Refund Cycle Chart (Publication 2043)
  - Formulating next steps



## What Can You Do?

- Clarify what expected refund date means in all messages to customers regarding their refund
- Advise customers to contact [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) around expected refund date to get updates
- Bring issues to the IRS as you identify them so we can work together towards a solution



# Question and Answer Session

- Questions ???