

Recent Research on Tax Administration and Compliance

*Selected Papers Given at the
2009 IRS Research Conference*

**Georgetown University School of Law
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July 8-9, 2009**

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Foreword

This edition of the IRS Research Bulletin (Publication 1500) features selected papers from the latest IRS Research Conference, held at the Georgetown University School of Law in Washington, DC, on July 8-9, 2009. Conference presenters and attendees included researchers from all areas of the IRS, officials from other Government agencies, and academic and private sector experts on tax policy, tax administration, and tax compliance.

The conference began with a keynote address by Austan Goolsbee, member of the Council of Economic Advisors and staff director and chief economist of the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board. Dr. Goolsbee acknowledged the critical role of research in support of both tax policy and tax administration. He expressed his appreciation for the research being conducted at the IRS, in academia, and at other institutions and agencies. He concluded his remarks by answering a few questions from the audience.

Mark Mazur, former Director of Research, Analysis, and Statistics, then led a panel discussion that highlighted and critiqued the IRS's tax gap estimation methodologies. Panelists discussed the strengths and weaknesses of recent estimates' major components. The remainder of the conference included sessions on tax systems and taxpayer behavior, the tax behavior of corporations, measuring and facilitating low-income tax benefits, issues affecting high-wealth individuals, and tax preparation services. For the first time, the conference also included a poster session highlighting additional IRS research.

We hope that this volume will enable IRS executives, managers, employees, stakeholders, and tax administrators elsewhere to stay abreast of the latest trends and research findings affecting Federal tax administration. We also hope that the research featured here will stimulate improved tax administration and additional helpful research.

Acknowledgments

The IRS Research Conference was the result of substantial effort and preparation over a number of months by many people. The conference program was assembled by a committee representing research organizations throughout the IRS. Members of the program committee included Mark Mazur (formerly of Research, Analysis, and Statistics), Janice Hedemann (National Headquarters Office of Research), Melissa Kovalick (Research, Analysis, and Statistics), Alan Plumley, Ed Emblom, Kay Wolman, Natalia Carro, Rahul Tikekar, George Contos (National Headquarters Office of Research), Elizabeth Kruse, Chris Hess (Office of Program Evaluation and Risk Analysis), Martha Eller Gangi, Barry Johnson (Statistics of Income), John DeWald, Caroline Trinkwalder (Small Business and Self-Employed), Shelley Pope (Tax Exempt and Government Entities), Howard Rasey (Wage and Investment), Tom Beers (Taxpayer Advocate), Davey Sparkman (Criminal Investigation), and David Stanley (Large and Mid-Size Business). Melissa Kovalick, Elizabeth Kruse, Martha Eller Gangi, Marcella Garland, Craig Swinford, and Bobbie Vaira oversaw numerous details to ensure that the conference ran smoothly.

This volume was prepared by Paul Bastuscheck, Clay Moulton, Lisa Smith, and Camille Swick (layout and graphics) and James Dalton and Martha Eller Gangi (editors), all of the Statistics of Income Division. The authors of the papers are responsible for their content, and views expressed in these papers do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of the Treasury or the Internal Revenue Service.

We appreciate the contributions of everyone who helped make the IRS Research Conference a success.

Janice M. Hedemann
Director, National Headquarters Office of Research
Chair, 2009 IRS Research Conference

Note: The papers included in this volume may also be found on the IRS Web site at <http://www.irs.gov/taxstats/article/...>