

ITG News



Keeping First Nations Informed



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New Compliance Unit to Debut

Fiscal Year 2009 has closed with a number of significant changes in ITG operations. As many may be aware, the federal budget provided for increased staffing for the IRS as a whole, and ITG was pleased to be able to hire 17 new employees over the past four months. This staffing not only allowed us to replace many employees who had retired or otherwise departed, but actually allowed us to increase our resources in some geographic areas where we had need.

The budget also permitted us to create the "Government Entities Compliance Unit" (GECU), a new function that will be based at our Ogden campus. This unit has already begun work to address compliance issues involving tax exempt bonds, but in the near future they will be undertaking some initiatives directly involving tribal governments. An experienced ITG Specialist is serving as a coordinator for these efforts, and will be assisting with staff training. The ITG Director will also be closely involved.

At present, the GECU is studying a number of initiatives, including following up with tribes where tax deposits have been made but no return has been filed, working with tribes to complete and submit delinquent returns, and conducting assessments of potential areas for outreach and education.

The new unit will not affect the ability of tribes to work directly with their assigned ITG Specialist. That designee will remain the principal point of contact for tribes on any federal tax administration matter, and can also be consulted on any inquiry received from the GECU.

Consultation Listening Meetings

Our appreciation to everyone who attended the FY 2009 meetings held in Anchorage, Washington D.C. Tulsa, and Albuquerque. Your input is a valuable part of our planning and operations. Our tentative meetings for FY 2010 are listed below. Watch the ITG web site and future editions of ITG News for the specific dates and locations.

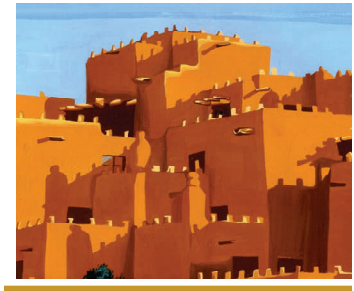
Tentative Consultation Listening Meetings for FY 2010

California

Minnesota

Nevada

Western Oklahoma



....the GECU will help address compliance issues, but will not affect the ability of tribes to work with the assigned ITG Specialist...

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Update on Customer Satisfaction Survey

We recently began tabulating the results from the FY 2009 Customer Satisfaction Survey. We received 211 responses, a record number. We appreciate everyone's time taken to complete and return the survey form.

As in past years, we will publish a report on the findings from the survey, and will post it to the ITG landing page at www.irs.gov/tribes. We will also convene a team to review the results and determine any actions that ITG can undertake to address concerns raised, or to strengthen the areas that tribes value. Past actions have included increased outreach, web site enhancements, improved communication processes, and assistance in mitigating penalties.

The eventual actions to be undertaken during FY 2010 will be highlighted in future editions of ITG News

Top Five Bank Secrecy Act Casino Issues

Many tribes have entities subject to the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA), in particular those who operate gaming establishments. ITG provides limited outreach and education on BSA issues, and the Small Business/Self-Employed Division conducts examinations on this area.

The following list reflects common audit issues identified on current BSA casino examinations. It should be noted that this is universal to all gaming operations, not just those that are operated by tribes:

- Failure to create due diligent procedures for mismatched SSNs as identified by the Enterprise Computing Center—Detroit on filed currency transaction reports
- Failure to create due diligent procedures when presented with post office box numbers as permanent addresses for BSA required records or reports
- Failure to adequately use all available information when required for BSA compliance
- Failure to adequately use automated data processing to aid in assuring BSA compliance
- Inaccurate and incomplete currency transaction reports and suspicious activity reports.

Your assigned ITG Specialist is available to assist with these areas if you have any questions, or believe you need further training. ITG can also conduct a BSA Compliance Check to assist a tribe in identifying specific program weaknesses that may exist.



Identity Theft Attempts Continue

Tribes and tribal members continue to receive e-mails regarding alleged refunds that are due, or that tribes and tribal members are exempt from federal income tax. The messages often purport to come from the Internal Revenue Service. These e-mail messages are not only false, but most importantly represent attempts at identity theft. They are commonly known as “phishing”.

There are several ways you can determine these messages are false:

- The IRS does not send any confidential tax information by e-mail on the Internet. Since it is not a secure communication system, we simply cannot use it to transmit personal information. Thus these messages would never originate from the IRS, even if the sender uses the IRS name or an “irs.gov” e-mail extension.
- The messages often contain serious spelling errors, including one that recently misspelled the word “Service” in our agency name.
- The recipient is asked to complete a form that has a legitimate IRS form name, but is not that form. Recipients can always access IRS forms through the www.irs.gov web site, and then can compare the actual form to the version provided in the e-mail. You will readily see the difference, or may even discover that there is no actual IRS form number that matches the one you have been provided.
- The recipient is asked to provide personal information that the IRS would never seek. This often includes bank account numbers and PINs, ostensibly so the sender can deposit money owed to the recipient of the e-mail. A PIN is not required for making a deposit to a bank account, and the IRS would never ask for that information since only the bank routing and account number are required for a direct deposit.
- Many of these attempts at identity theft ask the recipient to fax a completed form to a long distance telephone number. These are generally fax forwarding services, where your faxed information is immediately relayed elsewhere, often offshore beyond the reach of regulators and law enforcement.

Do not respond to these solicitations. Instead, please report them to your assigned ITG Specialist who in turn will report it to the IRS office that investigates “phishing”. We will also ensure that other tribes that might be subject to these efforts are aware of the latest versions of identity theft.

Reporting Abuses/Schemes

We continue to work with tribes and tribal officials to address financial abuses and schemes being promoted in Indian country. Working together can help ensure the integrity of tribal finances, and eliminate the threats posed by individuals with schemes that appear “too good to be true” and often are.

If you are aware of financial impropriety, or of a promoter advocating a scheme that appears highly suspect, you can contact the ITG Abuse Detection and Prevention Team at (405) 297-4407, or via e-mail at tege.itg.schemes@irs.gov



Update on Tribal Economic Development Bonds

The Internal Revenue Service has allocated authority to issue Tribal Economic Development Bonds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

In [Notice 2009-51](#), the IRS solicited applications for the allocation of \$2 billion of national bond volume limitation authority (volume cap) to issue Tribal Economic Development Bonds under section 7871(f) of the Internal Revenue Code. Section seven of the notice provides that the volume cap is to be allocated in at least two tranches, the first of which would not exceed \$1 billion in total with a \$30 million limitation per Indian tribal government.

The IRS received 58 applications requesting a total of \$1,329,487,364.88 in volume cap available under the first tranche. Pursuant to the notice, the IRS allocated pro rata amounts of volume cap to the projects described in the applications such that the total amount allocated under the first tranche did not exceed \$1 billion.

For those applicants who elected to consent to public disclosure, the IRS released an [allocation schedule](#) showing the names of the Indian tribal governments, the types and locations of the projects described in the applications and the amounts of the awarded allocations.

The Second Allocation will address the remaining \$1 billion for qualified projects for which applications meeting the requirements have been filed with the IRS on or before January 1, 2010. If the total amount of volume cap requested in all applications received on or before that date does not exceed the \$1 billion, then each applicant will be allocated the amount of volume cap requested and any volume cap remaining may be available for allocation by the IRS as part of an allocation process to be announced by the IRS at some future date. If the total amount of volume cap requested in all applications received on or before January 1, 2010 exceeds \$1 billion, then each applicant will be allocated the amount of volume cap requested reduced pro rata such that the total amount allocated does not exceed the \$1 billion.

Applicants must include a description of the project, or any related project, for which a prior allocation was made, as well as the name of the applicant that received the allocation. For this purpose, related projects include facilities that are owned by the same Indian tribal government, a political subdivision of the Indian tribal government, or an entity controlled by the Indian tribal government, which are (i) located at or near the same site, and (ii) are integrated, interconnected, or directly or indirectly dependent on each other based on all the facts and circumstances.

Want to Avoid Penalties?

Are you incurring penalties? Do you want to eliminate penalties in the future?
ITG has a "Helpful Hints to Avoid Penalties" job aid that can assist you.
It's available by ordering our "Tax Tools for Tribes" CD-Rom via e-mail
at ITG.TaxTools@irs.gov.



Message from the Director

As the federal government embarks on FY 2010, the office of Indian Tribal Governments enters its second decade of existence. Many people questioned the commitment of the IRS to retain this office when it was initially established, but we have successfully maintained the staffing and support necessary to address the unique federal tax administration issues for our First Nations, along with the expertise needed to meet their unique legal and cultural issues.

It has been a fast-paced decade. Not only has the world and our country changed dramatically; ITG has changed greatly as well. While we have maintained a fairly stable workforce, we have experienced significant turnover. Yes, tribes are not the only governments that see employees come and go.

Our current workforce is 74, but only 18 of our current staff have been with us since 2000. While the changes have been gradual, retirements and other job opportunities have led to major staffing changes over time.

Hopefully many of these changes have been transparent to you. Successful organizations are based on processes, not people. I believe we have created work processes that have allowed us to continue seamless operations despite the changes in personnel. Hopefully tribes agree with that, and have not experienced any problems when assigned ITG Specialists have departed.

We begin FY 2010 with 17 new employees, the largest number of new hires in ITG since 2001. They bring new energy and new ideas, which I plan to embrace. This means that many tribes will be meeting new ITG Specialists, and if your Chapter has a newly assigned ITG Specialist, you should have received a letter of introduction. However, I also encourage you to visit the listing of ITG Specialists which can be located under the "Contacting ITG" link in the left border of our landing page at www.irs.gov/tribes.

Of course, I am always available to listen to any ideas, suggestions, and concerns, at christie.jacobs@irs.gov, or at (202) 283-9800.

Christie Jacobs



Tax News For Casinos!

Sign-up for IRS Gaming Seminar in Albuquerque, NM Please RSVP no later than October 14, 2009

ITG is committed to providing superior service to all of our tribal customers. As part of this continuing customer service, a gaming seminar has been scheduled for:

Date of the Training: October 21, 2009

Time of the training is: 8:00am to 4:30pm

Address for the Training: Internal Revenue Service
5338 Montgomery Blvd, NE,
Albuquerque, NM 87109-1311

Topics include: Form W-2G (Gaming Winnings), Form 1099-MISC (Prizes and Awards), Form 1042-S (Gaming Winnings by Foreigners), Tip Reporting Compliance - Form 8027, TRDA - Tip Rate Determination Agreement, and GITCA - Gaming Industry Tip Compliance Agreement

To register for this class, you need to submit the following information via E-mail to:
Jimmy.C.Crook@irs.gov

Your full name or the full name of the person(s) attending the training

Your business address and entity name

Your telephone number and fax number

Your E-mail address

Registration is limited to the first 32 participants (Maximum 2 per Casino), so please e-mail Jimmy Crook by **October 14, 2009, OR EARLIER** to register for this gaming seminar.

If you are interested in receiving a local presentation for your tribe's employees for a gaming seminar, Title 31 training or any other federal tax related topics, please contact your assigned ITG Specialist or the Southwest Group Manager, Lonnette Graham. The current Southwest ITG contact information is provided on Page 10.



Your Indian Tribal Governments Specialists

Sometimes you just need a little help and other times you need more. ITG has assigned a Specialist to each of the Navajo Nation Agencies and Chapters. The following Specialists are your first-line IRS contacts:

Eastern Agency	Marvin E. Millsap	(505) 837-5693	Fax (505) 837-5654
	Email: Marvin.E.Millsap@IRS.GOV		
Northern Agency	Bruce M. Arnoldussen	(602) 636-9189	Fax (602) 624-9188
	Email: Bruce.M.Arnoldussen@IRS.GOV		
Western Agency	Theresa Nosie	(480) 503-7318	Fax (480) 503-7320
	Email: Theresa.S.Nosie@IRS.GOV		
Chinle Agency	Aaron Coleman	(602) 207-8751	Fax (602) 207-8002
	Email: Aaron.H.Coleman@IRS.GOV		
Ft. Defiance Agency	Tricia L. Miller	(520) 205-5078	Fax (520) 670-4823
	Email: Tricia.L.Miller@IRS.GOV		

Feel free to contact any or all of them if you need assistance. If you can't reach any of the Specialists, just call our Manager: Lonnette Graham at (505) 837-5536, Fax (505) 837-5654, or Email: Lonnette.L.Graham@IRS.GOV.

Self-Assess Your Federal Tax Compliance Risks

Tribal entities can now self-assess their federal tax compliance and work with ITG to address any problems they uncover. Entities electing to participate receive a fillable template from ITG, and are provided with the name of a local ITG Specialist who will serve as their resource during the process.

Information on the program, as well as an on-line request form, is available through the "Enhancing Federal Tax Compliance" link on the right-hand of the ITG web site landing page at www.irs.gov/tribes,

Tax Tools for Tribes

You can order our comprehensive reference CD-ROM containing Publication 4268 (Employment Tax Guide for Tribes), Publication 3908 (Gaming Tax Law for Indian Tribal Government), Publication 15 (Employer's Tax Guide), Publication 15-A (Employer's Supplemental Tax Guide), ITG News issuance for your area for the last 8 quarters, a "primer" for federal tax issues affecting individual Native Americans, and a guide on "Helpful Hints to Avoid Penalties".



Employment Tax Corner

Form 944, Employer's Annual Federal Tax Return

In 2006, the IRS introduced Form 944 to allow certain employers to file their employment tax returns annually and pay the taxes due with their returns. The IRS's goals for the new Form 944 Program were to reduce taxpayer burden for eligible employers that would normally file Employer's QUARTERLY Federal Tax Return(s) (Form 941) and to improve current filing and payment compliance levels. The program was designed for employers with little or no employment taxes due.

Under the 2006 proposed and temporary regulations, the IRS sent a notification letter to qualified employers, with an estimated employment tax liability of \$1,000 or less, requiring them to file Form 944. Employers were eligible to opt out only if they estimated that their employment tax liability would exceed the \$1,000 threshold or if they wanted to e-file Forms 941 quarterly instead. Employers that have received notification of their qualification to file Form 944 must continue to file Form 944 unless they properly opt out of the Form 944 program.

What will happen if a taxpayer exceeded the \$1,000 limit required in filing the Form 944? If this happens will the taxpayer be requested to file the Form 941? Or will he receive a penalty? If a Form 944 filer believed his tax liability would change prior to April 1, 2009, he should advise the IRS of the possible change by calling **1-800-829-4933**. If he did not notify the IRS by April 1, 2009, he should file Form 944 and pay the tax by January 31st. The employer will not incur a penalty. He will then be advised by the IRS to file forms 941 for the next year.

If an employer is required to file Form 944 to report its employment tax liability for the current calendar year; the employer must file Form 944 even if its actual employment tax liability for the current year exceeds the eligibility requirement threshold (\$1,000 under the new regulations). If the Form 944 shows that the employer's employment tax liability exceeds the eligibility threshold, then it will be required to file Form 941 to report its employment tax liability in the future.

If the IRS determines that the employer can file Form 941 instead of Form 944 for tax years after 2009, the employer will be sent a written notice that their filing requirement has changed.

The important thing to remember is to file the correct tax return timely and to pay the tax when due. Questions may be directed to your ITG Specialist on Page 7.



Federal Tax Calendar for Fourth Quarter 2009

October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 * Make a deposit for 9/26-9/29	3
4	5	6	7 * Make a deposit for 9/30-10/2	8	9 * Make a deposit for 10/3-10/6	10
11	12	13 Employees report September tip income to employers if \$20 or more	14	15 * Make a deposit for 10/7-10/9 ** make a deposit for September if under the monthly deposit rule	16 * Make a deposit for 10/10-10/13	17
18	19	20	21 * Make a deposit for 10/14-10/16	22	23 * Make a deposit for 10/17-10/20	24
25	26	27	28 * Make a deposit for 10/21-10/23	29	30 * Make a deposit for 10/24-10/27	31

November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 <i>File September for wages received during</i>	3	4 * Make a deposit for 10/28-10/30	5	6 * Make a deposit for 10/31-11/3	7
8	9 <i>File Form 941 the 3rd calendar quarter of 2009</i>	10 Employees report October tip income to employers if \$20 or more	11	12 * Make a deposit for 11/4-11/6	13	14
15	16 * Make a deposit for 11/7-11/10 ** make a deposit for October if under the monthly deposit rule	17	18 * Make a deposit for 11/11-11/13	19	20 * Make a deposit for 11/14-11/17	21
22	23	24	25 * Make a deposit for 11/18-11/20	26	27	28
29	30 * Make a deposit for 11/21-11/24 <i>Form 730 for wages received during October</i>					

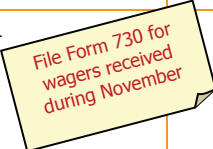
* = Make a Payroll Deposit if you are under the semi-weekly deposit rule.

**= Make a Monthly Deposit if you qualify under that rule.

9 NOTE: Deposits made through EFTPS must be initiated at least one day prior to the due dates listed above in order to be timely.



December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 * Make a deposit for 11/25-11/27	3	4 * Make a deposit for 11/28-12/1	5
6	7	8	9 * Make a deposit for 12/2-12/4	10 Employees report November tip in- come to employers if \$20 or more	11 * Make a deposit for 12/5-12/8	12
13	14	15 ** make a deposit for November if under the monthly deposit rule	16 * Make a deposit for 12/9-12/11	17	18 * Make a deposit for 12/12-12/15	19
20	21	22	23 * Make a deposit for 12/16-12/18	24	25	26
27	28 * Make a deposit for 12/19-12/22	29	30 * Make a deposit for 12/23-12/25	31 		

* = Make a Payroll Deposit if you are under the semi-weekly deposit rule.

**= Make a Monthly Deposit if you qualify under that rule.

NOTE: Deposits made through EFTPS must be initiated at least one day prior to the due dates listed above in order to be timely.

Return Filing Dates

November 2nd

- > File Form 941 for the 3rd quarter of 2009. If all deposits were paid on time and in full, file by November 10th.
- > File Form 730 and pay the tax on applicable wagers accepted during September.

November 30th

- > File Form 730 and pay the tax on applicable wagers accepted during October.

December 31st

- > File Form 730 and pay the tax on applicable wagers accepted during November.