# QuickAlerts Messages October 2015

### QuickAlerts – October 1, 2015
**Subject:** Extended Maintenance Window for MeF Production

The MeF maintenance build window is being extended on Sunday, October 4, 2015. The system will be unavailable from 1:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Eastern.

The build will deploy critical system updates. This extended window affects only the MeF Production Environment.

Thank you in advance for refraining from accessing the MeF Production System during this period.

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### QuickAlerts – October 2, 2015
**Subject:** IRS modifies maintenance schedule; Modernized e-File open over Columbus Day weekend
All times shown in this communication are in Eastern Standard Time.

Following concerns from the tax professional community, the IRS has modified its Columbus Day power outage to minimize the impact of this critical maintenance period as much as possible. This year, the Columbus Day weekend maintenance period will not affect the Modernized e-File operation, a change from previous years. The maintenance requirements, however, will affect the e-services secure mailbox operations between Sunday, Oct. 11 from around 3:00 a.m. Eastern Time until Monday, Oct. 12 at approximately 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please note those times could vary, depending on normal maintenance issues.

During this period, the Transcript Delivery System, TIN Matching and e-File application will be available and you can use the online method to print and view your documents. However, if you choose to use the secure mailbox, you will not be able to retrieve your documents until after the maintenance period ends. Bulk TIN Matching and Transcript Delivery requests should be submitted by 2:00 a.m. Oct. 11, to ensure delivery to the secure mailbox prior to the start of the maintenance period. The IRS appreciates the feedback it has received regarding the Columbus Day period, and it has tried to reduce the impact of this outage as much as possible while balancing the need for timely system updates during a critical period. Thank you for your patience.

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### QuickAlerts – October 2, 2015
**Subject:** New IP PIN Business Rules

There are new MeF 1040 business rules related to the Identity Protection PIN.  These business rules do not expand the IP PIN issuance process to include children but instead assist with return data integrity.

Starting January 1, 2016, the IRS will require the use of Identity Protection PINs for all SSNs with an IP PIN requirement, regardless of whether the SSN is entered for a primary, spouse, or dependent/qualifying individual. Entry of an IP PIN will be required for any SSN with an IP PIN requirement on the following Forms/Schedules:

- Form 1040, Individual Income Tax Return, series
- Form 2441, Child and Dependent Care Expenses

- Schedule Earned Income Credit.

For more information related to the new business rules, please refer to the updated Publication 4164 to be published by October 9, 2015.

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**Subject:** Electronic Management System (EMS) Columbus Day Power Outage

All times shown in this communication are in Central Time Zone.

Due to the Memorial Day Holiday, the Electronic Management System located at Memphis, Tennessee will be unavailable from 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 10, 2015 to 10:59 p.m. on Tuesday, October 12, 2015.

We apologize for the inconvenience this may cause you.

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**QuickAlerts – October 5, 2015**
**Subject:** Electronic Management System (EMS) Columbus Day Power Outage

**UPDATE:**

All times shown in this communication are in Central Time Zone.
Due to the Columbus Day Holiday, the Electronic Management System located at Memphis, Tennessee will be unavailable from 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 10, 2015 to 10:59 p.m. on Tuesday, October 12, 2015.

We apologize for the inconvenience this may cause you.

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**QuickAlerts – October 6, 2015**
**Subject:** Updated Tax Year 2014 AIR WSDLs for ISS-A2A channel are available

If you would like to request the updated Tax Year 2014 WSDLs, the Responsible Official or an official identified as a Contact on the AIR TCC Application must send an email to the AIR Mailbox with "Tax Year 2014 WSDLs" in the subject line.  The email request must include your company name and AIR TCC. The WSDLs will be forwarded upon confirmation of the TCC Application and contact information.

The WSDLs are used only for the ISS-A2A channel, and not for transmitters using the ISS-UI channel.

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**QuickAlerts – October 7, 2015**
**Subject:** Tax Year 2015 AIR WSDLs for ISS-A2A channel are available

If you would like to request the Tax Year 2015 WSDLs, the Responsible Official or an official identified as a Contact on the AIR TCC Application must send an email to the AIR Mailbox with "Tax Year 2015 WSDLs" in the subject line.  The email request must include your company name and AIR TCC. The WSDLs will be forwarded upon confirmation of the TCC Application and contact information.

The WSDLs are used only for the ISS-A2A communication channel, and not for transmitters using the ISS-UI channel.

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**QuickAlerts – October 8, 2015**
**Subject:** The AIR Transmission Checklist is available.

The AIR Transmission Checklist can be found on the AIR Program Overview page.
A checklist for Software Developers, Transmitters, and Issuers has been developed to assist with submitting AIR transmissions to the IRS. The checklist covers both UI and A2A channels and can be used for both AATS and Production.

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**QuickAlerts – October 8, 2015**
**Subject:** Modernized e-File (MeF) Assurance Testing System (ATS) Cutover

*All times shown in this communication are in Eastern Time Zone.*

**ATS Cutover October 17, 2015 – November 2, 2015**
MeF ATS will be taken off-line from 11:59 p.m., Saturday, October 17, 2015, until 9:00 a.m., Monday, November 2, 2015. The scheduled cutover includes system enhancements, loading the TY2015/PY2016 WSDLs, schemas, and business rules into ATS.

**Please note**: All existing test submissions for TY2014, TY2013 and TY2012, will be deleted except for tests sent in during the thirty days prior to cutover.

A QuickAlerts will be issued announcing IMF/BMF shutdown and start up dates when they become available.

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**QuickAlerts – October 8, 2015**
**Subject:** ACA Information Returns (AIR) Tax Year 2014 Schemas

The Tax Year 2014 Schema 2014v3.0 was updated with Schema 2014v3.1. The new package is the same with the addition of the IRS-ACAUserInterfaceHeaderMessage.xsd file. Either schema version may be used for transmitting for Tax Year 2014.

If you have any additional questions, please send them to the airmailbox@irs.gov.

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**QuickAlerts – October 8, 2015**
**Subject:** ACA Information Returns (AIR) Schema to Form Crosswalks for Tax Year 2015

Schema to Form Crosswalks for Tax Year 2015 are posted to IRS.gov for the following forms: 1094-B, 1095-B, 1094-C, and 1095-C.

Tax Year 2015 Schemas and Business Rules for Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR)

If you have any questions, please send them to the AIR Mailbox.

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**QuickAlerts – October 8, 2015**
**Subject:** Revision of Publication 4557

Publication 4557 "Safeguarding Taxpayer Data - A Guide for Your Business" has been revised and the updated version is now available in Web content on the e-file for Tax Professional page. The targeted audience for this publication is non-government businesses involved in the preparation and filing of income tax returns. The purpose of this publication is to provide information on legal requirements to safeguard taxpayer data.

Why a New Publication 4557? This revised Publication 4557, replaces the October 2008 edition. Safeguarding taxpayer data is a top priority for the IRS. It is the legal responsibility of government, businesses, organizations and individuals that receive, maintain, share, transmit or store taxpayers' personal information. This publication has been updated to include information on identity theft, references and important links.

We will notify you when the downloadable pdf version of this publication is available.

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**QuickAlerts – October 9, 2015**
**Subject:** An early look of Publication 5165 for Tax Year 2015 (Processing Year 2016) is available.

An early look of the Tax Year 2015 (Processing Year 2016) Publication 5165, *Guide for Filing Affordable Care Act (ACA) Information Returns for Software Developers and Transmitters,* for Tax Year 2015 (Processing Year 2016) has posted to the AIR Program page.

This publication outlines the communication procedures, transmission formats, business rules and validation procedures for returns transmitted electronically through the AIR System. To develop software for use with the AIR System, Software Developers and Transmitters should use the guidelines provided in this publication along with the Extensible Markup Language (XML) Schemas published on IRS.gov.

A new QuickAlerts message will be issued when the Final Publication 5165 is available.

Send questions related to Publication 5165 to the AIR Mailbox.

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**QuickAlerts – October 14, 2015**
**Subject:** Electronic Management System (EMS) Unavailable

The Electronic Management System (EMS) is currently unavailable. Please refrain from accessing the Electronic Management System until future notice.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you

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**QuickAlerts – October 14, 2015**
**Subject:** Electronic Management System (EMS) Available

The Electronic Management System is now available.

We apologize for any inconvenience this outage may have caused you.

**Subject:** An early look of Publication 5164 for Tax Year 2015 (Processing Year 2016) is available.

An early look of the Tax Year 2015 (Processing Year 2016) Publication 5164, *Test Package for Electronic Filers of Affordable Care Act (ACA) Information Returns (AIR)*, has posted to the AIR Program page.

This publication contains general and program specific testing information for use with the ACA Assurance Testing System (AATS).

Send questions related to Publication 5164 to the AIR Mailbox.

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**Subject:** Modernized e-File (MeF) Production Shutdown/Cutover Schedule

*All times shown in this communication are Eastern Time Zone.*

To ensure that all tax returns e-filed through the Modernized e-File (MeF) system are processed timely, the following MeF Production shutdown/cutover and acknowledgment retrieval schedule has been established. It is imperative that everyone adhere to the schedule shown below.

**1040 MeF Production Shutdown/Cutover Schedule**
Shutdown begins on Saturday, November 21, 2015 at 11:59 a.m. in order to prepare the system for the upcoming 2016 Filing Season.

*BMF returns are not affected by this IMF Production Shutdown/Cutover schedule.*
Shutdown Deadlines on Saturday, November 21, 2015

Transmitters:
    Transmitting Submissions (State and Federal)      10:00 a.m.
    Retrieving Acknowledgements      11:59 a.m.
States:
    Transmitting Acknowledgements      11:30 a.m.

**Important Note**: Anything not retrieved in MeF by 11:59 a.m., November 21st, cannot be accessed again until MeF reopens for 1040 MeF Production for Filing Season 2016.

**MeF Assurance Testing System (ATS) Schedule**
ATS will remain open throughout this production shutdown/cutover period.

**Business MeF Production Shutdown/Cutover Schedule**
Shutdown is scheduled to begin on Saturday, December 26, 2015 at 11:59 a.m.
A QuickAlert message outlining the exact timeframes for Send Submissions or retrieve federal/state Acknowledgements will be issued in early December and the times will be posted on the MeF Status Page.

Please monitor the MeF Status Page for any updates.

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**QuickAlerts – October 19, 2015**
**Subject:** Affordable Care Act Assurance Testing System (AATS) Information Returns Tax Year 2015/Processing Year 2016

Tax Year 2015 ACA AATS will open for testing on November 2, 2015 for Information Returns that will be processed in 2016. Special instructions providing explanations of the functionality for both the November and January AATS iterations will be included on the [AIR Program page](#).

**A2A Channel users**: As a reminder, you will need new WSDLs for Tax Year 2015. If you have not received the WSDLs for Tax Year 2015, the Responsible Official, or an official identified as a Contact on the AIR TCC Application, must send an email to [airmailbox@irs.gov](mailto:airmailbox@irs.gov) with "WSDLs for Tax Year 2015" in the subject line. The email request must include your company name and AIR TCC. The WSDLs will be forwarded upon confirmation of the TCC application and contact information. You will also need new WSDLs for AIR production when it reopens for Processing Year 2016

**UI Channel users**: UI Channel users are required to log in to the IRS Registered User Portal (RUP) and invoke the appropriate link for AIR. WSDLs are not required for UI Channel users.

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**QuickAlerts – October 20, 2015**
**Subject:** An early look of the AIR Submission Composition and Reference Guide for Tax Year 2015 (Processing Year 2016) is available

An early look of the AIR Submission Composition and Reference Guide for Tax Year 2015 (Processing Year 2016) is available on IRS.gov on the [AIR Program](#) page.  This guide includes information on the:
- electronic composition of Forms 1094B/C and 1095B/C
- transmission of forms through the ACA Information Returns (AIR) platform
- XML format, including samples

Send questions related to the AIR Submission Composition and Reference Guide to the [AIR Mailbox](#).

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**QuickAlerts – October 22, 2015**
**Subject:** ACA Information Returns (AIR) Working Group Meeting on October 27, 2015

The next ACA Information Returns (AIR) Working Group Meeting (webinar) will be held:

Tuesday, October 27, 2015
2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Dial-in: 1-888-621-9649
Event ID: 421758

You may join the teleconference 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start. You must register to attend the webinar. Participants should register for the webinar no later than 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time on the day of the event.
To register for this event, use the following link:

[Registration](#)
If clicking the above link does not work, please copy the entire link and paste it into your web browser. A confirmation email will be sent within 24 hours of registration.

This virtual session will focus on General Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Program topics. At the conclusion of the presentation, there will be a live question and answer period with IRS

presenters.

You may use your computer speakers to listen to the webinar or use the teleconference number provided above. To avoid background noise, please do not use both the computer speakers and the teleconference number.

The presentation materials for this meeting will be posted to the AIR Program Overview page prior to the meeting. An additional QuickAlerts message will be issued when the presentation is posted.

NOTE: The intended audiences of these meetings are Transmitters, Software Developers, and Issuers/Payers.

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## QuickAlerts – October 23, 2015
**Subject:** Modernized e-File Production Acknowledgement Delays

IRS will be conducting system maintenance on the MeF platform that will begin at 12:00 a.m. Eastern on Saturday, October 24, 2015, and end at 07:00 a.m. Eastern on Saturday, October 24, 2015. MeF will be accepting submissions during this time; however acknowledgements for Individual Tax Returns (IMF) will be delayed until the end of the maintenance.

Our regular Sunday build window will take place as scheduled.

We thank you for your patience and we apologize for any inconvenience.

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## QuickAlerts – October 27, 2015
**Subject:** Update to the ACA Information Returns (AIR) Working Group Meeting:  October 27, 2015

The October 27, 2015 Working Group Meeting (webinar) Presentation Materials have been posted to the AIR Program Overview page.
Tuesday, October 27, 2015
2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Dial-in: 1-888-621-9649
Event ID: 421758

You may join the teleconference 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start. You must register to attend the webinar. Participants should register for the webinar no later than 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time on the day of the event.
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Registration
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The presentation materials for this meeting will be posted to the AIR Program Overview page prior to the meeting. An additional QuickAlerts message will be issued when the presentation is posted.

NOTE: The intended audiences of these meetings are Transmitters, Software Developers, and Issuers/Payers.

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**QuickAlerts – October 27, 2015**
**Subject:** AIR System Maintenance and UI Header Schema Change for TY2014

AIR will be performing maintenance between 6:00 AM until 8:00 AM ET on October 29, 2015. During this time period, the AATS and Production environments will be unavailable. Please refrain from accessing the system during this time.

There will be a change to the ACAUserInterfaceHeaderMessage.xsd schema during this maintenance.  It will change some of the elements used in the UI channel to be consistent with the ones used in the A2A channel. An updated schema package has been posted. If transmitters continue to use the current schema after the change is implemented at 8:00 AM, they will receive an error from the AIR system.

Note: This change affects transmitters using the UI channel only.

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**QuickAlerts – October 28, 2015**
**Subject:** Revised Publication 4557 (pdf) now available

Publication 4557, *Safeguarding Taxpayer Data, A Guide for Your Business*, has been revised and replaces the previous edition dated October 2008. This PDF version is now available for download on IRS.gov, keywords: Publication 4557.

This publication continues to provide information on federal and state information security laws and regulations, as well as industry standards and best practices. It describes the various security provisions and rules that impact tax professionals. The document assists tax professionals in understanding their requirement to protect the privacy and confidentiality of taxpayer data and provides guidance to implement the necessary security controls within their business to satisfy these requirements. The Web version of Publication 4557 is also available on IRS.gov. This version allows us to make updates as they occur.

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**QuickAlerts – October 29, 2015**
**Subject:** ACA Information Returns (AIR) Tax Year 2015 Schemas

Schema version 2015v2.0 for Tax Year 2015 has been posted to the Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Schemas page.

If you have any additional questions, please send them to the AIR Mailbox.

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## QuickAlerts – October 30, 2015
**Subject:** For Software Developers **-** Accessing the Modernized e-File (MeF) Portal for Processing Year 2016 (Tax Year 2015)

This message only applies to Software Developers.

The IRS is deploying additional measures that Software Developers **must** implement to access the portal for Processing Year 2016 (Tax Year 2015).

Specific technical information will be emailed to Registered Software Providers over the next week.

No action is required for other Tax Professionals.

If, after you receive this information, you have questions, please contact the MeF Mailbox.

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## QuickAlerts – October 30, 2015
**Subject:** EITC Educational Compliance Letters

The IRS recently sent Earned Income Tax Credit Due Diligence letters to tax preparers who submitted incorrect or highly questionable EITC tax returns this past year.

The letters are for information purposes only. However, IRS will continue to monitor the EITC returns prepared in the upcoming filing season to see if the quality of the preparers' returns improves. Return Preparers who completed highly questionable EITC claims may receive one or more of the following letters:
- Letter 5025, You May Have Prepared Inaccurate EITC Returns with Questionable Qualifying Children and Self-Employment Income
- Letter 5025C, You May Have Prepared Inaccurate EITC Returns with Self-Employment Income
- Letter 5025Q, You May Have Prepared Inaccurate EITC Returns Based on Questionable Qualifying Children
- Letter 5138, Return Preparer EITC Client Audit Notification

For more information on the due diligence requirements, go to our Tax Preparer Toolkit on EITC Central.

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