



TAXATION

Management of financial abuse within the tax system: IGTO review

An IGTO report on the identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system has been released, making a number of recommendations to the ATO.

Government proposal to extend \$20,000 instant asset write-off threshold for another year

The Government has pledged to extend the \$20,000 instant asset write-off threshold for 2025-26.

Changes for Top 500 private groups program

The ATO will make some changes to its Top 500 tax performance program.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

ASIC issues sustainability reporting regulatory guide

ASIC has published RG 280 which provides guidance for entities required to prepare a sustainability report containing climate-related financial information.

Sustainability reporting for stapled entities

ASIC has registered a new amending instrument to extend relief in response to the introduction of new sustainability reporting requirements.

Anti-Money Laundering obligations are coming

From 1 July 2026, accountants will be required to join the fight when the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing (AML-CTF) regime is extended to professional, such as accountants, lawyers and real estate agents.

SUPERANNUATION

ASIC releases landmark super death benefit claims handling report

ASIC has handed down its landmark super death benefit claims handling report, identifying numerous issues including excessive delays and poor customer service.

Social security treatment of commutation of legacy income streams

The new Specification specifies 2 classes of social security debts that may be waived following



the easing of commutation restrictions for legacy income streams.

Key super rates and thresholds updated for 2025-26

Key super rates and thresholds have been updated for 2025-26, including the maximum contribution base, general transfer balance cap and non-concessional contributions cap.

Cyber-attack on large superannuation funds

Media has reported that several large Australian superannuation funds were subject to a cyber-attack.

SUSTAINABILITY

Building Trust in Sustainability Assurance: Statement from the European and Global Accountancy Profession

As the European Union (EU) moves to simplify its sustainability legislation, global sustainability reporting and assurance practices are evolving to meet growing demands for transparency, credibility, and impact

REGULATOR NEWS

ASIC News

Updates from ASIC in the past week including media releases, news, articles and speeches.

APRA news

Updates from APRA in the past week including media releases, news, articles and speeches.

TAXATION

Management of financial abuse within the tax system: IGTO review

The Inspector-General of Taxation and the Taxation Ombudsman (IGTO), Ruth Owen, has [released](#) a report on its review entitled *Identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system*. The purpose of the review was to understand how the tax system is being weaponised for financial abuse and what action is required from the ATO to address it, including appropriate support and remediation for those affected.

The IGTO review considers how the ATO addresses situations where a victim-survivor has a tax debt as a result of financial abuse and is seeking the ATO's assistance with respect to that liability. The key focus of the review is on the ATO's frontline services as they are often the first

point of contact.

The report recommends that the ATO:

- increase its training for all frontline officers and provide dedicated and specialist resources with the appropriate skills and training in financial abuse and trauma-informed practices to better support victim-survivors;
- better prevent and detect abuse when it comes to light, including using evidence from trusted partner organisations (meaning victim-survivors are not required to repeat their history for each agency);
- explore available opportunities to remove the debt from the victim-survivor; and
- clarify how and when it can report potential financial abuse to law enforcement authorities.

In a separate [media release](#), the ATO has welcomed the release of the IGTO report and agrees with all the recommendations provided.

Government proposal to extend \$20,000 instant asset write-off threshold for another year

On 4 April 2025, the Government announced that, if re-elected, it will legislate to extend the \$20,000 threshold for the instant asset write-off for one more year until 30 June 2026. Currently the threshold is legislated to revert to \$1,000 on 1 July 2025.

Changes for Top 500 private groups program

The Top 500 program has recently been reviewed. As a result, from April 2025, there may be changes to how the ATO engages with these taxpayers. 'The aim of the changes is to ensure the focus of the program is on the wealthiest groups.'

FINANCIAL SERVICES

ASIC issues sustainability reporting regulatory guide

ASIC has published [Regulatory Guide 280 Sustainability reporting \(RG 280\)](#) which provides guidance for entities that are required to prepare a sustainability report containing climate-related financial information under Chapter 2M of the Corporations Act 2001. This may include registrable superannuation entities, companies, registered schemes and retail corporate collective investment vehicles.

RG 280 includes guidance on determining who must prepare a sustainability report under the Corporations Act, the content required in the sustainability report, disclosing sustainability-related financial information outside the sustainability report (such as in disclosure documents and product disclosure statements), and ASIC's administration of the sustainability reporting requirements.

The sustainability reporting requirements are being phased in over 3 years across 3 groups of reporting entities, with the first reporting cohort required to prepare sustainability reports for financial years commencing on or after 1 January 2025.



ASIC has also provided:

- relief to allow stapled entities to prepare a consolidated sustainability report for the stapled group;
- additional [information for entities within the value chain of reporting entities](#), including small businesses and farmers, about sustainability reporting and what it means to them; and
- the [sustainability reporting page](#) on the ASIC website for more information.

Sustainability reporting for stapled entities

The [ASIC Corporations \(Amendment\) Instrument 2025/164](#) (the “Amendment Instrument”) amends:

- ASIC Corporations (Financial Reporting by Stapled Entities) Instrument 2023/673 (ASIC Instrument 2023/673) to enable stapled entities relying on the relief in that instrument to prepare a sustainability report on behalf of the stapled group; and
- ASIC Corporations (Electronic Lodgment of Financial Reports) Instrument 2016/181 (ASIC Instrument 2016/181) to ensure the title of that instrument also refers to sustainability reports.

A stapled security is one issued by an entity whose securities are required to be traded together with the securities of another entity. Stapled entities can present combined financial statements covering all of the entities whose securities are stapled.

The Amendment Instrument commence 1 April 2025 and will cease to have effect on expiry of the principal instruments. ASIC Instrument 2023/673 and ASIC Instrument 2016/181 both are due to sunset on 1 April 2035.

Anti-Money Laundering obligations are coming

Financial crime costs the Australian community an estimated \$60 billion annually. From 1 July 2026, accountants will be required to join the fight when the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing (AML-CTF) regime is extended to professional, such as accountants, lawyers and real estate agents. Many professionals will be required to conduct a risk assessment of their services and clients, mitigate identified risks and report suspicious activities to the regulator, AUSTRAC.

Much of the detail requirements and guidance are still be developed by AUSTRAC. To answer any questions, you may have no the IPA has partnered with Holley Nethercote to provide a complimentary introductory workbook and webinars for members. To access the workbook and webinars follow the links below.

- [‘Getting Ready’ workbook](#)
- [AML/CTF Reforms – don't get caught out](#) webinar on 22nd April 2025
- [Your questions answered \(Q&A session\)](#) webinar on 29th April 2025

SUPERANNUATION

ASIC releases landmark super death benefit claims handling report

ASIC has handed down 34 recommendations to superannuation trustees in its [Report 806 Taking ownership of death benefits: How trustees can deliver outcomes Australians deserve](#).

The report presents detailed observations from ASIC's review of death benefit claims handling practices of 10 trustees over a 2-year period ending 31 March 2024. ASIC has urged superannuation trustees to immediately review and rectify death benefit claims handling deficiencies by implementing the recommendations outlined in the report.

ASIC identified numerous concerning issues in death benefit claim handling, including excessive delays, poor customer service, and ineffective procedures. Notably, none of the reviewed trustees monitored or reported on their end-to-end claims handling times or performance. These systemic failures by trustees subjected grieving Australians to added and unnecessary distress after the death of a loved one.

The regulator will review the progress of all trustees on improving their death benefit claims handling processes to ensure that they are appropriately prioritising the needs of members and their beneficiaries.

Social security treatment of commutation of legacy income streams

The [Social Security \(Waiver of Debts - Legacy Product Conversions\) Specification 2025](#) (the Specification) was registered on 28 March 2025. This is the missing legislation required to allow individuals who are or were social security clients to successfully exit legacy income stream products. [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Legacy Retirement Product Commutations and Reserves\) Regulations 2024](#) (Treasury Amendment Regulations) eased commutation restrictions for legacy income streams from 7 December 2024, but did not address the social security consequences for social security clients. Legacy income stream products include lifetime income streams, life expectancy income streams and market-linked income streams (term allocated pensions) that commenced before 20 September 2007 (or conversions of such products).

Two classes of debt that may be waived under the Specification

The Specification identifies 2 classes of social security debt that may be waived by the Secretary.

- *Debts arising under section 1223A* when recipients commute asset-test exempt income streams that were previously compliant with sections 9A, 9B or 9BA of the Social Security Act 1991 (the Act). These commutations are now permitted by the Treasury Amendment Regulations.
- *Debts arising under section 1223* when recipients' non-commuted legacy products ceased to satisfy statutory requirements for asset-test exemption due to changes in contract or governing rules made to comply with the Treasury Amendment Regulations.

Conditions for debt waiver eligibility

First class (commuted products)

The following conditions must be met for a debt to be waived when a previously asset-test exempt income stream is commuted:

- the debt must arise under s 1223A;

- the debt did not arise due to the person knowingly making a false or misleading statement; and
- the debt arose due to the full commutation of the income stream under reg 1.08AA of the Retirement Savings Accounts Regulations 1997; or SIS reg 1.05AA; or SIS reg 1.06C.

Second class (non-commuted products)

The following conditions must be met for a debt to be waived for non-commuted products impacted by the Treasury Amendment Regulations:

- the debt must arise under s 1223;
- the debt did not arise due to the person knowingly making a false or misleading statement;
- the debt must arise because paragraph 9A(1)(c), 9B(1A)(c) or subparagraph 9BA(1)(a)(v) is no longer satisfied; and
- the sole reason for non-compliance is SIS reg 1.05AA or 1.06C or reg 1.08AA of the RSA Regs.

Commencement

The Specification commences the day after the end of the relevant disallowance period (15 sitting days from being laid before each House). If disallowed, the provisions will not commence.

The commencement date cannot currently be determined as we do not know the sitting calendar of the new parliament. However, once commenced, the Secretary can consider waiving debts in these specified classes, including those arising before or after the Specification commences.

Key super rates and thresholds updated for 2025-26

The ATO has updated [key super rates and thresholds for 2025-26](#) on the ATO website.

Superannuation Rates and Thresholds

	2024-25	2025-26
Basic concessional contributions cap	\$30,000	\$30,000
CGT cap amount	\$1.780m	\$1.865m
Downsizer contributions (not indexed)	\$300,000	\$300,000
Div 293 tax threshold (not indexed)	\$250,000	\$250,000
Government co-contributions		



	2024-25	2025-26
Lower income threshold	\$45,400	\$47,488
Higher income threshold	\$60,400	\$62,488
Superannuation guarantee		
Minimum % of OTE base per quarter (legislated increase)	11.5%	12.0%
Maximum contribution base per quarter (see comment below)	\$65,070	\$62,500
Maximum contribution base annual equivalent	\$260,280	\$250,000
SG payable on maximum contribution base (over 4 quarters)	\$29,932.20 (at 11.5%)	\$30,000 (at 12%)
Income streams		
General transfer balance cap	\$1.9m	\$2.0m
Untaxed plan cap	\$1.780m	\$1.865m
Defined benefit income cap	\$118,750	\$125,000
Genuine redundancy and early retirement payments		
ETP cap	\$245,000	\$260,000
Base tax-free amount	\$12,524	\$13,100
Tax-free amount for each complete year of service	\$6,264	\$6,552

Maximum contribution base

From 2017-18, s 15(5) of the Superannuation Guarantee Administration Act 1992 limits the maximum contribution base to:

$1/4 \times \text{basic concessional contributions cap} \times 100 / \text{charge percentage}$ (rounded down to nearest \$10)

This ensures that compulsory SG contributions from a single employer do not exceed the basic concessional contributions cap.

The indexed amount this year would have been \$68,060 for 2025-26. This is the first year that the indexed amount has exceeded the formula above, so \$62,500 is the maximum contribution base for 2025-26.

General transfer balance cap

The general transfer balance cap, which is indexed to CPI (rather than AWOTE), is set to increase from \$1.9m to \$2.0m on 1 July 2025.

Non-concessional contributions cap

The "total superannuation balance" threshold for making non-concessional contributions (which is tied to the general transfer balance cap) will also increase to \$2.0m for 2025-26.

The thresholds for the bring-forward rule are a combination of the general transfer balance cap and non-concessional contributions caps. These thresholds will increase in 2025-26 as shown below.

Total superannuation balance thresholds when bring-forward rule triggered in 2024-25

Total superannuation balance at 30 June 2024	Standard non-concessional contributions cap for 2024-25	Non-concessional contributions cap for bring-forward period (if eligible) 2024-25
Less than \$1.66m	\$120,000	\$360,000 (over 3 years)
\$1.66m to less than \$1.78m	\$120,000	\$240,000 (over 2 years)
\$1.78m to less than \$1.9m	\$120,000	\$120,000 (no bring-forward)
\$1.9m or more	Nil	Nil

Total superannuation balance thresholds when bring-forward rule triggered in 2025-26

Total superannuation balance at 30 June 2025	Standard non-concessional contributions cap for 2025-26	Non-concessional contributions cap for bring-forward period (if eligible) 2025-26
Less than \$1.76m	\$120,000	\$360,000 (over 3 years)
\$1.76m to less than \$1.88m	\$120,000	\$240,000 (over 2 years)



Total superannuation balance at 30 June 2025	Standard non-concessional contributions cap for 2025-26	Non-concessional contributions cap for bring-forward period (if eligible) 2025-26
\$1.88m to less than \$2m	\$120,000	\$120,000 (no bring-forward)
\$2m or more	Nil	Nil

Cyber-attack on large superannuation funds

On 4 April 2025, media reported that several large Australian superannuation funds were subject to a cyber-attack in the early hours of the morning.

While direct information from funds was not publicly available, the Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia (ASFA) released a [media statement](#) saying it “is aware that last weekend hackers attempted to get through the cyber-defences of a number of superannuation funds”: “While the majority of the attempts were repelled, unfortunately a number of members were affected. Funds are contacting all affected members to let them know and are helping any whose data has been compromised.”

Lieutenant General Michelle McGuinness, the Federal government’s cybersecurity co-ordinator, was also quoted in the media: “I’m aware cyber criminals are targeting individual account holders of a number of superannuation funds ... I am co-ordinating engagement across the Australian government, including with the financial system regulators and with industry stakeholders to provide cybersecurity advice.”

Superannuation funds were contacting affected members directly. General security advice was to:

- Log in and check super accounts.
- Change existing passwords to more complex passwords.
- Enable Multi Factor Authentication (MFA).
- Contact their super fund immediately if they considered something suspicious or if they were unable to access their account.

Even if a fund member’s fund was not named/impacted by the cyber-attack, it could be a good time to follow the above steps and secure their super account.

SUSTAINABILITY

Building Trust in Sustainability Assurance: Statement from the European and Global Accountancy Profession

As the European Union (EU) moves to simplify its sustainability legislation, global sustainability reporting and assurance practices are evolving to meet growing demands for transparency, credibility, and impact.

Accountancy Europe and the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), as representatives of the European and global accountancy profession, reaffirm their commitment to high-quality and consistent sustainability assurance. Achieving this requires a collective effort by all stakeholders, robust professional standards, and regulatory consistency.

Global baseline for consistent assurance

Independent external assurance enhances information's credibility and supports investors and other users in making informed decisions. To fully deliver on this potential, a global baseline for assurance and ethical standards are vital to meet users' needs and ensure quality, consistency and efficiency of assurance engagements. High-quality sustainability assurance, based on globally accepted standards, is critical to reinforcing trust and ensuring comparability and usefulness of disclosures across markets.

As a stand-alone, profession-agnostic and principles-based standard, the IAASB's International Standard on Sustainability Assurance (ISSA 5000) could fulfil this role.

IOSCO recognises the potential of the ISSA 5000 and IESBA's International Ethics Standard for Sustainability Assurance to enhance consistency, comparability and reliability of sustainability information provided to the market. The ISSA 5000 could provide a strong basis for adoption of a future sustainability assurance standard in the EU and beyond.

Level playing field

It is vital that all providers, regardless of their background, operate under an equivalent framework, ensuring a level playing field on professional assurance standards, qualification, ethical requirements including independence, quality framework and public oversight.

"It is absolutely critical for investor and consumer protection that practitioners outside of the audit profession are held by jurisdictional regulators to the same regulatory oversight, disciplinary responsibility and requirements that apply to professional accountants", said Lee White, CEO of IFAC.

Connectivity for better decision-making

Connectivity between financial and sustainability reporting helps to provide a full picture of the company's viability and performance. Integrated information allows investors, regulators, and other stakeholders to understand how sustainability risks and opportunities translate into financial outcomes.

The accountancy profession has provided assurance on sustainability information for over two decades, building expertise through professional standards and extensive experience in evaluating systems, processes and controls throughout companies. This is crucial for improving the connectivity between financial and sustainability information. Engaging a single assurance provider for both financial and sustainability reporting enhances consistency, efficiency, and the integration of financial results with ESG performance while reducing administrative complexity.

"When sustainability and financial data align, companies present a clearer, more consistent narrative to the market, enabling stakeholders to make effective and sustainable decisions. Statutory auditors are also well placed to provide assurance on sustainability reporting to support information's connectivity", said Eelco van der Enden, CEO of Accountancy Europe.



Notes to Editors

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REGULATOR NEWS

ASIC News

ASIC has released the following updates in its Newsroom section:

- [4 April 2025 – SPEECH – Leveraging data for consumer protection and to support Australian businesses](#) – ASIC Commissioner Kate O’Rourke presented to the Annual Australian Government Data Governance Summit in Canberra and emphasised ASIC’s role as the custodian of publicly available databases. The data sets, including registers of businesses, plus banned and disqualified individuals, enable economic activity, and promote transparency and corporate accountability. The databases are used by other government agencies, companies and businesses, the community and journalists. ASIC is developing new data sets for internal dispute resolution, and continues to enhance existing databases.
- [4 April 2025 – NEWS ITEM – ASIC releases March 2025 financial adviser exam results](#) – ASIC has released the results of the 28th Financial Advisers Exam cycle from March 2025. Of the 241 people that sat the exam, 73% passed. Since its inception, almost 22,000 people have passed the exam to demonstrate their skills and knowledge to gain entry to the profession. The next exam will be held on 5 June 2025.
- [3 April 2025 – NEWS ITEM – Scam alert: Scammers are impersonating ASIC in text messages](#) – ASIC has reiterated its recent warnings to consumers to be wary of text messages from scammers purporting to be from ASIC. The messages have included “alpha tags” which identify the sender rather than a phone number. The messages may ask for personal information, to renew a business name, confirm receipt of misconduct reports, offer to assist in recovering lost investments or demand fees. Recipients of such messages should delete them immediately and avoid clicking on links.
- [31 March 2025 – MEDIA RELEASES – ASIC issues sustainability reporting regulatory guide](#) – ASIC has issued Regulatory Guide 280 *Sustainability reporting* to assist entities prepare a sustainability report containing climate-related financial information under Ch 2M of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth). This may include companies, registered schemes or superannuation entities, and retail corporate collective investment vehicles. ASIC consulted with stakeholders and added information to the draft version of the Guide circulated in November 2024. The first entities required to comply must prepare reports for financial years starting on or after 1 January 2025. ASIC has granted relief for stapled entities to prepare a consolidated report for the stapled group and will consider other applications for relief.

- [31 March 2025 – NEWS ITEM – What small businesses need to know about sustainability reporting requirements](#) – Mandatory sustainability reporting requirements apply to large businesses and financial institutions on 1 January 2025. The rules do not apply directly to small businesses until 2028, but their suppliers and clients may request information to help them comply with their own reporting requirements. ASIC suggests that small businesses clarify with suppliers the type of documents or records they need, or ask whether estimates will suffice.
- [31 March 2025 – MEDIA RELEASE – RBA and ASIC act on deep concerns with ASX](#) – ASIC and the Reserve Bank of Australia have expressed their concerns to ASX about its risk management systems as a result of the CHES batch settlement failure on 20 December 2024. CHES is in the process of being replaced but the potential for more crashes in the interim remains. The RBA has downgraded its assessment the compliance with the “Operational Risk” standard by ASX Clear Pty Ltd and ASX Settlement Pty Ltd. ASIC has directed that ASX conduct a technical review of CHES under s 823BB of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).
- [31 March 2025 – MEDIA RELEASE – Super industry hit with long list of actions in landmark death benefit claims handling report](#) – ASIC has released Report 806 *Taking ownership of death benefits: How trustees can deliver outcomes Australians deserve*, making 34 recommendations to improve the treatment of death benefit claims by superannuation trustees. The review of 10 trustees’ claims handling documented excessive delays and poor service, gaps in data and reporting, unclear and inconsistent processes, ineffective and insensitive communication and engagement, and inadequate support for First Nations claimants.
- [28 March 2025 – MEDIA RELEASE – ASIC bans Queensland adviser from being involved in financial services for five years](#) – ASIC has banned Grant Richard Thomson from participating in financial services, with limited permissions. He had been an authorised representative of Australian Mortgage And Financial Advisers Pty Ltd, and provided clients with advice that was not in their best interests or appropriate for them. He also recommended insurance including levels of cover including mortgages which clients had not yet obtained and arranged for clients to sign forms including authority to proceed before receiving statements of advice.

APRA news

APRA has released the following updates in its News and publications section:

- [3 April 2025 – MEDIA RELEASES – APRA accepts Court Enforceable Undertaking from ANZ and increases capital add-on to \\$1 billion](#) – APRA has accepted an undertaking from the Australia and New Zealand Banking Group to address its risk management shortcomings, appoint an independent reviewer and report to APRA on the achievement of the remediation plan. APRA has long-standing concerns about ANZ’s risk management practice and culture and the undertaking accompanies the imposition of a further capital add-on for ANZ to bring the total to \$1 billion.
- [2 April 2025 – MEDIA RELEASES – APRA and the RBA release joint statement on the use of the RBA’s overnight standing facility](#) – The Reserve Bank of Australia recently updated its approach to implementing monetary policy including the role of the overnight standing facility. Both APRA and the RBA consider banks’ use of it to be consistent with routine liquidity management and are comfortable with them using it as needed. APRA and the RBA will liaise with banks about its use.
- [31 March 2025 – MEDIA RELEASES – APRA releases private health insurance risk equalisation statistics for 2023/24](#)



- [31 March 2025 – MEDIA RELEASES – APRA releases intermediated general insurance statistics for December 2024](#) – APRA has issued biannual insurance statistics for the six months ending 31 December 2024. This publication summarises intermediated general insurance with APRA-authorized general insurers, Lloyd's underwriters and unauthorised foreign insurers.
- [31 March 2025 – MEDIA RELEASES – APRA releases Monthly Authorised Deposit-taking Institution Statistics for February 2025](#)