



HMRC Capital Gains Tax probes yield record extra £136m



HM Revenue & Customs investigations during the past year have yielded a record £136m in extra capital gains tax from individuals and small businesses according to information obtained by an accountancy firm.

Research by UHY Hacker Young found that capital gains tax by HMRC probes for 2013/14 was up 24% from £110m on the previous year.

The majority of the extra tax collected is thought to have come from property transactions. HMRC have increasingly been targeting buy-to-let investors, many of whom are unsure of how to apply capital gains tax properly UHY suggested.

The firm stated that HMRC have become "much more aggressive" in their pursuit of capital gains tax due to falling revenues in recent years. This is despite introducing a higher tax rate and enjoying a better climate with rising house prices and a recovering stock market.

The research has shown that this is the second consecutive year that HMRC has collected a record level of capital gains tax amassing £110m in 2012/13 up 32% from the £83m collected in 2011/12.

Head of the London private client team at UHY Mark Giddens said "The culture of HMRC is now much more stringent than in previous years. Investigations into SMES and individuals are now a focus of the organisation in a way that was not the case in previous incarnations.

"Additionally we are seeing a more hardnosed attitude in HMRC's approach to investigations.

"With this sharper focus at HMRC it is no surprise to see that enforcement cases are bringing in rising amounts of extra tax. The record results over the past two years point to an organisation with clearer priorities."

Young men most likely to miss tax return deadline

Young men working in the communication industry are most likely to miss the looming tax return deadline, according to figures released by HMRC.

Data from returns made last year have shown that men are most likely to file late with those living in London aged between 18 and 20 the worst offenders.

So far 6.45 million returns have been submitted ahead of

HMRC reveals top late filing excuses from 2013/14

1. My pet dog ate my tax return...and all the reminders.
2. I was up a mountain in Wales, and couldn't find a postbox or get an internet signal.
3. I fell in with the wrong crowd.
4. I've been travelling the world, trying to escape from a foreign intelligence agency.
5. Barack Obama is in charge of my finances.
6. I've been busy looking after a flock of escaped parrots and some fox cubs.
7. A work colleague borrowed my tax return, to photocopy it, and didn't give it back.
8. I live in a camper van in a supermarket car park.
9. My girlfriend's pregnant.
10. I was in Australia

the deadline on 31st January with a further 4.5 million outstanding.

Ruth Owen of HM Revenue and Customs said "Whatever your gender, age, occupation or location, if you haven't sent in your 2013-14 tax return, you need to take action now. Don't leave it until the last minute to contact us. Do it now, and avoid a last-minute rush to beat the deadline."

According to last year's figures the most punctual returns were submitted by the over 65's.

Interestingly lawyers and accountants were not the most punctual with 219 late filers for every 10,000 submitted.

Here are just a few reasons we should be your first choice for debt and cash flow problems

- Service – not only a great service, but an unrivalled one. Qualified and experienced staff with a 'can do' approach to getting the job done. A single point of contact for both introducer and client
- Cost Effective – higher targeted performance, free meetings and fewer costs
- Reciprocal Work – we believe in supporting those who support us and we do not compete
- Full range of financial, insolvency and restructuring solutions available
- Big enough to cope with the large jobs but small enough to care for everyone
- Experienced and qualified board of directors who care passionately about what we do and how we do it
- Focus Business Club – regular corporate events, newsletters, updates and blogs

December sales worst since financial crash



According to figures released by the British Retail Consortium, December 2014 saw the worst performing sales figures since the financial crash in 2008.

Like for like sales in December fell by 0.4% as sales activity dropped off after Black Friday leaving retailers in a lull compared with a 0.9% lift in November.

The retail sales monitor reported an overall 1% rise in total sales, also the weakest December on record since 2008 amid the collapse of the banking sector when sales fell 3.3%.

David McCorquodale, head of retail at KPMG, said the US-inspired Black Friday of flash sales was followed by a "challenging lull in spending" as consumers waited for future bargains.

"This difficult stop/start sales environment has been undoubtedly challenging, but most retailers have managed to achieve a flat, but respectable, sales performance this Christmas. Time will tell on margins," he said.

Food sales remained 'modest' with a 0.3% decrease in the three months to December, an improvement on the 1.7% low in September.

"The grocers had rather a commendable Christmas, given the persistent price deflation that has dogged the sector throughout the year," McCorquodale said.

He went on to say that the launch of the Boxing Day sales and new season full price stock helped to rescue the situation particularly for fashion retailers which enjoyed their best sales performance since August.

Contact Focus Insolvency Group

If any of your clients have been affected by the stories in our newsletter or need advice on any other matters, please feel free to contact us on 01257 257030 or email a.fisher@focusinsolvencygroup.co.uk

"We pride ourselves on being the experts of choice for anyone struggling in business or with debt."

Tel 01257 257030
Fax 01257 253145
Email a.fisher@focusinsolvencygroup.co.uk
Web www.focusinsolvencygroup.co.uk

Skull House Lane
Appley Bridge
Wigan
WN6 9EU

