



## Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration Office of Audit

### FINAL INTEGRATION TEST PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Issued on May 8, 2015

## Highlights

Highlights of Report Number: 2015-20-034 to the Internal Revenue Service Chief Technology Officer.

### IMPACT ON TAXPAYERS

The Final Integration Test (FIT) is a critical part of the IRS's preparation for each filing season. If tax processing systems are not properly integrated to deliver filing season functionality, taxpayers may be unable to timely file returns, receive refunds, or obtain timely, accurate customer service.

### WHY TIGTA DID THE AUDIT

The IRS is in the process of making significant changes to its tax processing system to implement legislative changes, including provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). These changes will result in increased workload and challenges for the FIT program. TIGTA conducted this audit to help ensure the effectiveness of the FIT program's Planning and Preparation process steps in testing the integration of an increasingly complex tax processing system.

### WHAT TIGTA FOUND

The FIT program team effectively planned and prepared for the Processing Year 2015 FIT. The team conducted and completed all required planning and preparation activities as well as took corrective actions on several of the previous TIGTA audit report recommendations.

However, key systems and programs were not sufficiently developed and tested before delivery to the FIT environment. For example, during the FIT Execution process step, problem tickets were recorded for issues that should have been identified and corrected during systems acceptability testing. A production-level build of the ACA applications was also not provided to the FIT program team at the start of FIT execution on November 3, 2014. As a result, the start of ACA test cases was delayed until a more advanced build of the ACA applications was delivered. The FIT program received eight builds of the ACA 5.0 systems between November 3, 2014, and January 15, 2015. The final build was received by the FIT program less than one week before the start of the 2015 Filing Season.

The Modernized e-File system was delivered to the FIT environment with programming errors. Some of these delivery events caused FIT program analysts to open several priority one helpdesk tickets. A priority one ticket is the most critical priority level helpdesk ticket. In addition, FIT program analysts opened 182 helpdesk tickets for the Modernized e-File system during the Processing Year 2015 FIT. Errors continued to be identified in the ACA and Modernized e-File application and system builds that caused delays to the FIT schedule. Not completing the planned FIT execution on schedule prior to the 2015 Filing Season increases the risk of filing season processing errors that would have been identified and corrected during the FIT.

### WHAT TIGTA RECOMMENDED

TIGTA recommended that the Chief Technology Officer ensure that: 1) production builds of systems are timely delivered to the FIT environment and 2) systems are sufficiently developed and tested prior to delivery to the FIT environment.

The IRS acknowledged the report recommendations, but asserts that adequate procedures are in place to plan and schedule the timely delivery of systems to all testing environments. The IRS response is not adequate to ensure timely delivery of quality programs to the FIT environment. For example, the current procedures resulted in the FIT program receiving eight builds of the ACA 5.0 systems with the final build received by the FIT program less than one week before the start of the 2015 Filing Season. Based on the late delivery of systems to the FIT environment and the number of errors identified during FIT testing, the IRS should increase efforts to timely deliver programs and reduce programming errors.

### READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full IRS response, goes to:

<http://www.treas.gov/tigta/auditreports/2015reports/201520034fr.pdf>.