

Legislative statement: Taxation (Annual Rates for 2023–24, Multinational Tax, and Remedial Matters) Bill

This legislative statement is presented to the House of Representatives in accordance with Standing Order 272.

Overview

This legislative statement supports the first reading of the Taxation (Annual Rates for 2023–24, Multinational Tax, and Remedial Matters) Bill.

The Bill introduces amendments to the following Acts:

- Income Tax Act 2007
- Tax Administration Act 1994
- Goods and Services Tax Act 1985
- KiwiSaver Act 2006
- Child Support Act 1991
- Taxation (Annual Rates for 2022–2023, Platform Economy, and Remedial Matters) Act 2023; and
- Taxation (Annual Rates for 2021–22, GST, and Remedial Matters) Act 2022.

Details of changes in the Bill

The Bill sets the annual rates of income tax for the 2023–24 tax year at the rates currently specified in schedule 1, part A of the Income Tax Act 2007.

The other main items in the Bill are set out below.

Increasing the trustee tax rate to 39%

The Bill proposes aligning the trustee tax rate with the 39% top personal tax rate from the 2024–25 income year (beginning on 1 April 2024 for most trusts).

Tax paid on trustee income is a final tax. This means that once tax has been paid at the trustee tax rate (which is currently 33%), no further tax is payable when tax-paid trustee income is later distributed to a beneficiary who is on the 39% top personal tax rate. Aligning the trustee and top personal tax rates would therefore help ensure that trusts cannot be used to shelter income from the top personal tax rate.

In addition to increasing the trustee tax rate, special rules are proposed to buttress the 39% rate and help mitigate over-taxation that could arise for certain types of trusts:

- Certain beneficiary income allocations to corporate beneficiaries would be taxed as trustee income to help ensure that trustees cannot circumvent a 39% trustee tax rate by sheltering income in a corporate beneficiary.
- Trustee income of trusts settled for the care of disabled people would be taxed at the personal tax rate of the disabled beneficiary rather than the trustee tax rate.
- Trustees of estates, which are taxed as trusts, would be able to tax income derived within 12 months of the deceased person's date of death at the deceased person's personal tax rates

Global Anti-Base Erosion rules for New Zealand

The Bill proposes to introduce the Global Anti-Base Erosion (GloBE) rules in New Zealand. The GloBE rules are a global minimum tax developed by the Inclusive Framework on BEPS (IF), made up of delegates from over 130 countries and led by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Under the rules, multinational enterprises (MNEs) with annual revenues above €750 million in two of the preceding four years are subject to tax of at least 15% on their mobile income in every country where that income is earned. The rules require implementation by a critical mass of countries to be effective.

The GloBE rules included in this Bill would introduce a multinational top-up tax that consists of an income inclusion rule (IIR) and an undertaxed profits rule (UTPR). The rules would apply to in-scope MNEs headquartered in New Zealand as well as MNEs headquartered outside of New Zealand if they have an intermediate parent located in New Zealand or a liability under the UTPR.

Whether an in-scope MNE has a multinational top-up tax filing and (potentially) payment obligation would be determined by applying the OECD-published Model Rules, Commentary and Agreed Administrative Guidance. The Bill proposes that, instead of repeating or translating these texts into New Zealand tax law, they would be incorporated by reference.

Proposed amendments also address the interaction of New Zealand tax law with the GloBE rules. These include the treatment of top-up tax paid for imputation and foreign tax credit purposes, the introduction of a domestic income inclusion rule in New Zealand and a provision to deal with the interaction between the GloBE rules and double tax agreements. Modifications to the Model Rules to ensure that they work as intended in New Zealand would be contained in a Schedule.

The effective date of the GloBE rules in New Zealand would be set by Order in Council once the Government determines that a critical mass of countries has adopted the GloBE rules. This would not be earlier than 1 January 2024 for the IIR and 1 January 2025 for the UTPR. The first compliance obligation will not be until 18 months after the end of the first fiscal year and in-scope MNE is in scope of New Zealand's GloBE rules.

ACC and MSD lump sum backdated payments

The Bill proposes to alter the tax treatment of ACC and MSD backdated lump sum payments to address the tax disparity that arises when the timing of the receipt of the lump sum results in a higher tax liability than would arise if the amount had been spread over the periods to which it relates (i.e., an amount that should have been paid over multiple years but is paid as a lump sum in a single year). The proposed treatment would approximate the lower amount of tax that would be owing if the payment had been paid over the relevant earlier years.

For backdated ACC compensation payments that consist of a lump sum and relate to more than one income year, the Bill proposes that the tax rate that would apply would be:

- 10.5% if the recipient's average basic tax rate calculated over the four previous years is less than 10.5%, or
- the recipient's average basic tax rate calculated over the four previous years, or
- the recipient's basic tax rate for the year they receive the payment if that rate is higher than 10.5% and lower than their average basic tax rate for the four previous years.

For backdated MSD benefit payments that consist of a lump sum that relates to more than one income year the Bill proposes that the tax deducted by MSD would be treated as the final amount of tax owed.

Government payment of employer contribution to qualifying paid parental leave recipients

The Bill proposes the Government pay a three percent employer style KiwiSaver contribution into the KiwiSaver accounts of paid parental leave (PPL) recipients who pay three percent of their PPL payments into their KiwiSaver accounts. This would take effect from 1 July 2024 and help to increase the retirement savings of people who take time away from work on PPL.

Extending tax exemption for non-resident offshore oil rig and seismic vessel operators

The Bill proposes extending the existing temporary five-year income tax exemption on the income of non-resident offshore oil rig and seismic vessel operators.

The current exemption, which is due to expire on 31 December 2024, would be extended for a further five years until 31 December 2029. The exemption removes the incentive for rigs and seismic vessels to "churn" (i.e., to move in and out of New Zealand waters within 183 days to ensure income is not taxable under many of our double tax agreements), a process which is inefficient and has negative environmental impacts.

Tax rollover relief in response to recent flood events

The Bill proposes tax rollover relief for assets destroyed or made economically useless by the January-February North Island flood events. The effect of the proposed rollover relief would be to defer the recognition of income from the receipt of insurance proceeds for a destroyed business asset, provided there was a commitment to rebuild or replace the destroyed revenue account buildings or depreciable assets.

This would provide some cash flow benefits for insured businesses severely affected by the floods to assist them in their rebuild or replacement, and it would limit the windfall revenue gain that the Government would otherwise receive from the events.

A maximum five-year rollover/deferral period is proposed from the 2022–23 income year. If the asset has not been rebuilt or replaced by the 2027–28 income year, the suspended income would be brought to account in that year. If the business decided in an earlier income year to cease business or not to rebuild or replace the asset, the suspended income would be brought to account in that earlier year.

Other items

The Bill also contains items that would:

- Grant six New Zealand charities with overseas charitable purposes overseas donee status; and
- Make other minor technical and remedial changes to tax legislation. These include changes to other income tax rules, GST, tax administration and social policy.