

H M Revenue & Customs is letting big business off the h...

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[ARC - the Association of Revenue and Customs](#) - which is the union for higher grade staff at H M Revenue & Customs has issued a press release today saying:

The Association of Revenue and Customs (ARC) has described today's disclosure of HM Revenue and Customs' detailed plans for the next few years, which show a crackdown on evasion by small and medium-sized businesses but fewer resources to tackle avoidance by multi-nationals and the wealthy, as letting big businesses "off the hook".

In Autumn the Government announced, as part of its spending review that HMRC would be cut by more than £3bn, although some limited "re-investment" was said to be targeting fraud. Only now have detailed plans emerged, and these show further steep reductions in the senior grades — the grades that deal primarily with large business and the wealthy.

Graham Black, ARC President, said: "This is just as we feared. HMRC is reducing by a further 15% to around half the size it was a few years ago. And while some extra resources are being used, rightly, to target fraud, the number of senior staff capable of dealing with complex avoidance and evasion will tumble yet further, by over 400. "There is a huge tax gap, caused in part by well-advised businesses and individuals stepping aside from taking their share of the pain. Why should banks and major businesses be let off the hook, when most citizens in the UK pay their fair share in taxation? The country cannot afford this madness. The Government is acting like an unhinged Robin Hood — taking from the poor and giving to the rich".

Graham Black is right: this is madness. Any sane person can see that.

George Osborne can't. Draw your own conclusions and at the same time decide where he sees his own future career: will he be on the side of the tax avoiders, or on the side of the tax enforcers? I think that the answer is pretty obvious, and that makes him wholly unsuitable to be Chancellor.