

HMRC are going to lose more than 6% of staff tackling t...

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I noticed [an exchange in Parliament yesterday](#), albeit in written answers, in which Catherine McKinnell MP asked David Gauke MP, the minister she shadows:

How many staff he expects to be employed in each area of [HM Revenue and Customs](#)' activity on 31 March (a) 2013 and (b) 2014?

Gauke answered with this table:

So, with the exception of enforcement and compliance (which is a pretty generic term for tax return processing in many cases and where the increase relates very largely to some extra staff under the supposed 'reinvestment' scheme) HMRC is going to see significant falls in front line staff, especially in personal tax where service has been particularly poor.

That's especially true amongst specialists tackling business tax (where most evasion takes place), corporate tax (where most high end abuse takes place) and personal tax (where most straightforward moonlighting and non-declaration occurs.

No wonder the Public Accounts Committee says H M Revenue & Customs is not serious about the tax gap. How can they be when in all areas where they've got to address it then will be between 6% and over 11 staff down in the next year.

This is no way to run a tax authority.

And it's no way to clear a deficit.