



CANADA

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## **Minister Findlay highlights Economic Action Plan 2015 investment to expand Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Underground Economy Specialist Teams**

On April 28, 2015, the Honourable Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay, Minister of National Revenue, met with members of the Underground Economy Advisory Committee on actions and opportunities for collaboration to tackle the underground economy (UE) across the country.

The Minister also highlighted the Government's commitment through Economic Action Plan 2015 to invest \$118.2 million over five years to enhance the CRA's audit capacity by expanding its Underground Economy Specialist Teams.

These new specialist teams will use advanced data analysis to identify and adopt new approaches to combat the underground economy. Working with provincial colleagues, the teams will target UE activity in high risk sectors of the Canadian economy.

The Minister's Underground Economy Advisory Committee is an important partner in advising Minister Findlay on the CRA's broader three-year strategy, *Reducing Participation in the Underground Economy*, announced in November 2014. The strategy focuses on reducing the UE in Canada through three approaches: research and analysis to better understand the nature of the underground economy in Canada; awareness activities to communicate the costs and reduce the social acceptability of participation in the UE; and compliance initiatives to deter and detect those who are participating in the UE.

The Committee is comprised of representatives from key industry sectors and academia. The committee, the first of its kind in Canada, was created by Minister Findlay to provide an industry perspective and input to the Minister and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) on the government's ongoing efforts to combat the underground economy, particularly in higher-risk sectors of the economy.

If left unchallenged, the underground economy costs jobs, erodes the integrity of Canada's tax system and undermines the competitiveness of honest businesses, especially small businesses, which play by the rules. Combatting the underground economy requires a collaborative approach between all levels of government and the

industries directly affected by this problem. Working with provincial, territorial and industry partners to reduce the UE in Canada is a Government of Canada priority.

**The Minister of National Revenue announces appointment of the new Taxpayers' Ombudsman**

On April 10, 2015, the Honourable Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay, Minister of National Revenue, announced the appointment of the new Taxpayers' Ombudsman, Ms. Sherra Profit. Minister Findlay underscored the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) commitment to maintain its strong relationship with the Office of the Taxpayers' Ombudsman in order to provide Canadians with fair, equitable and respectful service.

The Office of the Taxpayers' Ombudsman was established in 2008 and operates independently from the CRA. Its mandate is to uphold the [Taxpayer Bill of Rights](#) and provide an impartial review of unresolved taxpayer service complaints. This Government created the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, as well as the Office of the Taxpayer's Ombudsman, and is committed to offering the highest level of service to Canadians.

Ms. Profit has more than 15 years of experience practicing law in a wide range of areas. Ms. Profit holds a Bachelor of Laws Degree from the University of Saskatchewan, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree from St. Francis Xavier University. She was called to the bar on April 14, 2000, in Prince Edward Island. Ms. Sherra Profit is the second person to be appointed Canada's Taxpayers' Ombudsman since the Office of the Taxpayers' Ombudsman was created in 2008.

The Taxpayers' Ombudsman offers Canadians who feel they haven't been treated fairly with one more avenue of recourse, in addition to the internal CRA appeals process, and the Tax Court of Canada. The Taxpayers' Ombudsman has published six annual reports, seven special reports, and one observation paper, with over 28 recommendations, which were all accepted by the CRA. Taxpayers are encouraged to try to resolve their service-related complaints with the CRA first before they approach the Taxpayers' Ombudsman.