



News Release

Tax cheating is a crime

Ottawa, Ontario, May 13, 2010... Keith Ashfield, Minister of National Revenue, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, reminds Canadians that the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) takes non-compliance with tax law very seriously.

“The CRA works hard to address tax cheating, to make sure that the tax system is fair for the majority of Canadians who are honest and comply with tax law,” said Minister Ashfield. “Filing taxes is the law and tax cheating is a crime.”

In 2008–2009, CRA criminal investigations led to convictions in 98% of the cases resulting in 323 convictions of tax evasion or fraud. Courts across Canada imposed close to \$29.2 million in fines and offenders were sentenced to a total of more than 81 years in prison.

Convictions for tax evasion, including not filing tax returns and making false declarations, can result in court-imposed fines of up to twice the taxes evaded, plus jail time. In addition, taxpayers still have to pay the taxes owed and all other civil penalties and interest imposed by the CRA.

The CRA’s Voluntary Disclosures Program is available to taxpayers who want to correct their tax affairs. Taxpayers will not be penalized or prosecuted if they make a valid disclosure before they become aware of any compliance action being initiated by the CRA against them. These taxpayers may only have to pay the taxes owing, plus interest.

The CRA will take action against those who are not paying their share of tax. Tax cheats place an unfair burden on law-abiding individuals and businesses by reducing the amount of money available for important government programs like health care, education, and the environment.

For information on investigations, convictions, or coming forward to correct inaccurate information through the Voluntary Disclosures Program, go to www.cra.gc.ca/investigations on the CRA Web site.

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