

Abbott's Untouchables -- the 55 Oz millionaires that paid NO Tax

by Peter Martin via gail - SMH Wednesday, Apr 29 2015, 3:38am

international / prose / post

Tax Office statistics reveal the 55 millionaires who paid no tax

Fifty-five of Australia's highest earners paid no income tax at all during 2012-13, not even the Medicare levy. All earning at least \$1 million, they managed to write their taxable incomes down to below the \$18,200 tax-free threshold.



Lackeys to the elite, Tony Abbott and his treasurer Joe Hockey

Tax statistics released Wednesday reveal that 40 of them claimed an extraordinary \$42.5 million for the "cost of managing tax affairs" meaning they each paid an average of \$1 million to an adviser prepared to help to bring down their taxable income, which is itself a tax deduction.

Between them they reported earning \$129.5 million, an average of \$2.3 million. By the time their accountants had finished with them they reported losing a combined \$12.8 million.

The implausibility of someone earning \$2.3 million and paying half of it to a tax adviser suggests some may be understating their earnings.

A tax office spokeswoman said there were "legitimate reasons why a wealthy taxpayer might not pay tax in a particular financial year".

These included tax losses through poor business performance, tax losses in previous years which could be carried forward indefinitely and dividend imputation credits.

She said the majority of wealthy Australians paid the right amount of tax.

Most of the 55 were either ungenerous or modest when it came to giving, claiming nothing for gifts. However 10 of the 55 gave between them \$10.4 million, also suggesting their incomes were higher than reported. The gifts may not have all gone to charities. The Tax Office also allows deductions for gifts to political parties.

Fifteen were unsuccessful in business, losing \$2.7 million between them. They carried over previous losses of \$22.5 million.

They were more successful when it came to investing, receiving \$8.8 million between them in so-called 'franked' dividends, and only \$839,000 in unfranked dividends. Franked dividends allow the recipients to cut their taxable incomes to take account of company tax already paid.

They were also surprisingly successful landlords. Whereas 1.3 million Australian landlords claimed between them losses of \$12 billion, the 15 of the 55 millionaires who rented out properties made a combined \$1.6 million dollars.

Around 9.5 million Australians paid tax in 2012-13, slightly down on the 9.7 million who paid tax in 2011-12. The number of tax returns on which no tax was paid climbed from 2.9 million to 3.3 million.

Two thirds of the tax was paid by Australians earning \$80,000 or more. More than one quarter was paid by Australians earning \$180,000 or more.

The biggest deductions were for work-related expenses (19.7 billion), negative gearing (\$12 billion), personal superannuation contributions (\$2.9 billion) and the cost of managing tax affairs.

The emergence of e-Tax made little difference to Australia's traditional reliance on tax agents in 2012-13. Around 9.4 million of the 12.4 million tax returns were filed by agents and only 2.8 million filled by individuals electronically, little more than in 2011-12. Half a million tax returns were filed by individuals on paper, down from almost a million the year before.

- with Nassim Khadem

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[Remember average Aussies, Abbott promised his masters that it would be the people that pay when the mega-rich avoid their obvious responsibilities. And so there are no mysteries to Abbott's callous and unfair policies.]

<http://tinyurl.com/l32zogq>

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-1583.html>