

## **BURS HOST A CONSULTATIVE MEETING WITH BOCCIM ON THE E-FILING PROJECT**

In the near future taxpayers will no longer have to worry about waiting in long queues in our banking halls, about finding parking space or about office hours as they would be able to e-file from the comfort of their home or office. That was stated by Acting Commissioner General, Mr S Lekau at the well attended BOCCIM Consultative meeting held at Gaborone Sun on August 14, 2013.

To buttress his point he indicated that the adoption of ICT in filing tax would improve Botswana's indices in the ease of doing business in Botswana. The development will start as a pilot project with some 500 companies before it is rolled out to the public. Responding to a question on the floor about why the pilot phase is starting with VAT tax type this is what he had to say; "After thorough engagement with stakeholders regarding the E Filing project, they overwhelmingly advised that VAT, being the most challenging of all taxes, be the first to be e-filed."

BURS would then roll out e-filing to withholding tax especially PAYE followed by corporate tax and individual tax in that order. He said the electronic system will go a long way in eliminating manual forms, which result in capturing wrong information, wrong amounts as the taxpayer will be the one inputting data.

The words of His Excellency President Ian Khama contained in the Foreword of the E-Government Strategy were quoted saying that for Botswana to flourish and prosper in the 21st century, there is need to become innovative users of ICT, and have a high-performing government that is providing convenient and efficient electronic services to all of citizens.

BURS has partnered with e-Government in this project in order to achieve objectives in 2011-2016 Strategy which provides a pragmatic roadmap for getting there.

"We have a secure payment feature to enable customers to pay using VISA cards and Internet banking," the Acting Commissioner General said.

Currently BURS is in serious talks with commercial banks to provide the payment gateway, and so far negotiations with Barclays Bank are at an advanced stage.

## **SUMMARY NOTES ABOUT E FILING PROJECT:**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives for the development of e-services are:

- To simplify Compliance & elicit taxpayers to use electronic services
- To enhance service delivery to the taxpayer and business.
- To eliminate manual data entry and physical file operation process.
- To reduce queuing.
- To provide immediate access to data.
- To enable an efficient tax administration.
- To provide a platform for transparency, consistency and integrity
- To provide a platform for cooperation with other authorities and partners.

### **SOLUTION OVERVIEW:**

BURS has partnered with the E-gov to develop **scalable e-service solution** that will serve as the basis for launching various e-services.

Objectives:

- Provide a platform for electronic Taxpayer registration
- Provide electronic filing solution with capability for Taxpayers to update their details
- Provide a secure (PCI-DSS compliant) payment portal to process and account for Taxpayers' liabilities (VAT)
- Provide an integration point for payment and notification files to be sent between e-filing solution and commercial bank's online business facility

### **SERVICES OFFERED:**

- Provide for instant update of taxpayer accounts
- Registration of Income Tax, VAT and Customs
- Filling of tax returns (commencing with VAT)

- Payments (commencing with VAT)
- Updating Taxpayer details
- SMS and Email notifications

**ACCESS CHANNELS:**

- Computers
- Tablets
- Smart phones
- Self-service computers will be installed in all BURS regional Offices to facilitate taxpayers to use the BURS online services