

25-5-2008.

Revenue is ready to show 'latitude' to firms on tax

By Ian Kehoe

The Revenue Commissioners is prepared to show "latitude" to companies which fall behind in their tax obligations, but only if they come clean about their debts, according to one of the country's top Revenue officials.

Collector general Gerard Harrahill said that the Revenue was "happy to work with a business" towards resolving problems, and that the authority was prepared to be flexible in its payment timetables. However, he said that companies would still have to pay interest as part of any deferred payment arrangement.

Writing in today's *Sunday Business Post*, the collector general said it was "surprising at times to find how little real analysis" businesses carried out in order to understand their financial difficulties.

"Statements like 'we are finding it difficult to get payments from our customers' are not particularly helpful in themselves in a discussion with Revenue about how to manage



Gerard Harrahill

an expected delay in paying a tax debt," Harrahill said.

He said that the Revenue was at its most responsive when a business came forward at an early stage and "puts its cards clearly and firmly face up on the table". When a company does not take that approach, Harrahill said that the scope for "applying the less painful remedies is severely limited".

He added: "The costs arising from a lack of a quality engagement or, worse still, no engagement with Revenue are significant."

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