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Statistical release

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Statistics of civil cases for debt (Preliminary)

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Key figures

Table A – Key figures for the month of June 2009

Actual estimates	June 2009	% change between June 2008 and June 2009	% change between April to June 2008 and April to June 2009
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	122 749	11,5	2,6
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	64 126	11,8	2,6
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	646,8	18,1	16,9

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: STATISTICS OF CIVIL CASES FOR DEBT (JUNE 2009)

The number of civil summonses issued for debt increases

The total number of civil summonses issued for debt for the second quarter of 2009 increased by 2,6% compared with the second quarter of 2008. There was also an 11,5% increase between June 2008 and June 2009 (see Table A and Tables 5 and 7).

The major contributors to the increase in civil summonses issued for debt for the second quarter of 2009 compared with the second quarter of 2008 were civil summonses issued in respect of promissory notes and other acknowledgements of debt (2,3 percentage points), goods sold on an open account (1,6 percentage points) and money lent (1,4 percentage points) (see Table 6 column 2, page 8).

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt increases

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt for the second quarter of 2009 was 2,6% higher compared with the second quarter of 2008. There was also an 11,8% increase between June 2008 and June 2009 (see Table A and Tables 5 and 7).

Civil judgements in respect of money lent (4,4 percentage points), professional services (3,0 percentage points), instalment sale transactions (0,7 of a percentage point) and 'other services' (0,3 of a percentage point) were the drivers behind the 2,6% increase in the number of civil judgements recorded for debt (see Table 6 column 3, page 8). The other four categories contributed negatively during this period.

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt increases

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt for the second quarter of 2009 increased by 16,9% compared with the second quarter of 2008. There was also an 18,1% increase between June 2008 and June 2009 (see Table A and Tables 5 and 7).

The major contributors to the 16,9% increase in the value of civil judgements for the second quarter of 2009 compared with the same period last year were money lent (8,6 percentage points), rent (3,2 percentage points) and instalment sale transactions (2,3 percentage points). The 'other debts' category was the only negative contributor (-0,7 of a percentage point) (see Table 6 column 4, page 8).

During June 2009, 64 126 civil judgements for debt amounting to R646,8 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the R646,8 million were:

- Civil judgements relating to money lent (R231,1 million or 35,7%)
- 'Other debts' (R108,9 million or 16,8%)
- Goods sold on an open account (R74,9 million or 11,6%) and
- Other services (R61,4 million or 9,5%).

Figures 1 and 2 outline the number of civil summonses issued and civil judgements recorded for debt respectively from January 2004 to June 2009.

Figure 1 – Civil summonses issued for debt

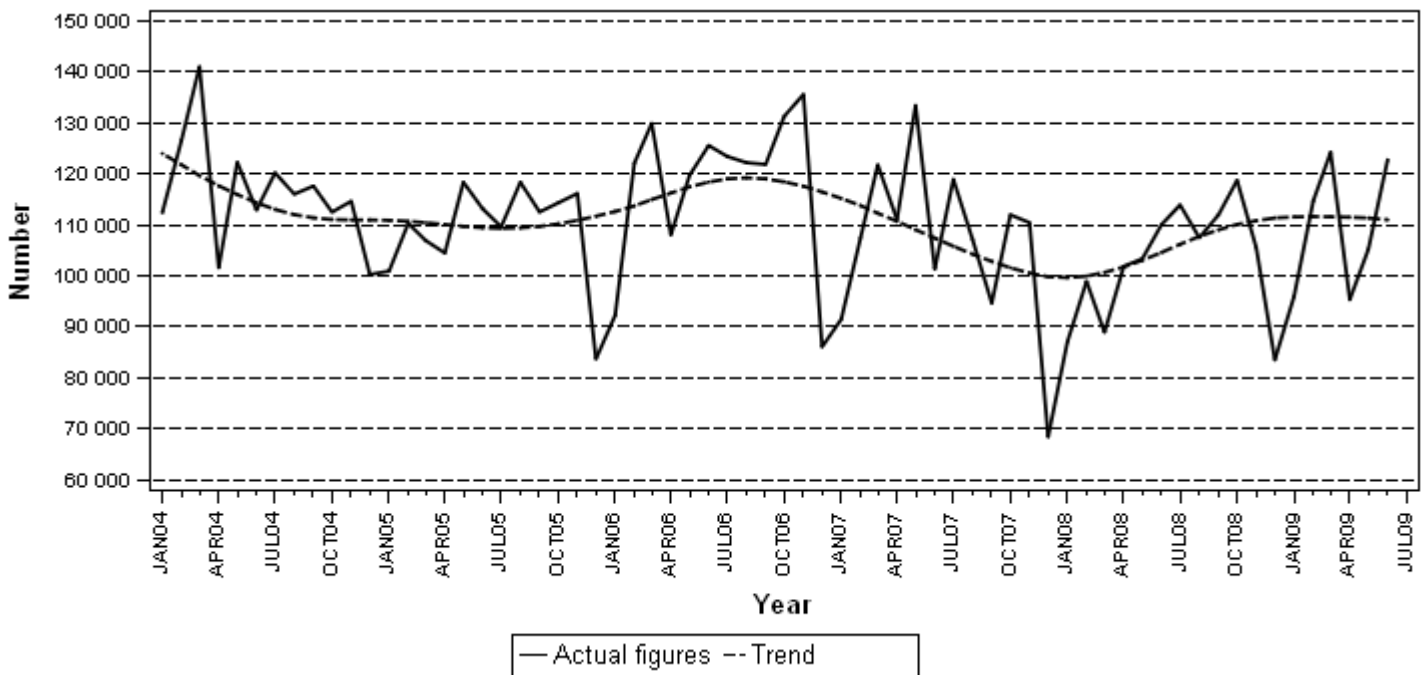
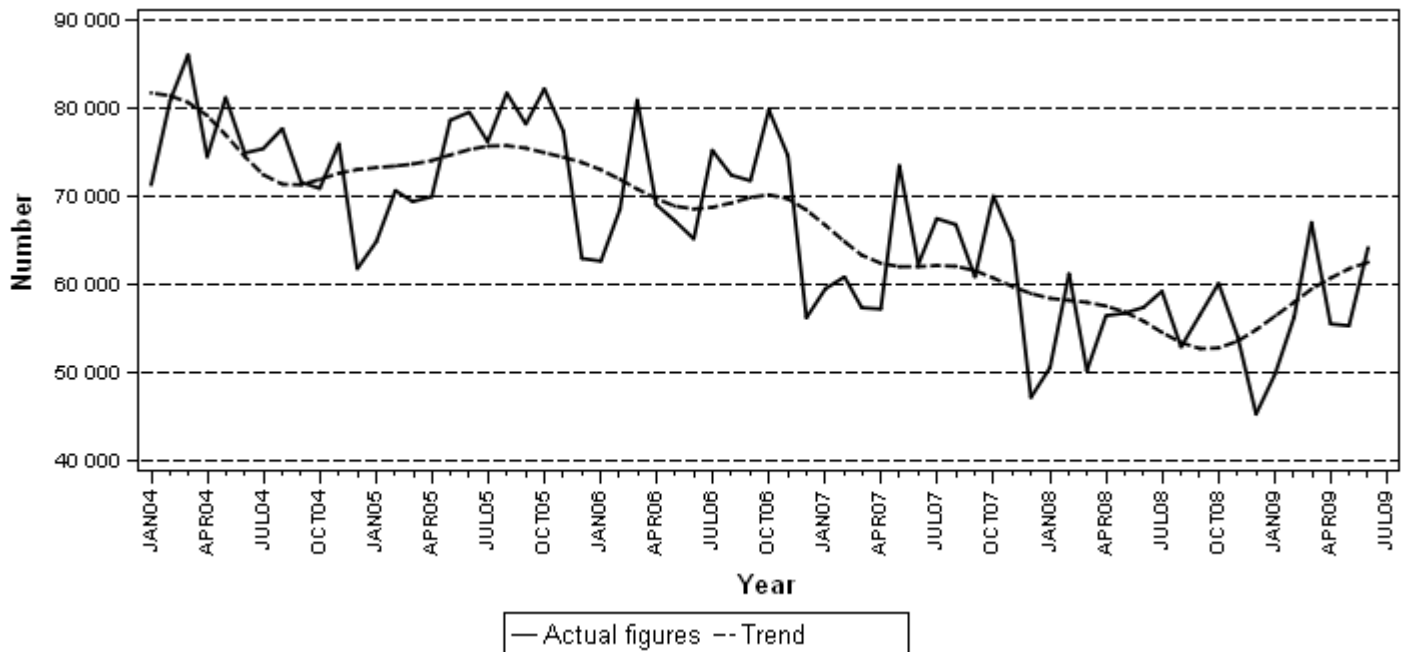


Figure 2 – Civil judgements recorded for debt



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Statistician-General

Detailed results: Tables

Table 1 – Number of civil cases recorded and summonses issued for debt according to business enterprises and private persons

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private Persons			
	2008	2008	1/ 2009		2008	2008	1/ 2009	
		June	May	June		June	May	June
1. Cases recorded								
1.1 Actual figures	1 442 676	128 769	126 614	145 158	1 265 159	112 936	111 963	125 876
1.2 Seasonally adjusted		119 973	124 277	134 700		106 856	109 415	118 357
2. Civil summonses for debt								
2.1 Goods sold								
2.1.1 Open account	116 702	8 780	10 185	12 125	95 703	7 030	8 225	9 962
2.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	31 242	2 410	2 930	3 219	26 472	2 161	2 458	2 646
2.2 Services								
2.2.1 Professional	132 886	11 848	12 442	12 194	112 140	10 213	10 428	10 229
2.2.2 Other	173 709	15 067	11 528	13 451	151 941	12 826	9 806	11 311
2.3 Rent	53 031	4 882	4 237	4 323	42 964	4 249	3 620	3 695
2.4 Money lent	283 693	24 263	24 034	27 070	262 921	22 123	22 483	25 425
2.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	201 891	18 448	18 381	24 233	189 884	17 525	17 447	22 642
2.6 Other debts	238 253	24 359	21 512	26 134	205 941	19 343	17 323	20 505
2.7 Total								
2.7.1 Actual figures	1 231 407	110 057	105 249	122 749	1 087 966	95 470	91 790	106 415
2.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		103 020	105 183	114 567		91 174	92 161	101 051

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Table 2 – Number of civil cases recorded according to selected magistrates' offices

Year and month		Cape Peninsula	Port Elizabeth	East London	Kimberley	Pietermaritzburg	Durban	Johannesburg	East Rand	West Rand	Pretoria	Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark	Bloemfontein
2007	Year Total	117 403	65 797	32 766	9 226	17 420	77 021	215 297	51 978	40 863	153 646	26 219	45 913
2008	Year Total	117 171	54 474	17 553	7 236	19 284	78 092	205 869	59 060	33 410	138 384	26 859	33 374
	January	6 304	5 151	1 278	274	1 136	5 286	10 193	3 392	1 905	15 008	4 496	3 068
	February	9 395	4 538	2 187	431	1 132	5 476	11 003	4 424	3 242	11 748	3 638	2 842
	March	9 382	4 278	1 399	822	1 447	6 079	11 776	4 716	2 482	7 997	1 470	2 905
	April	8 158	6 398	1 807	465	1 851	6 648	17 776	5 253	2 858	9 995	1 815	2 658
	May	9 157	6 544	1 695	597	1 814	5 513	17 667	5 407	2 499	10 008	2 666	3 087
	June	8 499	6 045	1 578	928	1 557	5 572	19 524	5 494	2 673	12 313	1 865	2 987
	July	11 015	3 344	1 144	869	1 954	7 370	22 450	4 484	2 922	11 901	2 710	2 992
	August	9 558	4 502	1 180	500	1 615	6 213	20 052	4 552	3 490	11 136	2 236	3 050
	September	10 882	3 738	825	555	1 707	6 312	22 753	5 257	2 816	14 527	1 839	2 962
	October	12 480	3 866	1 549	405	1 966	7 767	18 597	5 758	3 777	14 812	1 975	2 374
	November	12 497	3 655	1 535	844	2 050	8 149	18 480	5 704	2 879	11 611	1 375	2 356
December	9 844	2 415	1 376	546	1 055	7 707	15 598	4 619	1 867	7 328	774	2 093	
1/ 2009	January	8 353	1 955	1 259	515	1 713	7 400	20 427	5 126	2 299	10 835	1 265	4 435
	February	10 331	3 211	1 619	795	1 557	7 766	22 126	5 592	2 742	12 559	1 449	3 645
	March	14 242	5 191	1 759	755	1 807	7 604	20 163	5 618	4 660	14 922	2 339	3 728
	April	9 791	3 286	1 384	538	1 403	7 336	18 223	4 108	2 668	9 863	1 671	2 494
	May	11 016	3 555	1 439	641	1 839	7 483	18 112	4 878	3 120	11 931	3 448	3 554
	June	14 060	3 298	2 364	639	1 537	7 470	24 521	4 557	2 895	12 165	2 698	2 670

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Table 3 – Number of civil default and consent judgements for debt according to business enterprises and private persons

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private Persons			
	2008	2008	1/ 2009		2008	2008	1/ 2009	
		June	May	June		June	May	June
1. Judgements								
1.1 Goods sold								
1.1.1 Open account	85 779	7 739	6 338	8 444	75 644	6 772	5 394	7 190
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	9 655	689	1 242	1 104	8 047	575	1 016	923
1.2 Services								
1.2.1 Professional	77 331	6 572	7 339	8 643	67 961	5 734	6 261	7 502
1.2.2 Other	80 433	6 397	5 683	7 298	72 556	5 852	4 962	6 442
1.3 Rent	30 891	3 172	2 235	2 653	23 363	2 380	1 811	2 153
1.4 Money lent	222 378	19 893	22 008	23 447	216 753	19 570	21 625	22 819
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	47 916	4 212	3 620	3 760	42 595	3 756	3 148	3 080
1.6 Other debts	106 174	8 695	6 828	8 777	95 631	7 557	6 164	8 093
1.7 Total								
1.7.1 Actual figures	660 557	57 369	55 293	64 126	602 550	52 196	50 381	58 202
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		56 104	54 434	62 753		51 278	49 822	57 247

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Table 4 – Value of civil default and consent judgements for debt according to business enterprises and private persons (R'000)

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private Persons			
	2008	2008	1/ 2009		2008	2008	1/ 2009	
		June	May	June		June	May	June
1. Judgements								
1.1 Goods sold								
1.1.1 Open account	631 110	61 319	62 933	74 875	442 239	46 308	42 008	51 029
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	254 184	21 162	33 338	33 465	199 440	14 612	25 744	26 974
1.2 Services								
1.2.1 Professional	281 951	23 386	25 786	27 551	217 663	17 694	20 883	22 610
1.2.2 Other	595 868	49 150	55 876	61 368	455 915	31 337	40 621	49 207
1.3 Rent	323 395	29 562	41 754	50 282	212 835	17 903	29 680	37 154
1.4 Money lent	1 956 374	208 459	200 002	231 118	1 827 288	191 434	190 842	217 377
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	662 489	60 307	50 154	59 211	555 402	52 075	33 861	40 909
1.6 Other debts	1 314 647	94 531	89 615	108 945	1 012 729	73 686	69 789	89 045
1.7 Total								
1.7.1 Actual figures	6 020 018	547 876	559 458	646 815	4 923 511	445 049	453 428	534 305
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		519 893	572 896	607 128		420 416	451 448	498 418

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Table 5 – Percentage change in the total number of civil summonses, judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous year

Actual estimates	Actual estimates April to June 2008	Actual estimates April to June 2009	% change between April to June 2008 and April to June 2009	Difference between April to June 2008 and April to June 2009
Number of summonses for debt	315 284	323 365	2,6	8 081
Number of judgements for debt	170 518	174 921	2,6	4 403
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	1 510,1	1 765,1	16,9	255,0

Table 6 – Contribution of the different kinds of debts to the total number of civil summonses, judgements and the value of judgements recorded for the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous year 1/

Item	Contribution (percentage points) to the percentage change in the total number of summonses for debt	Contribution (percentage points) to the percentage change in the total number of civil judgements for debt	Contribution (percentage points) to the percentage change in the total value of civil judgements for debt
Goods sold			
--Open Account	1,6	-2,1	0,2
--Instalment sale transactions	0,3	0,7	2,3
Professional Services	0,5	3,0	0,5
Other Services	-3,1	0,3	1,9
Rent	-0,4	-0,9	3,2
Money lent	1,4	4,4	8,6
Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgement of debt	2,3	-0,7	0,9
Other debts	0,0	-2,1	-0,7
Total	2,6	2,6	16,9

1/ The contribution (percentage points) is calculated by multiplying the quarterly percentage change of each kind of debt with the percentage contribution to the total number or value of cases recorded during April to June 2008, divided by 100. Figures have been rounded off.

Table 7 – Percentage change in the total number of civil summonses, judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the current month and the corresponding month of the previous year

Actual estimates	Actual estimates June 2008	Actual estimates June 2009	% change between June 2008 and June 2009	Difference between June 2008 and June 2009
Number of summonses for debt	110 057	122 749	11,5	12 692
Number of judgements for debt	57 369	64 126	11,8	6 757
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	547,9	646,8	18,1	98,9

Explanatory notes

Introduction	1	<p>Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly sample survey of civil cases recorded and civil summonses for debt issued in South Africa. This information is obtained from selected magistrates' offices.</p> <p>Except for cases recorded, all other information relates to debt cases only, therefore claims for damages, ejection orders and other non-debt cases are excluded.</p>
Purpose of the survey	3	<p>The survey of Civil Cases for Debt covers a sample of magistrates' offices in South Africa, excluding the former Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC states). This survey collects information regarding civil cases recorded, civil summonses issued and civil judgements recorded in order to provide users with information on the extent of unpaid debt in South Africa. The results of the survey are used by the private and public sectors as an indicator of economic performance.</p>
Scope of the survey	4	<p>This survey covers-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of civil cases recorded; • number of civil summonses issued for debt; • number of civil judgements recorded for debt; and • value of civil judgements recorded for debt.
Statistical unit	5	<p>The statistical unit for collection of information is a magistrate' office. Magistrates' offices include the small claims courts.</p> <p>The largest magistrates' offices in South Africa, which account for approximately 95% of all the civil cases in South Africa, are included in the monthly survey of civil cases recorded and civil summonses for debt issued. The smallest magistrates, offices are not used in the sample. A sample of 151 magistrates' offices was drawn using only the number of civil cases recorded as measure of size.</p>
Survey methodology and design	6	<p>The survey is conducted by mail each month from 151 magistrates' offices.</p>
Response rate	7	<p>The response rate for the civil cases for debt survey for June 2009 was 91,4%.</p>
Trend cycle	8	<p>Smoothed seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are generated using the X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Programme.</p>
Publications	9	<p>Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bulletin of Statistics issued quarterly.</i> • <i>SA Statistics issued annually.</i>
Unpublished statistics	10	<p>In some cases Stats SA can also make available statistics, which are not published. The statistics can be made available as computer printouts or CD. Generally a charge is made for providing unpublished statistics.</p>
Symbols and abbreviations	11	<p>R/D Refer to Drawer CD Compact Disc Stats SA Statistics South Africa TBVC Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei * Revised figures</p>

Glossary

Acknowledgement of debt	Acknowledgement of debt is a statement by a person/debtor which he admits that he owes money to an individual or a company or a bank.
Bills	Bills are statements of charges for services rendered or for amounts owed.
Civil judgements	Civil judgements are decisions taken in a civil matter or a dispute between two people or parties.
Civil summonses	Civil summonses are notices to appear before the court of law where a dispute between two parties or people has to be heard, i.e. not for a criminal offence.
Consent judgements	Consent judgements refer to where a debtor agrees to subject himself/herself to obey or accept a judgement of a court against him for debt he owes without defending the action. This usually happens before the debtor signs a binding contract, e.g. loan agreement.
Default judgements	Default judgements refer to where the court gives a judgement or a ruling against the defendant who is not present in court and was previously given a notice that was ignored, i.e. a judgement was given against a party or an individual while not present in court.
Instalment sale transaction	Instalment sale transaction relates to where a person buys goods on credit and pays for them in instalments, e.g. every week or month, until he/she settles the debt.
Litigants	Litigants are people who take part in court proceedings, usually against each other, like a debtor and a creditor.
Litigants referred	Litigants referred relates to a case where the parties have been referred to another instance/court.
Open account transaction	Open account transactions are revolving credit, i.e. where an account does not have a final payment date and a person can always take more goods and keep paying as long as he has credit.
Other services	“Other services” refers to municipal services (except outstanding assessment rates), plumbers, builders, mechanics, panel-beaters and electricians.
Other debts	“Other debts” refers to all other kinds of outstanding debts such as salaries and wages, outstanding medical fund debts, outstanding sponsored debts, outstanding class and tuition debt, outstanding income and sales, tax, outstanding assessment rates, outstanding money in respect to television maintenance contracts and outstanding money in respect of flat levies,
Plaintiff	Plaintiff is a person/party in a civil case who asks the court for judgement against another person.
Professional services	Professional services refer to medical doctors/ dentists, advocates/attorneys, auditors/accountants, architects, engineers and hospital services.
Promissory note	Promissory note is a written note, signed by one person, in which he promises to pay money to another person or to the bearer of such a note on a specific date or on demand.
Reference month	Reference month refers to one calendar month.
Refer to drawer (R/D) cheques	R/d cheques refer to dishonoured cheques. The drawer is the owner of the cheque. When a person issues a cheque and there is no money in the cheque account, the bank will refuse to pay the bearer. The cheque will be referred back to the drawer.

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