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Key figures

Table A – Key figures for the month of September 2007

Actual estimates	September 2007	% change between September 2006 and September 2007	% change between July 2006 to September 2006 and July 2007 to September 2007
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	97 052	-20,4	-12,6
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	59 626	-16,9	-11,7
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	457,4	-16,9	-8,7

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: STATISTICS OF CIVIL CASES FOR DEBT (SEPTEMBER 2007)

Key findings as at the end of September 2007

The number of civil summonses issued for debt decreases

The total number of civil summonses issued for debt for the third quarter of 2007 decreased by 12,6% compared with the third quarter of 2006.

The major contributors to the decrease of 12,6% in civil summonses issued for debt for the third quarter of 2007 compared with the third quarter of 2006 were civil summonses issued in respect of money lent (-8,3 percentage points), 'other' debts (-4,5 percentage points) and goods sold on an open account (-3,2 percentage points). There was, however, an increase of 7,0 percentage points with regard to civil summonses issued for promissory notes and other (see Table 6 column 2, page 9).

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreases

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt for the third quarter of 2007 decreased by 11,7% compared with the third quarter of 2006.

The major contributors to the decrease of 11,7% in civil judgements recorded for debt for the third quarter of 2007 compared with the third quarter of 2006 were civil judgements in respect of money lent (-4,9 percentage points), 'other' debts (-4,1 percentage points) and goods sold on an open account (-3,4 percentage points). There was, however, an increase of 1,6 percentage points with regard to civil judgements issued for promissory notes and other (see Table 6 column 3, page 9).

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt decreases

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt for the third quarter of 2007 decreased by 8,7% compared with the third quarter of 2006.

The major contributors to the decrease of 8,7% in the value of civil judgements for the third quarter of 2007 compared with the third quarter of 2006 were civil judgements recorded in respect of 'other' debt (-6,0 percentage points), money lent (-4,4 percentage points) and goods sold on an open account (-1,5 percentage points). There was, however, an increase of 2,3 percentage points with regard to civil summonses issued for promissory notes and other (see Table 6 column 4, page 9).

During September 2007, 59 626 civil judgements for debt, amounting to R457,4 million, were recorded. The largest contributors to the R457,4 million were civil judgements relating to money lent (R132,9 million or 29,1%) and 'other' debts (R88,9 million or 19,4%) (see Table 4, page 8).

Figures 1 and 2 outline the number of civil summonses issued and civil judgements recorded for debt from 2002 to September 2007 respectively. In figure 1 from January 2002 the trend estimates for the total number of civil summonses issued for debt showed an upward increase until April 2003. The trend decreased from May 2003 to June 2005 but increased again to July 2006. Thereafter the trend decreased again until present.

Figure 1 – Civil summonses issued for debt

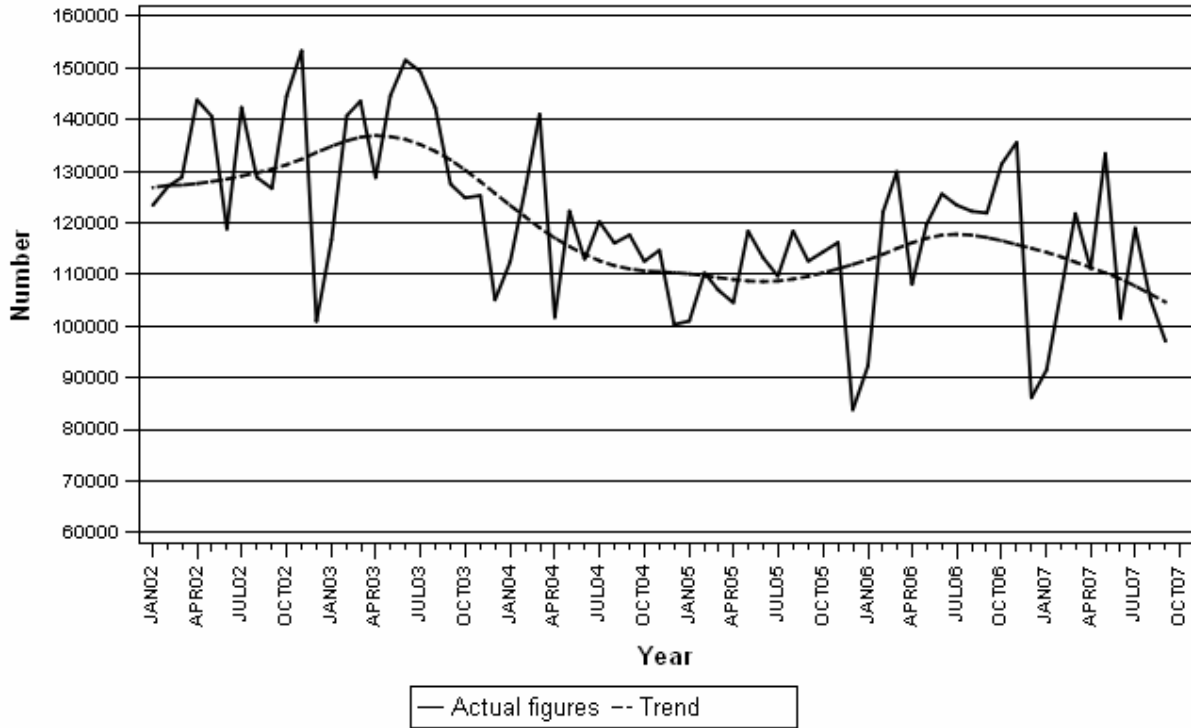
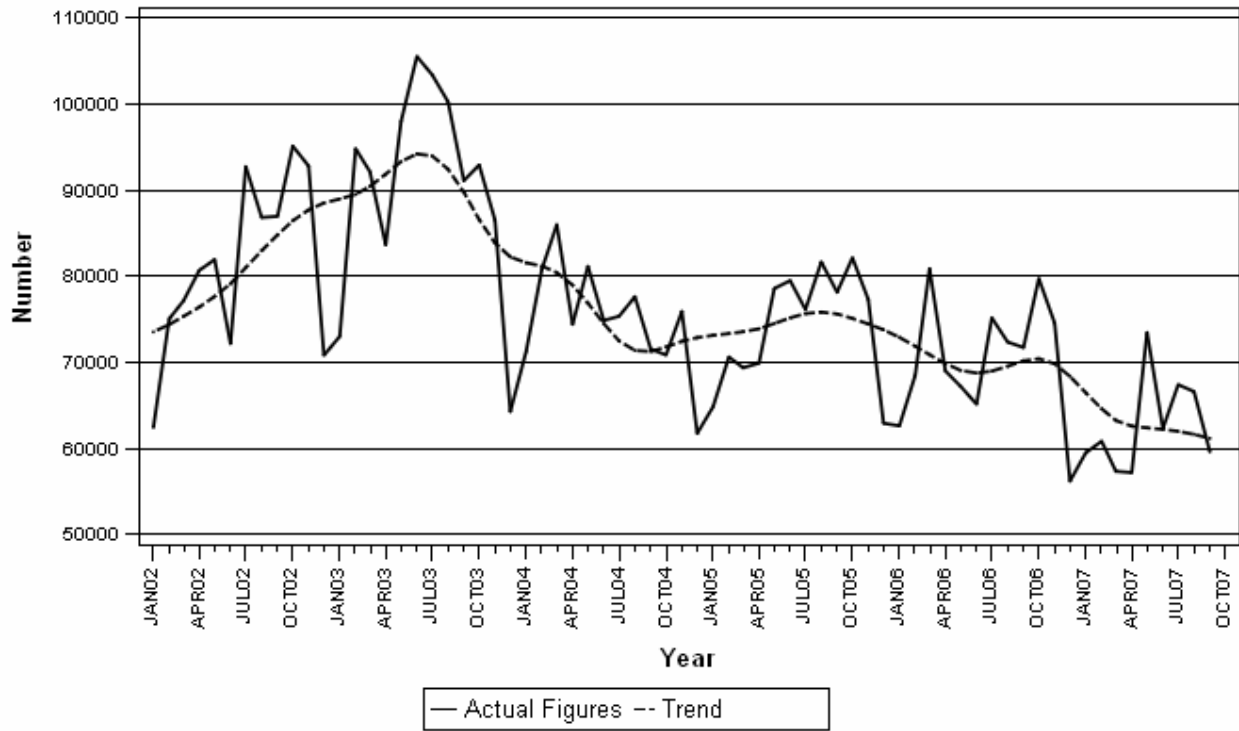


Figure 2 shows that the trend in civil judgements for debt generally declined from mid-2003 and this long-term decrease is continuing in 2007.

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			
	2006	2006	2007		2006	2006	2007	
		September	August	1/ September		September	August	1/ September
1. Cases recorded								
1.1 Actual figures	1 603 709	137 560	120 601	114 521	1 442 388	123 058	109 473	104 688
1.2 Seasonally adjusted		134 843	116 702	112 184		120 734	105 570	102 718
2 Civil summonses for debt								
2.1 Goods sold								
2.1.1 Open account	159 476	12 133	9 808	8 968	137 314	10 499	8 296	7 499
2.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	35 514	2 394	2 236	2 315	28 794	2 109	1 859	1 948
2.2 Services								
2.2.1 Professional	138 310	11 620	10 701	10 324	117 768	9 436	9 547	9 180
2.2.2 Other	200 992	15 967	14 793	13 049	178 084	13 956	13 379	11 599
2.3 Rent	50 894	4 779	4 262	4 137	39 914	3 990	3 566	3 613
2.4 Money lent	407 106	39 342	25 539	24 485	387 509	37 522	23 852	23 394
2.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	148 099	11 145	17 852	17 694	133 964	10 206	16 745	16 966
2.6 Other debts	277 740	24 488	20 001	16 080	242 332	20 654	17 624	14 206
2.7 Total								
2.7.1 Actual figures	1 418 131	121 868	105 192	97 052	1 265 679	108 372	94 868	88 405
2.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		120 286	101 004	95 738		107 159	90 868	87 474

1/ Preliminary.

* Revised.

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

Year or month	Cape Peninsula	Port Elizabeth	East London	Kimberley	Pietermaritzburg	Durban	Johannesburg	East Rand	West Rand	Pretoria	Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark	Bloemfontein	
2005	Year Total	165 535	69 776	38 487	9 248	20 091	77 468	156 641	58 486	58 984	138 300	27 437	59 361
2006	Year Total	147 564	69 334	50 557	5 922	18 095	69 501	181 787	64 780	59 891	142 102	39 909	60 344
	January	10 205	5 091	4 446	209	1 171	5 751	6 505	4 097	4 441	10 867	2 437	5 120
	February	11 387	7 860	5 785	756	1 751	5 751	13 143	4 652	7 231	12 266	2 492	5 117
	March	14 010	8 082	6 013	732	1 742	6 285	14 398	5 761	6 259	14 272	2 994	4 789
	April	11 657	5 239	4 285	311	1 290	6 364	12 046	5 658	4 454	8 127	3 028	5 191
	May	13 981	5 393	2 620	741	1 893	4 925	15 758	5 585	5 489	11 299	3 200	5 253
	June	13 359	6 628	5 688	555	1 254	4 999	16 849	5 418	4 411	10 018	5 307	5 244
	July	12 981	5 770	5 218	442	1 348	5 867	16 060	6 478	5 190	10 318	3 847	5 449
	August	11 196	3 824	4 814	480	1 348	5 796	15 146	6 702	5 147	8 550	2 712	5 513
	September	12 137	5 315	2 350	507	1 140	5 291	18 632	5 593	5 057	13 258	1 869	5 368
	October	13 397	6 537	2 616	532	1 577	5 291	19 761	6 699	5 199	14 758	5 172	5 174
	November	13 082	6 315	4 499	271	1 837	6 571	21 268	4 784	4 347	19 625	4 144	4 145
	December	10 172	3 280	2 223	386	1 744	6 610	12 221	3 353	2 666	8 744	2 707	3 981
2007	January	7 940	6 102	1 275	729	1 282	5 789	22 003	3 455	2 138	14 856	1 635	4 238
	February	9 788	5 904	2 832	581	1 452	6 018	18 368	4 228	5 791	11 214	954	3 922
	March	12 802	7 935	3 553	1 123	1 613	8 978	15 648	4 318	5 925	13 803	2 186	4 010
	April	9 349	5 013	3 167	1 123	1 748	8 518	15 648	5 118	4 826	12 558	4 822	3 652
	May	10 792	6 650	5 105	1 332	2 346	5 245	25 094	5 655	2 760	16 251	2 714	4 242
	June	10 167	4 387	5 688	503	638	7 164	8 213	3 077	3 142	10 948	4 326	4 105
	July	13 170	4 784	1 799	983	2 173	7 164	20 470	5 734	2 865	14 144	3 004	4 110
	* August	8 805	5 275	709	764	1 178	4 977	18 632	4 549	3 950	13 494	1 895	4 189
	1/ September	8 784	4 614	420	470	1 442	10 240	18 632	3 805	2 855	11 363	1 217	4 070

1/ Preliminary

* Revised

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					
	2006	2006		2007		2006	2006		2007	
		September	August	1/ September	September		August	1/ September		
1. Judgements										
1.1 Goods sold										
1.1.1 Open account	120 554	8 711	7 174	8 405	109 368	7 636	6 436	7 700		
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	12 254	910	842	615	10 582	756	699	545		
1.2 Services										
1.2.1 Professional	78 747	5 712	6 100	5 989	69 974	4 689	5 565	5 544		
1.2.2 Other	96 191	8 206	8 464	8 091	89 567	7 531	7 992	7 647		
1.3 Rent	25 941	1 922	2 472	2 286	20 595	1 553	2 047	1 722		
1.4 Money lent	297 379	27 877	24 851	19 847	289 631	27 051	24 514	19 557		
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	75 440	7 800	7 633	6 298	68 753	7 499	7 309	6 003		
1.6 Other debts	136 605	10 591	9 065	8 095	122 291	9 604	8 501	7 632		
1.7 Total										
1.7.1 Actual figures	843 111	71 729	66 601	59 626	780 761	66 319	63 063	56 350		
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		70 724	62 185	58 780		65 475	58 890	55 625		

1/ Preliminary.

* Revised.

Table 4 – Value of civil default and consent judgements for debt according to business enterprises and private persons

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private Persons					
	2006	2006		2007		2006	2006		2007	
		September	August	1/ September	September		August	1/ September		
1. Judgements										
1.1 Goods sold										
1.1.1 Open account	673 174	51 209	55 139	49 528	523 117	38 714	42 213	39 923		
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	256 585	18 345	17 827	19 061	197 360	12 473	12 003	17 005		
1.2 Services										
1.2.1 Professional	266 969	18 440	20 141	21 479	223 269	13 967	16 909	18 156		
1.2.2 Other	579 439	43 447	56 226	58 564	464 798	33 306	45 630	41 378		
1.3 Rent	222 568	15 213	24 908	21 962	153 995	10 919	19 051	16 428		
1.4 Money lent	2 086 739	194 745	167 669	132 877	1 960 167	186 329	153 106	120 501		
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	713 512	69 707	73 509	64 975	630 837	62 737	66 596	60 405		
1.6 Other debts	1 784 255	139 165	102 069	88 907	1 271 309	96 699	83 596	76 503		
1.7 Total										
1.7.1 Actual figures	6 583 241	550 271	517 488	457 353	5 424 852	455 144	439 104	390 299		
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		524 570	490 934	435 675		427 077	420 536	365 360		

1/ Preliminary.
* Revised.

Table 5 – Percentage change in the total number and value of debts recorded between the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

	Actual estimates July 2006 to September 2006	Actual estimates July 2007 to September 2007	% change between July 2006 to September 2006 and July 2007 to September 2007	Difference between July 2006 to September 2006 and July 2007 to September 2007
Number of summonses for debt	367 497	321 228	-12,6	-46 269
Number of judgements for debt	219 257	193 634	-11,7	-25 623
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	1 658,3	1 514,3	-8,7	-1 440

Table 6 – Contribution of the different kinds of debts to the total number and value of debts recorded for the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

	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	-3,2	-3,4	-1,5
--Instalment sale transactions	-0,6	-0,3	-0,6
Professional Services	-1,0	-0,5	-0,5
Other Services	-1,9	-0,6	1,2
Rent	-0,1	0,5	0,9
Money lent	-8,3	-4,9	-4,4
Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgement of debt	7,0	1,6	2,3
Other debts	-4,5	-4,1	-6,0
Total	-12,6	-11,7	-8,7

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 July 2006 to September 2006, divided by 100. Figures have been rounded off.

Table 7 – Percentage change in the total number and value of debts recorded between the current month and the corresponding month of the previous year.

	Actual estimates September 2006	Actual estimates September 2007	% change between September 2006 and September 2007	Difference between September 2006 and September 2007
Number of summonses for debt	121 868	97 052	-20,4	-24 816
Number of judgements for debt	71 729	59 626	-16,9	-12 103
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	550,3	457,4	-16,9	-92,9

Explanatory notes

Introduction	1	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.
	2	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.
Scope of the survey	3	This survey covers- <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	4	The statistical unit for collection of information is a magistrate' office. Magistrates' offices include the small claims courts.
	5	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 is drawn using only the number of civil cases recorded as measure of size.
Survey methodology and design	6	The survey is conducted by mail each month from approximately 151 magistrates' offices.
Response rate	7	The response rate for the civil cases for debt for September 2007 was 88,0%.
Trend cycle	8	Smoothed seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are generated using the X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Programme.
Publications	9	Users may also wish to refer to the following publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bulletin of Statistics issued quarterly.</i> • <i>SA Statistics issued annually.</i>
Unpublished statistics	10	In some cases Stats SA can also make available statistics, which are not published. The statistics can be made available as computer printouts, on diskette or CD. Generally a charge is made for providing unpublished statistics.
Symbols and abbreviations	11	R/D Refer to Drawer CD Compact Disc Stats SA Statistics South Africa TBVC Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei * Revised figures

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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