

## Media Releases 2007

### Taxpayer confidentiality

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**Pretoria, 26 February 2006 --** The South African Revenue Service (SARS) emphatically rejects all allegations that it divulged information to the media about the tax affairs of Mr. Jacob Zuma.

The Income Tax Act (Section 4) specifically prohibits any SARS official from engaging in such practice.

SARS regularly receives media enquiries about specific taxpayers or taxpaying entities. SARS applies a standard and consistent procedure in dealing with such enquiries. The same approach – citing the confidentiality provisions of Section 4 – was applied when media enquiries were received about Mr. Zuma.

SARS has a proven record of integrity, fairness and impartiality and we remain proud of this reputation. These values underpin SARS' conduct at all times.

SARS issues more than 70 000 summonses to taxpayers per year requesting them to provide information on income acquired or to submit their returns. For the current financial year SARS has been engaged in 413 matters before court. Of these, 359 convictions were obtained.

In none of these instances has SARS been accused of violating the confidentiality provisions of the Income Tax Act.

At the same time, SARS must appeal to those raising allegations publicly about SARS' conduct to familiarise themselves with the Income Tax Act in order to make better informed public statements.

When a particular tax matter appears before court it becomes a matter for public record and part of the judicial process.

ENDS.

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