

## Media Releases 2011

### Early bird taxpayers set record for Tax Season

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**Pretoria, 1 August 2011** – Early bird taxpayers have exceeded all expectations and set a new record by submitting 872 928 returns to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) in the first month of Tax Season 2011.

This is 266 384 more than the 606 544 returns that were submitted to SARS in the first month of tax season last year, representing a 44% increase in taxpayer compliance.

So far SARS branches have assisted 290 106 taxpayers to file their returns via a branch (33.2%) while 567 952 returns (65.1%) have been submitted via eFiling. Just 14 871 returns (1.7%) were submitted by post of drop box in the first month of Tax Season.

The SARS Contact Centre has fielded close to 743 000 calls during July 2011 with the highest number of calls on one day being 42 733 calls on Monday 25 July 2011. During July 2010 the SARS Contact Centre fielded about 588 000 calls, which means an increase of 155 000 calls during July 2011. In line with SARS's commitment to continually improve our service to taxpayers, the Contact Centre resolved 94% of the 743 000 calls on first interaction.

SARS believes the significant increase in early filing reflects a growing recognition among taxpayers of the benefits of filing early, honestly and electronically – in line with this year's Tax Season communication campaign of 'taking the "eish!" out of tax-eish-ion'.

Among the benefits of early and electronic submission is the rapid payment of refunds to those who are due rebates. SARS has paid out close to R2.6-billion in refunds to individual taxpayers so far this Tax Season, with over 80% being paid into taxpayers' bank accounts within 48 hours of submission. The average time to receive an assessment is less than 24 hours after electronic submission.

To assist taxpayers in the compliance drive, all SARS branches will from 1 August be open from 07h30 to 18h00, which is an extension of two and a half hours per day.

In addition the following branches will be open on Saturdays as from 13 August from 08h00 to 13h00 (for the submission of income tax returns only): Bellville, Cape Town, East London, Port Elizabeth, George, Durban, Umtata, Pretoria, Randburg, Rissik Street (Johannesburg), Roodepoort.

SARS is will also be activating a number of service points at selected shopping malls across the country to assist taxpayers submit their returns, as well as continuing its workplace visits where SARS officials visit places of work to assist employees.

The deadlines for Tax Season 2011 are as follows:

- The deadline for postal submissions (paper tax returns) for provisional and non-provisional taxpayers is Friday 30 September 2011
- Taxpayers who use eFiling or come into a branch where SARS consultants capture their returns on computer have until Friday 25 November 2011.
- Provisional taxpayers who file via eFiling have until Tuesday 31 January 2012 to submit returns

Taxpayers who need assistance can call the SARS Contact Centre on 0800 00 7277 or visit the nearest SARS branch.