

Media Releases 2011

Three million returns submitted as deadline approaches

Pretoria, 13 November 2011 - With two weeks left before the deadline of Friday 25 November 2011, the number of tax returns submitted to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) has exceeded the three million mark.

Currently the number of income tax returns submitted stands at 3,038,502 which is an improvement of about 15% on the figure for the same time last year (2,591,043).

During last year's Tax Season it took taxpayers 22 weeks to reach the three million mark, compared to the 19 weeks it took this year to reach this milestone.

SARS reminds taxpayers who need assistance at a branch to file their return to visit their nearest SARS branch as soon as possible before the deadline. Taxpayers who do this will avoid the congestion that occurs at our branches in the last week of Tax Season.

During the last two weeks of Tax Season 2010 SARS branches countrywide had to assist more 318 700 taxpayers, which in the major centres means an average of 2 000 taxpayers per day. In addition more than 230 000 calls were received by the SARS Contact Centre (0800 00 7277) in the last week of Tax Season and 54 193 on the last day.

SARS therefore wants make an appeal to taxpayers with outstanding returns to submit these or seek assistance from the Contact Centre as soon as possible to avoid the last minute rush. The deadline for submissions is Friday 25 November 2011. In order to address the anticipated increase in the number of taxpayers wanting to file returns, SARS branches and the SARS Contact Centre have extended their working hours.

SARS branches will be open from 07h30 to 18h00, Monday to Friday. The SARS Contact Centre will operate from 07h30 to 19h00 from 14 to 18 November and from 07h30 to 20h00 from 21 to 25 November.

Taxpayers are encouraged to use the more convenient option of filing returns via eFiling (www.sarsefiling.co.za) which is a free electronic platform for submitting returns, making payments and tracking the status of their assessment.

SARS wishes to remind taxpayers who file their returns late that they may face tough administrative penalties for every month that a return is late.

Provisional taxpayers who file their returns via eFiling have until Tuesday 31 January 2012 to submit returns.

During this time taxpayers must also be careful and avoid being caught by phishing scams that seek to defraud taxpayers. Taxpayers should beware of e-mails or SMSes that ask for personal, tax, banking and eFiling details (login name, passwords, pins, credit / debit card information, etc) as SARS will never ask taxpayers for such information in an email or SMS.

For assistance with filing a tax return taxpayers can call the SARS Contact Centre on 0800 00 7277 or visit a SARS branch.

ENDS

For further media enquiries, please contact Adrian Lackay, SARS Spokesperson, 083 388 2580