

## **Further deterioration in consumer credit records**

*For Immediate Release*

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Credit bureaux maintain credit information received monthly from credit providers and create consumer credit profiles based on this information. Both the credit bureaux and the quality of data are regulated and monitored by the National Credit Regulator (NCR).

Of the total of 17.56 million credit-active consumers as at the end of the December 2008 quarter, 58.4% were in good standing while 41.6% had 'impaired records'. The percentage of consumers with an impaired record increased by 1.1% when compared with the previous quarter and increased by 4% over the last year (since the fourth quarter of 2007).

In the fourth quarter of 2008, 115.05 million enquiries made on consumer records, which was a decrease of 7.7% from the previous quarter but an increase of 13.3% since the quarter ending December 2007. Enquiries from banks accounted for 34% and enquiries from retailers accounted for 26% of all the enquiries made during the quarter. Enquiries by banks decreased by 3.9% in comparison with the previous quarter. While enquiries by retailers decreased by 27.2%, mainly due to the September quarter having been inflated by enquiries for marketing purposes.

Consumers lodged 9,020 disputes. These related to the accuracy of the credit information on their credit records. Credit bureaux received 41,206 disputes for the full year of 2008. Disputes have decreased by 8.6% compared with the previous quarter of 2008 and by 36% over the last year.

In the fourth quarter of 2008, 33,827 free credit reports were issued to consumers and 152,222 free credit reports were issued for the full year of 2008.

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