



News Release

Tel: 020 7636 5214

Email: fwalker@hurlstons.com

www.registry-trust.org.uk

JUDGMENTS AGAINST BUSINESSES RISE IN 2007

Judgments and decrees for bad debts against businesses in England and Wales increased by four percent in 2007 according to statistics published today (March 31) by Registry Trust, the not-for-profit company which collects and distributes judgment information in the public interest throughout the UK.

In 2007, the number of business judgments increased by four percent to 185,395 in England and Wales. Meanwhile in Scotland, commercial decrees increased by one percent to 3,814.

Judgments against individuals fell by six percent year-on-year in 2007 to 796,928 in England and Wales. Consumer decrees fell by seven percent over the same period to 27,608. Overall CCJs declined by four percent year-on-year.

Issuing the annual statistics, Malcolm Hurlston, the Chairman of Registry Trust, said:

“The trends identified in Q3 2007 did not let up in the last quarter of the year. In 2007, judgments against business reached their highest level since 2001. Consumer judgments continue to fall, albeit from a high point in 2006, mirroring the slower growth in consumer credit and the drop in the numbers of insolvencies at the end of 2007.

“The next 12 months should be interesting. I certainly expect the upward trend in commercial judgments to continue in 2008 which promises to be a tough year for British businesses, especially in the SME sector against whom most of the commercial judgments are made.

“Trends for consumer judgments are less clear-cut: I would expect overall debt levels to continue to fall but more people to have difficulties in repaying their debts because of pressure on the household purse. So we may well see the start of an upward trend in 2008.”

Table 1: County Court Judgments in England and Wales

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Consumer	631,368	538,383	635,222	843,853	796,528
Commercial	170,689	161,882	167,664	178,313	185,395
Total CCJ	802,057	700,265	802,886	1,022,166	981,923
Y/y change	-1.6%	-12.7%	14.7%	27.3%	-3.9%

Table 2: Scottish Decrees

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Consumer	28,855	29,374	30,428	25,271	23,794
Commercial	4,758	4,150	4,634	3,794	3,814
Total	33,613	33,524	35,062	29,515	27,608
Y/y change	-1.9%	-0.3%	4.6%	-15.8%	-6.5%

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For further information, please contact:

James Ketchell on 020 7636 5214, jketchell@hurlstons.com

Frances Walker on 020 7636 5214, fwalker@hurlstons.com

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Notes for editors:

Registry Trust maintains judgment registers in the British Isles, including (under contract to the Ministry of Justice) the Registry of Judgments, Orders and Fines which covers England and Wales only. Judgment records are an important factor in avoiding debt and in assisting responsible lending decisions, which in turn support a modern and stable economy.

Full annual statistics are available from Registry Trust's website:

<http://www.registry-trust.org.uk>

Anyone may search for entries against a named person or business at a stated address or a corporate body in Great Britain by submitting a request either via Registry Trust's website <http://www.registry-trust.org.uk> or by post to Registry Trust, 173-175 Cleveland Street, London W1T 6QR.