



Stats SA appeals to farmers for access

As the official supplier of quality statistics in the country, Statistics South Africa has a mandate to collect statistical information from the South African public. In just a few months' time, the organisation will be conducting Community Survey 2007. The survey, as contemplated by the Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel during his budget vote in June this year, aims to collect demographic, geographical, social and economic data at municipal level in order to assist different spheres of society and government with planning, policy evaluation and monitoring.

Community Survey 2007 is not only a measure of the development trajectory that South Africa has undertaken since 1994, it is also intended to elevate vexed questions of Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) of the United Nations (UN) for which South Africa has committed itself to achieving since the 1990's.

In preparation for this survey, scheduled to get underway early next year, Stats SA is currently engaged in a process known, in statistical terms, as listing. The 'listing' process is taking place across the nine provinces in order to compile a register of all residential, non-residential structures and vacant stands within identified Enumeration Areas (EA's).

Enumeration Area (EA) is a statistical term denoting the smallest geographical unit (piece of land) into which the country is divided for the purposes of counting by Stats SA. As such, the entire country is divided into Enumeration Areas for tracking and management purposes.

Listing is conducted as a forerunner to the main survey (data collection), which involves the collection of statistical information from selected households that would have been listed during the aforesaid process.

Although data collection will only begin next year, publicity fieldwork for the listing phase has already started across the country in order to brief stakeholders such as farmers and councillors about the importance of Community Survey 2007. A process of consultation is also underway with farmers' unions and a variety of bodies that can assist with access to the identified EA's.

It is imperative that the identified EA's are part of the survey. Stats SA is, therefore, appealing to farmers to allow access to their premises in order to enable Community Survey 2007 publicity officers to execute their duties.

Stats SA is a government agency legally mandated, under the Statistics Act, 1999 (Act No. 6 of 1999), to collect information for statistical purposes from the South African public. Section 15 of the Act outlines the requirements in terms of access to premises by Stats SA officials and Section 16 deals with the obligation and duty of the public to answer questions relevant to the survey being undertaken. It is not in the interest of the organisation nor the public to force respondents to co-operate or participate. Citizens are, therefore, requested to demonstrate a sense of understanding and tolerance as their co-operation and participation is to the benefit of the entire country.

Fieldworkers from Stats SA can be easily identified through their Community Survey 2007 yellow bibs, yellow bags, blue Community Survey caps, Stats SA/Community Survey magnetic stickers on vehicles and Stats SA/Community Survey ID cards.