

# Look who's on Ashley

For seven years South African government officials, doctors, vets and thousands of other cheating spouses may have spent over a quarter of a billion rand looking for action on the world's premier dating/cheating website Ashley Madison.



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Their details lie in the 9.7 gigs of data the hacker group The Impact Team stole from Ashley Madison then dumped on the Dark Web. What is revealed is a picture of a South African cheater, where some serial users have spent more than R300,000 on the international site.

hxt.africa yesterday was able to mine the data, and what it found was that of nine million credit card transactions recorded in the dump, about 70,816 were made in SA. This is a figure far smaller than the 205,000-plus South African members Ashley Madison claims it has.

## Government officials on Ashley Madison

A further breakdown revealed that 615 registered users registered government e-mail addresses in their transactions. Of these, five South African government officials regularly made payments and were recently active. One of them was a police officer.

There are 172 e-mails registered to Eskom, 65 to the justice department and 158 associated with SA universities, according to Reddit. Most, however, are web addresses, such as Yahoo and Hotmail, which are more anonymous. A couple of monikers attached to the web addresses included Mick The 12 inch and Dirty Toad.

Phumla Williams, deputy director-general of the GCIS, said that while her department had policy guidelines when it came to internet and e-mail use, this might differ with other government departments. "With GCIS the internet is seen as tool of trade and we are expected to operate within this framework" she said.

Advocate Ian Levitt said while it was not illegal to go on Ashley Madison if the government found out which staff members used the site "they would be in trouble".

## Cash and credits

A total of 10,116 South African men, htxt.africa found, handed over cash for on-site credits between August 2008 and April. These numbers could be higher as these transactions were from SA and don't include PayPal transactions.

The amounts paid ranged from Canadian \$8.56 to a few payments of Canadian \$29 000. In total, South Africans spent C21275675.

Adam Oxford of htxt.Africa said it was assumed payment was in Canadian dollars in because the data was hacked from Ashley Madison's database in Canada, where the site was based.

There are on average seven transactions per South African. The most transactions made by South Africans were in Johannesburg - 13,373. Cape Town followed with 9,674.

## The least faithful city in SA

In a release last year Ashley Madison called Randfontein Randyfontein, claiming that it was the least faithful city in SA. It had 991 transactions and is ranked 10th in the country for the most paying Ashley Madison users.

The predominance of men in the sample is because men pay to contact women, while women can send and read messages for free. As more people download the dumps, websites have emerged where possibly jilted spouses can check if their partner is on the database. The site <https://ashley.cynic.al/> checks if e-mails appear in the dump.

As the FBI said it was tracking down the Impact Team. The hack appeared to claim its first celebrity - US reality TV star and family rights activist Joshua Duggar.

*Source: The Times*

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