

PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES INC

Form 10-K

March 01, 2007

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549
FORM 10-K

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2006

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from ___ to ___

Commission File Number: 000-50058

Portfolio Recovery Associates, Inc.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware

75-3078675

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

120 Corporate Boulevard, Norfolk, Virginia

23502

(Address of principal executive offices)

(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (888) 772-7326

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Common Stock, \$0.01 par value per share

(Title of Class)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. YES NO

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15 (d) of the Act. YES NO

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. YES NO

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment of this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, or a non-accelerated filer. See definition of "accelerated filer and large accelerated filer" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer Non-accelerated filer

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

YES NO

The aggregate market value of the common stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant as of June 30, 2006 was \$706,688,211 based on the \$45.70 closing price as reported on the NASDAQ Global Stock Market.

The number of shares of the registrant's Common Stock outstanding as of February 14, 2007 was 15,990,932.

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Documents incorporated by reference: Portions of the Proxy Statement to be filed by April 30, 2007 for our 2007 Annual Meeting of Stockholders are incorporated by reference into Items 11, 12 and 13 of Part III of this Form 10-K.

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Cautionary Statements Pursuant to Safe Harbor Provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995:

This report contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws. These forward-looking statements involve risks, uncertainties and assumptions that, if they never materialize or prove incorrect, could cause our results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. All statements, other than statements of historical fact, are forward-looking statements, including statements regarding overall trends, operating cost trends, liquidity and capital needs and other statements of expectations, beliefs, future plans and strategies, anticipated events or trends, and similar expressions concerning matters that are not historical facts. The risks, uncertainties and assumptions referred to above may include the following:

our ability to purchase defaulted consumer receivables at appropriate prices;

changes in the business practices of credit originators in terms of selling defaulted consumer receivables or outsourcing defaulted consumer receivables to third-party contingent fee collection agencies;

changes in government regulations that affect our ability to collect sufficient amounts on our acquired or serviced receivables;

changes in bankruptcy laws that could negatively affect our business;

our ability to employ and retain qualified employees, especially collection personnel;

changes in the credit or capital markets, which affect our ability to borrow money or raise capital to purchase or service defaulted consumer receivables;

the degree and nature of our competition;

our future ability to comply with the provisions of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder;

our ability to successfully integrate our IGS and Alatax/RDS businesses (we refer to these businesses in this document as IGS and RDS, respectively) into our business operations;

our ability to secure sufficient levels of placements for our fee-for-service businesses;

the sufficiency of our funds generated from operations, existing cash and available borrowings to finance our current operations; and

the risk factors listed from time to time in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC).

You should assume that the information appearing in this annual report is accurate only as of the date it was issued. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date.

For a discussion of the risks, uncertainties and assumptions that could affect our future events, developments or results, you should carefully review the Risk Factors described beginning on page 18, as well as Business beginning on page 4 and Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations beginning on page 30.

Our forward-looking statements could be wrong in light of these and other risks, uncertainties and assumptions. The future events, developments or results described in this report could turn out to be materially different. We have no obligation to publicly update or revise our forward-looking statements after the date of this annual report and you should not expect us to do so.

Investors should also be aware that while we do, from time to time, communicate with securities analysts and others, we do not, by policy, selectively disclose to them any material nonpublic information or other confidential commercial information. Accordingly, stockholders should not assume that we agree with any statement or report issued by any analyst regardless of the content of the statement or report. We do not, by policy, confirm forecasts or projections issued by others. Thus, to the extent that reports issued by securities analysts contain any projections, forecasts or opinions, such reports are not our responsibility.

PART I

Item 1. Business.

General

We are a full-service provider of outsourced receivables management and related services. Our primary business is the purchase, collection and management of portfolios of defaulted consumer receivables. These are the unpaid obligations of individuals to credit originators, which include banks, credit unions, consumer and auto finance companies and retail merchants. We also provide a broad range of contingent and fee-based services, including collateral-location services for credit originators via IGS, fee-based collections through Anchor Receivables Management (we refer to this business in this document as ARM) and revenue administration, audit and debt discovery/recovery services for government entities through RDS which we commenced after our acquisition of the assets of Alatax, Inc. in July 2005. We believe that the strengths of our business are our sophisticated approach to portfolio pricing and servicing, our emphasis on developing and retaining our collection personnel, our sophisticated collections systems and procedures and our relationships with many of the largest consumer lenders in the United States. Our proven ability to service defaulted consumer receivables allows us to offer debt owners a complete outsourced solution to address their defaulted consumer receivables. The defaulted consumer receivables we collect are generally either purchased from sellers of defaulted consumer debt or are collected on behalf of debt owners on a commission fee basis. We intend to continue to build on our strengths and grow our business through the disciplined approach that has contributed to our success to date.

We use the following terminology throughout our reports: Cash Receipts refers to collections on our owned portfolios together with commission income and sales of finance receivables. Cash Collections refers to collections on our owned portfolios only, exclusive of commission income and sales of finance receivables. Amortization Rate refers to cash collections applied to principal as a percentage of total cash collections. Income Recognized on Finance Receivables refers to income derived from our owned debt portfolios and is shown net of valuation allowances. Cash Sales of Finance Receivables refers to the sales of our owned portfolios. Commissions refers to fee income generated from our wholly-owned contingent fee and fee-for-service subsidiaries.

We specialize in receivables that have been charged-off by the credit originator. Because the credit originator and/or other debt servicing companies have unsuccessfully attempted to collect these receivables, we are able to purchase them at a substantial discount to their face value. From our 1996 inception through December 31, 2006, we acquired 803 portfolios with a face value of \$24.2 billion for \$527.8 million, representing more than 11.4 million customer accounts. The success of our business depends on our ability to purchase portfolios of defaulted consumer receivables at appropriate valuations and to collect on those receivables effectively and efficiently. Since inception, we have been able to collect at an average rate of 2.5 to 3.0 times our purchase price for defaulted consumer receivables portfolios, as measured over a five to ten year period, which has enabled us to generate increasing profits and positive cash flow.

We have achieved strong financial results since our formation, with cash collections growing from \$10.9 million in 1998 to \$236.4 million in 2006. Total revenue has grown from \$6.8 million in 1998 to \$188.3 million in 2006, a compound annual growth rate of 51%. Similarly, pro forma net income has grown from \$402,000 in 1998 to net income of \$44.5 million in 2006.

We were initially formed as Portfolio Recovery Associates, L.L.C., a Delaware limited liability company, on March 20, 1996. Prior to the formation of Portfolio Recovery Associates, Inc., members of our current management team played key roles in the development of a defaulted consumer receivables acquisition and divestiture operation for Household Recovery Services, a subsidiary of Household International, now owned by HSBC. In connection with our 2002 initial public offering (our IPO), all of the membership units of Portfolio Recovery Associates, L.L.C. were exchanged, simultaneously with the effectiveness of our registration statement, for a single class of the common stock of Portfolio Recovery Associates, Inc., a new Delaware corporation formed on August 7, 2002. Accordingly, the members of Portfolio Recovery Associates, L.L.C. became the common stockholders of Portfolio Recovery Associates, Inc., which became the parent company of Portfolio Recovery Associates, L.L.C. and its subsidiaries.

The Company maintains an Internet website at the following address: www.portfoliorecovery.com.

We make available on or through our website certain reports that we file with or furnish to the SEC in accordance with the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These include our annual reports on Form 10-K, our quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and our current reports on Form 8-K. We make this information available on our website free of charge as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file the information with or furnish it to the SEC. The information that is filed with the SEC may be read or copied at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549. In addition, information on the operation of the Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC maintains an Internet site that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC at: www.sec.gov.

Reports filed with or furnished to the SEC are also available free of charge upon request by contacting our corporate office at:

Portfolio Recovery Associates, Inc.

Attn: Investor Relations

120 Corporate Boulevard, Suite 100

Norfolk, Virginia 23502

Competitive Strengths

Complete Outsourced Solution for Debt Owners

We offer debt owners a complete outsourced solution to address their defaulted consumer receivables. Depending on a debt owner's timing and needs, we can either purchase their defaulted consumer receivables, providing immediate cash, or service those receivables on their behalf for either a fee-for-service or a commission fee, based on a percentage of our collections. We can purchase or service receivables throughout the entire delinquency cycle, from receivables that have only been processed for collection internally by the debt owner to receivables that have been subject to multiple internal and external collection efforts. This flexibility helps us meet the needs of debt owners and allows us to become a trusted resource. Furthermore, our strength across multiple transaction and asset types provides the opportunity to cross-sell our services to debt owners, building on successful engagements. Through our RDS business, we have the ability to provide these services to local governments.

Disciplined and Proprietary Underwriting Process

One of the key components of our growth has been our ability to price portfolio acquisitions at levels that have generated profitable returns on investment. Since inception, we have been able to collect at an average rate of 2.5 to 3.0 times our purchase price for defaulted consumer receivables portfolios, as measured over a five to ten year period, which has enabled us to generate increasing profits and cash flow. In order to price portfolios and forecast the targeted collection results for a portfolio, we use two separate statistical models developed internally, which we may supplement with on-site due diligence and data obtained from the debt owner's collection process and loan files. One model analyzes the portfolio as one unit based on demographic comparisons, while the second model analyzes each account in a portfolio using variables in a regression analysis. As we collect on our portfolios, the results are input back into the models in an ongoing process which we believe increases their accuracy. Through December 31, 2006 we have acquired 803 portfolios with a face value of \$24.2 billion.

Ability to Hire, Develop and Retain Productive Collectors

We place considerable focus on our ability to hire, develop and retain effective collectors who are key to our continued growth and profitability. Several large military bases and numerous telemarketing, customer service and reservation phone centers are located near our headquarters and regional offices in Virginia, providing access to a large pool of eligible personnel. The Hutchinson, Kansas, Las Vegas, Nevada, Birmingham, Alabama and Jackson, Tennessee areas also provide a sufficient potential workforce of eligible personnel. We have found that tenure is a primary driver of our collector effectiveness. We offer our collectors a competitive wage with the opportunity to receive unlimited incentive compensation based on performance, as well as an attractive benefits package, a comfortable working environment and the ability to work on a flexible schedule. Stock options were awarded to many of our collectors at the time of our IPO, and many tenured collectors were awarded nonvested shares in 2004, 2005 and 2006. We have a comprehensive six week training program for new owned portfolio collectors and provide continuing advanced training classes which are conducted in our four training centers. Recognizing the demands of the job, our management team has endeavored to create a professional and supportive environment for all of our employees.

Established Systems and Infrastructure

We have devoted significant effort to developing our systems, including statistical models, databases and reporting packages, to optimize our portfolio purchases and collection efforts. In addition, we believe that our technology infrastructure is flexible, secure, reliable and redundant, to ensure the protection of our sensitive data and to mitigate exposure to systems failure or unauthorized access. We believe that our systems and infrastructure give us meaningful advantages over our competitors. We have developed financial models and systems for pricing portfolio acquisitions, managing the collections process and monitoring operating results. We perform a static pool analysis monthly on each of our portfolios, inputting actual results back into our acquisition models, to enhance their accuracy. We monitor collection results continuously, seeking to identify and resolve negative trends immediately. Our comprehensive management reporting package is designed to fully inform our management team so that they may make timely operating decisions. This combination of hardware, software and proprietary modeling and systems has been developed by our management team through years of experience in this industry and we believe provides us with an important competitive advantage from the acquisition process all the way through collection operations.

Strong Relationships with Major Credit Originators

We have done business with most of the top consumer lenders in the United States. We maintain an extensive marketing effort and our senior management team is in contact on a regular basis with known and prospective credit originators. We believe that we have earned a reputation as a reliable purchaser of defaulted consumer receivables portfolios and as responsible collectors. Furthermore, from the perspective of the selling credit originator, the failure to close on a negotiated sale of a portfolio consumes valuable time and expense and can have an adverse effect on pricing when the portfolio is re-marketed. We have never failed to close on a transaction. Similarly, if a credit originator sells a portfolio to a debt buyer which has a reputation for violating industry standard collecting practices, it can taint the reputation of the credit originator. We go to great lengths to collect from consumers in a responsible, professional and legally compliant manner. We believe our strong relationships with major credit originators provide us with access to quality opportunities for portfolio purchases and contingent fee collection placements.

Experienced Management Team

We have an experienced management team with considerable expertise in the accounts receivable management industry. Prior to our formation, our founders played key roles in the development and management of a consumer receivables acquisition and divestiture operation of Household Recovery Services, a subsidiary of Household International, now owned by HSBC. As we have grown, the original management team has been expanded to include a group of experienced, seasoned executives.

Portfolio Acquisitions

Our portfolio of defaulted consumer receivables includes a diverse set of accounts that can be categorized by asset type, age and size of account, level of previous collection efforts and geography. To identify attractive buying opportunities, we maintain an extensive marketing effort with our senior officers contacting known and prospective sellers of defaulted consumer receivables. We acquire receivables of Visa[®], MasterCard[®] and Discover[®] credit cards, private label credit cards, installment loans, lines of credit, bankrupt, deficiency balances of various types, legal judgments, and trade payables, all from a variety of debt owners. These debt owners include major banks, credit unions, consumer finance companies, telecommunication providers, retailers, utilities, insurance companies, medical groups/hospitals, other debt buyers and auto finance companies. In addition, we exhibit at trade shows, advertise in a variety of trade publications and attend industry events in an effort to develop account purchase opportunities. We also maintain active relationships with brokers of defaulted consumer receivables.

The following chart categorizes our life to date owned portfolios as of December 31, 2006 into the major asset types represented.

Asset Type	No. of Accounts	%	Life to Date Purchased Face Value of Defaulted Consumer Receivables ⁽¹⁾	
			\$	%
Visa/MasterCard/Discover	5,376,651	46.9%	\$ 16,348,256,929	67.5%
Consumer Finance	3,606,270	31.5%	3,049,956,353	12.6%
Private Label Credit Cards	2,146,784	18.7%	2,781,276,748	11.5%
Auto Deficiency	333,467	2.9%	2,039,524,851	8.4%
Total:	11,463,172	100.0%	\$ 24,219,014,881	100.0%

(1) The Life to Date Purchased Face Value of Defaulted Consumer Receivables represents the original face amount purchased from sellers and has not been decremented by any adjustments including payments and buybacks (buybacks are defined as purchase price refunded by the

seller due to the
return of
non-compliant
accounts).

We have done business with most of the largest consumer lenders in the United States. Since our formation, we have purchased accounts from approximately 110 debt owners.

We have acquired portfolios at various price levels, depending on the age of the portfolio, its geographic distribution, our historical experience with a certain asset type or credit originator and similar factors. A typical defaulted consumer receivables portfolio ranges from \$1 million to \$150 million in face value and contains defaulted consumer receivables from diverse geographic locations with average initial individual account balances of \$400 to \$7,000.

The age of a defaulted consumer receivables portfolio (the time since an account has been charged-off) is an important factor in determining the price at which we will purchase a receivables portfolio. Generally, there is an inverse relationship between the age of a portfolio and the price at which we will purchase the portfolio. This relationship is due to the fact that older receivables typically are more difficult to collect. The accounts receivables management industry places receivables into categories depending on the number of collection agencies that have previously attempted to collect on the receivables. Fresh accounts are typically past due 120 to 270 days and charged-off by the credit originator, that are either being sold prior to any post-charge-off collection activity or are placed with a third-party for the first time. These accounts typically sell for the highest purchase price. Primary accounts are typically 360 to 450 days past due and charged-off, have been previously placed with one contingent fee servicer and receive a lower purchase price. Secondary and tertiary accounts are typically more than 540 days past due and charged-off, have been placed with two or three contingent fee servicers and receive even lower purchase prices.

As shown in the following chart, as of December 31, 2006, we purchase or service accounts at any point in the delinquency cycle.

Account Type	No. of		Life to Date Purchased Face Value of Defaulted Consumer	
	Accounts	%	Receivables⁽¹⁾	%
Fresh	272,695	2.4%	\$ 1,163,166,261	4.8%
Primary	1,287,466	11.2%	2,820,152,617	11.6%
Secondary	2,124,532	18.6%	3,942,881,497	16.3%
Tertiary	2,990,790	26.1%	3,708,911,628	15.3%
BK Trustees ⁽²⁾	1,550,738	13.5%	6,320,427,075	26.1%
Other ⁽²⁾	3,236,951	28.2%	6,263,475,803	25.9%
Total:	11,463,172	100.0%	\$ 24,219,014,881	100.0%

(1) The Life to Date Purchased Face Value of Defaulted Consumer Receivables represents the original face amount purchased from sellers and has not been decremented by any adjustments including payments and buybacks.

(2) Included in Other are purchased accounts that were previously included in BK Trustees. These accounts have been reclassified to more properly reflect

historical
buying and the
nature of the
accounts.

We also review the geographic distribution of accounts within a portfolio because we have found that certain states have more debtor-friendly laws than others and, therefore, are less desirable from a collectibility perspective. In addition, economic factors and bankruptcy trends vary regionally and are factored into our maximum purchase price equation.

The following chart sets forth our overall life to date portfolio of defaulted consumer receivables geographically as of December 31, 2006:

Geographic Distribution	No. of Accounts	%	Life to Date Purchased Face Value of Defaulted Consumer Receivables ⁽¹⁾		Original Purchase Price of Defaulted Consumer Receivables ⁽²⁾	
				%		%
Texas	2,155,782	19%	\$ 3,002,971,595	12%	\$ 63,109,706	12%
California	1,062,532	9%	2,835,314,011	12%	55,225,551	10%
Florida	843,108	7%	2,380,826,790	10%	48,030,067	9%
New York	644,997	6%	1,698,736,386	7%	37,429,693	7%
Pennsylvania	346,765	3%	918,977,752	4%	22,331,632	4%
New Jersey	285,265	2%	849,277,542	4%	16,876,671	3%
Ohio	368,310	3%	791,995,960	3%	17,859,999	3%
Illinois	451,219	4%	824,313,924	3%	19,372,074	4%
North Carolina	367,796	3%	796,496,805	3%	18,589,155	4%
Georgia	287,220	3%	682,589,442	3%	17,865,638	3%
Michigan	305,659	3%	611,109,844	3%	15,176,646	3%
Massachusetts	236,485	2%	545,904,331	2%	11,195,670	2%
Virginia	214,999	2%	455,610,000	2%	11,167,323	2%
Arizona	166,535	1%	452,744,304	2%	8,874,522	2%
Maryland	182,371	2%	430,945,120	2%	9,088,320	2%
Missouri	324,497	3%	433,370,156	2%	9,615,054	2%
Other ⁽³⁾	3,219,632	28%	6,507,830,919	26%	146,009,891	28%
Total:	11,463,172	100%	\$ 24,219,014,881	100%	\$ 527,817,612	100%

(1) The Life to Date Purchased Face Value of Defaulted Consumer Receivables represents the original face amount purchased from sellers and has

not been
decremented by
any adjustments
including
payments and
buybacks.

(2) The Original
Purchase Price
of Defaulted
Consumer
Receivables
represents the
cash paid to
sellers to
acquire
portfolios of
defaulted
consumer
receivables.

(3) Each state
included in
Other represents
less than 2% of
the face value of
total defaulted
consumer
receivables.

Purchasing Process

We acquire portfolios from debt owners through auctions and negotiated sales. In an auction process, the seller will assemble a portfolio of receivables and will either broadly offer the portfolio to the market or seek purchase prices from specifically invited potential purchasers. In a privately negotiated sale process, the debt owner will contact known, reputable purchasers directly, take bids and negotiate the terms of sale. On a limited basis, we also acquire accounts in forward flow contracts. Under a forward flow contract, we agree to purchase defaulted consumer receivables from a debt owner on a periodic basis, at a set percentage of face value of the receivables over a specified time period. These agreements typically have a provision requiring that the attributes of the receivables to be sold will not significantly change each month and that the debt owner efforts to collect these receivables will not change. If this provision is not adhered to, the contract will allow for the early termination of the forward flow contract by the purchaser. Forward flow contracts are a consistent source of defaulted consumer receivables for accounts receivables management providers and provide the debt owner with a reliable source of revenue and a professional resolution of defaulted consumer receivables.

In a typical sale transaction, a debt owner distributes a computer data file containing ten to fifteen basic data fields on each receivables account in the portfolio offered for sale. Such fields typically include the consumer's name, address, outstanding balance, date of charge-off, date of last payment and the date the account was opened. We perform our initial due diligence on the portfolio by electronically cross-checking the data fields on the computer disk or data tape against the accounts in our owned portfolios and against national demographic and credit databases. We compile a variety of portfolio level reports examining all demographic data available. When valuing pools of bankrupt consumer receivables, we seek to access information on the status of each account's bankruptcy case.

In order to determine a purchase price for a portfolio, we use two separate internally developed computer models, which we may supplement with on-site due diligence of the seller's collection operation and/or a review of their loan origination files, collection notes and work processes. We analyze the portfolio using our proprietary multiple regression model, which analyzes each account of the portfolio using variables in the regression model. In addition, we analyze the portfolio as a whole using an adjustment model, which uses an appropriate cash flow model depending upon whether it is a purchase of fresh, primary, secondary or tertiary accounts. Then, adjustments can be made to the cash flow model to compensate for demographic attributes supported by a detailed analysis of demographic data. From these models we derive our quantitative purchasing analysis which is used to help price transactions. The multiple regression model is also used to prioritize collection work efforts subsequent to purchase. With respect to prospective forward flow contracts and other long-term relationships, in addition to the procedures outlined above, as we receive new flows under the aforementioned contract we may obtain a representative test portfolio to evaluate and compare the performance of the portfolio to the projections we developed in our purchasing analysis. In addition, when purchasing bankrupt consumer receivables, we utilize a specifically designed pricing model.

Our due diligence and portfolio review results in a comprehensive analysis of the proposed portfolio. This analysis compares defaulted consumer receivables in the prospective portfolio with our collection history in similar portfolios. We then use our multiple regression model to value each account. Using the two valuation approaches, we determine cash collections over the life of the portfolio. We then summarize all anticipated cash collections and associated direct expenses and project a collectibility value expressed both in dollars and liquidation percentage and a detailed expense projection over the portfolio's estimated six to ten year economic life. We use the total projected collectibility value and expenses to determine an appropriate purchase price.

We maintain a detailed static pool analysis on each portfolio that we have acquired, capturing all demographic data and revenue and expense items for further analysis. We use the static pool analysis to refine the underwriting models that we use to price future portfolio purchases. The results of the static pool analysis are input back into our models, increasing the accuracy of the models as the data set increases with every portfolio purchase and each day's collection efforts.

The quantitative and qualitative data derived in our due diligence is evaluated together with our knowledge of the current defaulted consumer receivables market and any subjective factors about the portfolio or the debt owner of which management may be aware. A portfolio acquisition approval memorandum is prepared for each prospective portfolio before a purchase price is submitted to the debt owner. This approval memorandum, which outlines the portfolio's anticipated collectibility and purchase structure, is distributed to members of our Investment Committee. The approval by the Committee sets a maximum purchase price for the portfolio. The Investment Committee is currently comprised of Steve Fredrickson, Chief Executive Officer and President, Kevin Stevenson, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer and Craig Grube, Executive Vice President - Acquisitions.

Once a portfolio purchase has been approved by our investment committee and the terms of the sale have been agreed to with the debt owner, the acquisition is documented in an agreement that contains customary terms and conditions. Provisions are typically incorporated for bankrupt, disputed, fraudulent or deceased accounts and typically, the debt owner either agrees to repurchase these accounts or replace them with acceptable replacement accounts within certain time frames.

Owned Collection Operations

Our work flow management system places, recalls and prioritizes accounts in collectors' work queues, based on our analyses of our accounts and other demographic, credit and prior work collection attributes. We use this process to focus our work effort on those consumers most likely to pay on their accounts and to rotate to other collectors the non-paying but most likely to pay accounts from which other collectors have been unsuccessful in receiving payment. The majority of our collections occur as a result of telephone contact with consumers.

The collectibility forecast for a newly acquired portfolio will help determine collection strategy. Accounts which are determined to have the highest predicted collection probability may be sent immediately to collectors' work queues. Less collectible accounts may be set aside as house accounts to be collected using a predictive dialer or another passive, low cost method. Some accounts may be worked using a letter and/or settlement strategy. We may obtain credit reports for various accounts after the collection process begins. When a collector establishes contact with a consumer, the account information is placed automatically in the collector's work queue.

Our computer system allows each collector to view all the scanned documents relating to the consumer's account, which can include the original account application and payment checks. A typical collector work queue may include 650 to 1,000 accounts or more, depending on the skill level and tenure of the collector. The work queue is depleted and replenished automatically by our computerized work flow system.

On the initial contact call, the consumer is given a standardized presentation regarding the benefits of resolving his or her account with us. Emphasis is placed on determining the reason for the consumer's default in order to better assess the consumer's situation and create a plan for repayment. The collector is incentivized to have the consumer pay the full balance of the account. If the collector cannot obtain payment of the full balance, the collector will suggest a repayment plan which generally includes an approximate 20% down payment with the balance to be repaid over an agreed upon period. At times, when determined to be appropriate, and in many cases with management approval, a reduced lump-sum settlement may be agreed upon. If the consumer elects to utilize an installment plan, we have developed a system which enables us to make withdrawals from a consumer's bank account, in accordance with the directions of the customer.

If a collector is unable to establish contact with a consumer based on information received, the collector must undertake skip tracing procedures to develop important account information. Skip tracing is the process of developing new phone, address, job or asset information on a consumer, or verifying the accuracy of such information. Each collector does his or her own skip tracing using a number of computer applications available at his or her workstation, as well as a series of automated skip tracing procedures implemented by us on a regular basis.

Accounts for which the consumer has the likely ability, but not the willingness, to resolve their obligations are reviewed for legal action. Depending on the balance of the defaulted consumer receivable and the applicable state collection laws, we determine whether to commence legal action to judicially collect on the receivable. The legal process can take an extended period of time, but it also generates cash collections that likely would not have been realized otherwise.

Our legal recovery department oversees our internal legal collections and coordinates an independent nationwide collections attorney network which is responsible for the preparation and filing of judicial collection proceedings in multiple jurisdictions, determining the suit criteria, coordinating sales of property and instituting wage garnishments to satisfy judgments. This network consists of approximately 70 independent law firms who work on a flat fee or contingent fee basis. Legal cash collections currently constitute approximately 32% of our total cash collections. As our portfolio matures, a larger number of accounts will be directed to our legal recovery department for judicial collection; consequently, we anticipate that legal cash collections will grow commensurately and comprise a larger percentage of our total cash collections. During 2004, we began using a combination of internal staff (attorney and support), as well as external attorneys, to pursue legal collections in certain states and under certain circumstances. This has grown to over 30 states, utilizing the lower courts, up to jurisdictional limits. This distribution channel allows us to work accounts that we would not normally pursue through the use of contingent fee collection attorneys because of cost. Our legal recovery department also collects claims against estates in cases involving deceased debtors having assets at the time of death.

Our bankruptcy department files proofs of claim (POCs) and performs all administrative functions and tracking on accounts that are included in consumer bankruptcies filed under Chapter 13 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code in order to substantiate our claims and ensure that we participate in any distributions to creditors. The Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act, which was passed on October 17, 2005 (the Bankruptcy Reform Act), established a means test which imposed strict income criteria for the filing of a Chapter 7 bankruptcy petition. If a debtor s income exceeds the median income for his or her state, he or she may be required to file for Chapter 13 bankruptcy. Consequently, fewer debtors may be able to have their obligations completely discharged in Chapter 7 bankruptcy actions, and instead may be required to repay a portion of their debts under Chapter 13 payment plans. If this scenario occurs, it would enable us to generate recoveries from a larger number of bankrupt debtors through the filing of POCs with the trustees of bankruptcy courts. However, the increased complexities and expense of filing for bankruptcy, regardless of chapter, may reduce the total number of bankruptcies filed and consequently limit our potential recoveries.

Fee-for-Service Businesses

In order to provide debt owners with alternative collection solutions and to capitalize on common competencies between a fee-for-service collections operation and an acquired receivables portfolio business, we commenced our ARM third-party contingent fee collections operation in March 2001. In a contingent fee arrangement, debt owners typically place defaulted receivables with a third party collection agency once they have ceased their recovery efforts. The debt owners then pay the third-party agency a commission fee based upon the amount actually collected from the consumer. A contingent fee placement of defaulted consumer receivables is usually for a fixed time frame, typically four to six months, or as long as twelve months. At the end of this fixed period, the third-party agency will return the uncollected defaulted consumer receivables to the debt owner, which may then place the defaulted consumer receivables with another collection agency or sell the portfolio of receivables.

The determination of the commission fee to be paid for third-party collections is generally based upon the age and potential collectibility of the defaulted consumer receivables being assigned for placement. For example, if there has been no prior third-party collection activity with respect to the defaulted consumer receivables, the commission fee would be lower than if there had been one or more previous collection agencies attempting to collect on the receivables. The earlier the placement of defaulted consumer receivables in the collection process, the higher the probability of receiving a cash collection and, therefore, the lower the cost to collect and the lower the commission fee. Other factors, such as the location of the consumers, the size of the defaulted consumer receivables, competition among third party agencies, and the clients collection procedures and work standards also contribute to establishing a commission fee.

Revenues from IGS are accounted for as commission revenue. IGS performs national skip tracing and collateral recovery services, principally for auto finance companies, for a fee. The amount of fee earned is generally dependent on several different outcomes: whether the debtor was found and a resolution on the account occurred, if the collateral was repossessed or if payment was made by the debtor to the debt owner. For example, if the debtor is not found, our fee is less than if the debtor is found and we are able to create a positive resolution on the account.

RDS computes revenue using both of the aforementioned approaches. RDS collects delinquent taxes and earns a contingent fee. This fee can vary based on the age of the debt being collected. RDS also processes tax payments for taxing authorities. For this work, we are paid a fee for each transaction. RDS also performs tax audit services, for which we are paid at an hourly rate. RDS provides local and state governments with a range of revenue enhancement services including revenue administration, revenue discovery and recovery, aged receivables management and compliance auditing.

Competition

We face competition in both of the markets we serve – owned portfolio and fee-for-service accounts receivable management – from new and existing providers of outsourced receivables management services, including other purchasers of defaulted consumer receivables portfolios, third-party contingent fee collection agencies and debt owners that manage their own defaulted consumer receivables rather than outsourcing them. The accounts receivable management industry (owned portfolio and contingent fee) is highly fragmented and competitive, consisting of approximately 6,000 consumer and commercial agencies. We estimate that more than 90% of these agencies compete in the contingent fee market. There are few significant barriers for entry to new providers of contingent fee receivables management services and, consequently, the number of agencies serving the contingent fee market may continue to grow. Greater capital needs and the need for portfolio evaluation expertise sufficient to price portfolios effectively constitute significant barriers for entry to new providers of owned portfolio receivables management services.

We face bidding competition in our acquisition of defaulted consumer receivables and in obtaining placement of fee-for-service receivables. We also compete on the basis of reputation, industry experience and performance. Among the positive factors which we believe influence our ability to compete effectively in this market are our ability to bid on portfolios at appropriate prices, our reputation from previous transactions regarding our ability to close transactions in a timely fashion, our relationships with originators of defaulted consumer receivables, our team of well-trained collectors who provide quality customer service and compliance with applicable collections laws, our ability to collect on various asset types and our ability to provide both purchased and contingent fee solutions to debt owners. Among the negative factors which we believe could influence our ability to compete effectively in this market are that some of our current competitors and possible new competitors may have substantially greater financial, personnel and other resources, greater adaptability to changing market needs, longer operating histories and more established relationships in our industry than we currently have.

Information Technology

Technology Operating Systems and Server Platform

The scalability of our systems provides us with a technology system that is flexible, secure, reliable and redundant to ensure the protection of our sensitive data. We utilize Intel-based servers running industry standard open systems coupled with Microsoft Windows 2000/2003 and NT Server operating systems. In addition, we utilize a blend of purchased and proprietary software systems tailored to the needs of our business. These systems are designed to eliminate inefficiencies in our collections, continue to meet business objectives in a changing environment and meet compliance obligations with regulatory entities. Our proprietary hardware and software systems are being leveraged to manage location information, phone and operational applications for IGS and RDS. We believe our custom solutions will enhance the overall investigative capabilities of this business while meeting compliance obligations with regulatory entities.

Network Technology

To provide delivery of our applications, we utilize Intel-based workstations across our entire business operations. The environment is configured to provide speeds of 100 megabytes to the desktops of our collections and administration staff. Our one gigabyte server network architecture supports high-speed data transport. Our network system is designed to be scalable and meet expansion and inter-building bandwidth and quality of service demands.

Database and Software Systems

The ability to access and utilize data is essential to us being able to operate nationwide in a cost-effective manner. Our centralized computer-based information systems support the core processing functions of our business under a set of integrated databases and are designed to be both replicable and scalable to accommodate our internal growth. This integrated approach helps to assure that consistent sources are processed efficiently. We use these systems for portfolio and client management, skip tracing, check taking, financial and management accounting, reporting, and planning and analysis. The systems also support our consumers, including on-line access to account information, account status and payment entry. We use a combination of Microsoft, Oracle and Cache database software to manage our portfolios, financial, customer and sales data, and we believe these systems will be sufficient for our needs for the foreseeable future. RDS maintains a unique, proprietary software system that manages the movement of data, accounts and information throughout the unit. We believe this system will be sufficient for our needs in the foreseeable future. Our contingent fee collections operations database incorporates an integrated and proprietary predictive dialing platform used with our predictive dialer discussed below.

Redundancy, System Backup, Security and Disaster Recovery

Our data centers provide the infrastructure for innovative collection services and uninterrupted support of hardware and server management, server co-location and an all-inclusive server administration for our business. We believe our facilities and operations include sufficient redundancy, file back-up and security to ensure minimal exposure to systems failure or unauthorized access. The preparations in this area include the use of call centers in Virginia, Kansas and Tennessee in order to help provide redundancy for data and processes should one site be completely disabled. We have a disaster recovery plan covering our business that is tested on a periodic basis. The combination of our locally distributed call control systems provides enterprise-wide call and data distribution between our call centers for efficient portfolio collection and business operations. In addition to data replication between the sites, incremental backups of both software and databases are performed on a daily basis and a full system backup is performed weekly. Backup data tapes are stored at an offsite location along with copies of schedules and production control procedures, procedures for recovery using an off-site data center, documentation and other critical information necessary for recovery and continued operation. Our Virginia headquarters has two separate power and telecommunications feeds, an uninterruptible power supply and a diesel-generator power plant, all of which provide a level of redundancy should a power outage or interruption occur. We also have generators installed at our Hampton and Kansas locations. We also employ rigorous physical and electronic security to protect our data. Our call centers have restricted card key access and appropriate additional physical security measures. Electronic protections include data encryption, firewalls and multi-level access controls. The facilities which currently house IGS and RDS feature uninterruptible power supply units and electronic protections. Full-scale site power, telecommunication and all of the other systems abilities of our other sites will be installed at IGS and RDS at a later time.

Plasma Displays for Real Time Data Utilization

We utilize plasma displays at our main facility to aid in recovery of portfolios. The displays provide real-time business-critical information to our collection personnel for efficient collection efforts such as telephone, production, employee status, goal trending, training and corporate information.

Predictive Dialer Technology

The Avaya Proactive Contact Dialer ensures that our collection staff focuses on certain defaulted consumer receivables according to our specifications. Our predictive dialer takes account of all campaign and dialing parameters and is able to automatically adjust its dialing pace to match changes in campaign conditions and provide the lowest possible wait times and abandon rates. In addition, the dialer allows our collectors to only handle live voice calls by leaving automated messages on all calls where answering machines are detected. This feature allows our representatives to speak with more debtors per agent hour, and also increases our inbound call volume.

Employees

We employed 1,291 persons on a full-time basis, including the following number of front line operations employees by business: 937 on our owned portfolios, 81 working in our ARM contingent fee collections operations, 85 working in our IGS operations and 32 working in our RDS government collections operations, as of December 31, 2006. None of our employees are represented by a union or covered by a collective bargaining agreement. We believe that our relations with our employees are good.

Hiring

We recognize that our collectors are critical to the success of our business as a majority of our collection efforts occur as a result of telephone contact with consumers. We have found that the tenure and productivity of our collectors are directly related. Therefore, attracting, hiring, training, retaining and motivating our collection personnel is a major focus for us. We pay our collectors competitive wages and offer employees a full benefits program which includes comprehensive medical coverage, short and long term disability, life insurance, dental and vision coverage, pre-paid legal plan, an employee assistance program, supplemental indemnity, cancer, hospitalization, accident insurance, a flexible spending account for child care and a matching 401(k) program. In addition to a base wage, we provide collectors with the opportunity to receive unlimited compensation through an incentive compensation program that pays bonuses above a set monthly base, based upon each collector's collection results. This program is designed to ensure that employees are paid based not only on performance, but also on consistency. We have awarded stock based compensation to many of our tenured collectors. We believe that these practices have helped us achieve an annual post-training turnover rate of 56% in 2006.

A large number of telemarketing, customer-service and reservation phone centers are located near our Virginia headquarters. We believe that we offer a competitive and, in many cases, a higher base wage than many local employers and therefore have access to a large number of eligible personnel. In addition, there are several military bases in the area. We employ numerous military spouses and retirees and find them to be an excellent source of employees. We have also found the Las Vegas, Nevada, Hutchinson, Kansas, Birmingham, Alabama and Jackson, Tennessee areas to provide a large potential workforce of eligible personnel.

Training

We provide a comprehensive six week training program for all new owned portfolio collectors. The first three weeks of the training program is comprised of lectures to learn collection techniques, state and federal collection laws, systems, negotiation skills, skip tracing and telephone use. These sessions are then followed by an additional three weeks of practical experience conducting live calls with additional managerial supervision in order to provide employees with confidence and guidance while still contributing to our profitability. Each trainee must successfully pass a comprehensive examination before being assigned to the collection floor. In addition, we conduct continuing advanced classes in our four training centers. Our technology and systems allow us to monitor individual employees and then offer additional training in areas of deficiency to increase productivity.

Outsourced Collections Department

Legal Recovery

An important component of our collections effort involves our outsourced collections department and the judicial collection of accounts of customers who have the ability, but not the willingness, to resolve their obligations. Accounts for which the consumer is not cooperative and for which we can establish a garnishable job or attachable asset are reviewed for legal action. Depending on the balance of the defaulted consumer receivable and the applicable state collection laws, we determine whether to commence legal action to collect on the receivable. The legal process can take an extended period of time, but it also generates cash collections that likely would not have been realized otherwise. Our legal recovery department oversees internal legal collections and coordinates an independent nationwide attorney network which is responsible for the preparation and filing of judicial collection proceedings in multiple jurisdictions, determining the suit criteria, coordinating sales of property and instituting wage garnishments to satisfy judgments. This nationwide collections attorney network consists of approximately 70 independent law firms, all of which work on a contingent fee basis. Legal cash collections currently constitute approximately 32% of our total collections. As our portfolio matures, a larger number of accounts will be directed to our outsourced collections department for judicial collection; consequently, we anticipate that legal collections will grow

commensurately and comprise a larger percentage of our total cash collections. During 2004, we began using a combination of internal staff (attorney and support), as well as external attorneys, to pursue legal collections in certain states and under certain circumstances. This has grown to over 30 states, utilizing the lower courts, up to jurisdictional limits. This distribution channel allows us to work accounts that we would not normally pursue through the use of contingent fee collection attorneys because of cost.

Bankruptcy

Our bankruptcy department files POCs and performs all administrative functions and tracking on accounts that are included in consumer bankruptcies filed under Chapter 13 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code in order to substantiate our claims and ensure that we participate in any distributions to creditors. The Bankruptcy Reform Act established a means test which imposed strict income criteria for the filing of a Chapter 7 bankruptcy petition. If a debtor's income exceeds the median income for his or her state, he or she may be required to file for Chapter 13 bankruptcy. Consequently, fewer debtors may be able to have their obligations completely discharged in Chapter 7 bankruptcy actions, and instead may be required to repay a portion of their debts under Chapter 13 payment plans. If this scenario occurs, it would enable us to generate recoveries from a larger number of bankrupt debtors through the filing of POCs with the trustees of bankruptcy courts. However, the increased complexities and expense of filing for bankruptcy, regardless of chapter, may reduce the total number of bankruptcies filed and consequently limit our potential recoveries.

Corporate Legal Department

Our corporate legal department manages general corporate governance, litigation management, insurance management and risk assessment, corporate transactions, intellectual property, contract and document preparation and review, including real estate purchase and lease agreements and portfolio purchase documents, federal securities law and other regulatory and statutory compliance, obtaining and maintaining multi-state licensing, bonding and insurance, dispute and complaint resolution. As a part of its compliance functions, our corporate legal department works with our internal auditor and the Audit Committee of our Board of Directors in the implementation of our Code of Ethics. In that connection, we have implemented company wide ethics training and mandatory ethics quizzes and have established a confidential telephone hotline to report suspected policy violations, fraud, embezzlement, deception in record keeping and reporting, accounting, auditing matters and other acts which are inappropriate, criminal and/or unethical. Our Code of Ethics Policy is available at the Investor Relations page of our website. Our corporate legal department also provides guidance to our quality control department and assists with training our staff in relevant areas including extensive training on the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act and other relevant laws and regulations. Our corporate legal department distributes guidelines and procedures for collection personnel to follow when communicating with customers, customer's agents, attorneys and other parties during our recovery efforts. This includes overseeing the letter process and approving all written communications to account debtors. In addition, our corporate legal department regularly researches, and provides collections personnel and our training department with summaries and updates of changes in, federal and state statutes and relevant case law, so that they are aware of and in compliance with changing laws and judicial decisions when skip-tracing or collecting accounts.

Regulation

Federal and state statutes establish specific guidelines and procedures which debt collectors must follow when collecting consumer accounts. It is our policy to comply with the provisions of all applicable federal laws and comparable state statutes in all of our recovery activities, even in circumstances in which we may not be specifically subject to these laws. Our failure to comply with these laws could have a material adverse effect on us in the event and to the extent that they apply to some or all of our recovery activities. Federal and state consumer protection, privacy and related laws and regulations extensively regulate the relationship between debt collectors and debtors, and the relationship between customers and credit card issuers. Significant federal laws and regulations applicable to our business as a debt collector include the following:

Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. This act imposes certain obligations and restrictions on the practices of debt collectors, including specific restrictions regarding communications with consumer customers, including the time, place and manner of the communications. This act also gives consumers certain rights, including the right to dispute the validity of their obligations.

Fair Credit Reporting Act. This act places certain requirements on credit information providers regarding verification of the accuracy of information provided to credit reporting agencies and investigating consumer disputes concerning the accuracy of such information. We provide information concerning our accounts to the three major credit reporting agencies, and it is our practice to correctly report this information and to investigate credit reporting disputes. The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act amended the Fair Credit Reporting Act to include additional duties applicable to data furnishers with respect to information in the consumer's credit file that the consumer identifies as resulting from identity theft, and requires that data furnishers have procedures in place as of December 1, 2004 to prevent such information from being furnished to credit reporting agencies. We have instituted measures to effect compliance with these requirements.

Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. This act requires that certain financial institutions, including collection agencies, develop policies to protect the privacy of consumers' private financial information and provide notices to consumers advising them of their privacy policies. This act also requires that if private personal information concerning a consumer is shared with another unrelated institution, the consumer must be given an opportunity to opt out of having such information shared. Since we do not share consumer information with non-related entities, except as required by law, or except as needed to collect on the receivables, our consumers are not entitled to any opt-out rights under this act. This act is enforced by the Federal Trade Commission, which has retained exclusive jurisdiction over its enforcement, and does not afford a private cause of action to consumers who may wish to pursue legal action against a financial institution for violations of this act.

Electronic Funds Transfer Act. This act regulates the use of the Automated Clearing House (ACH) system to make electronic funds transfers. All ACH transactions must comply with the rules of the National Automated Check Clearing House Association (NACHA) and Uniform Commercial Code § 3-402. This act, the NACHA regulations and the Uniform Commercial Code give the consumer, among other things, certain privacy rights with respect to the transactions, the right to stop payments on a pre-approved fund transfer, and the right to receive certain documentation of the transaction. This act also gives consumers a right to sue institutions which cause financial damages as a result of their failure to comply with its provisions.

Telephone Consumer Protection Act. In the process of collecting accounts, we use automated predictive dialers to place calls to consumers. This act and similar state laws place certain restrictions on telemarketers and users of automated dialing equipment who place telephone calls to consumers.

Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940 was amended in December 2003 as the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA). The SCRA gives U.S. military service personnel relief from credit obligations they may have incurred prior to entering military service, and may also apply in certain circumstances to obligations and liabilities incurred by a servicemember while serving on active duty. The SCRA prohibits creditors from taking specified actions to collect the defaulted accounts of servicemembers. The SCRA impacts many different types of credit obligations, including installment contracts and court proceedings, and tolls the statute of limitations during the time that the servicemember is engaged in active military service. The SCRA also places a cap on interest bearing obligations of servicemembers to an amount not greater than 6% per year, inclusive of all related charges and fees.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) provides standards to protect the confidentiality of patients' personal healthcare and financial information. Pursuant to HIPAA, business associates of health care providers, such as agencies which collect healthcare receivables, must comply with certain privacy and security standards established by HIPAA to ensure that the information provided will be safeguarded from misuse.

U.S. Bankruptcy Code. In order to prevent any collection activity with bankrupt debtors by creditors and collection agencies, the U.S. Bankruptcy Code provides for an automatic stay, which prohibits certain contacts with consumers after the filing of bankruptcy petitions.

Additionally, there are in some states statutes and regulations comparable to the above federal laws, and specific licensing requirements which affect our operations. State laws may also limit credit account interest rates and the fees, as well as limit the time frame in which judicial actions may be initiated to enforce the collection of consumer accounts.

Although we are not a credit originator, some of these laws directed toward credit originators may occasionally affect our operations because our receivables were originated through credit transactions, such as the following laws, which apply principally to credit originators:

Truth in Lending Act;