

# Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and  
Business Affairs

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## Northern suburbs builder fined

Today in the Elizabeth Magistrates Court, Maurice Desmond Robinson of Elizabeth East was convicted on 12 counts of breaching the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995* and fined \$18 000 plus costs.

Robinson contracted to supply and erect sheds, verandas and carports while he was not a licensed builder and accepted payments from consumers. He was charged with and found guilty of carrying on business as a building work contractor while unlicensed and for holding himself out as being entitled to carry on business as a building work contractor whilst not entitled to do so. On one occasion he even quoted a false licence number.

In early May 2006 OCBA obtained injunctive orders against Robinson. He is currently restrained from carrying on business as a building work contractor, from holding himself out as being entitled to carry on business as a building work contractor, and from placing advertising or directory listing either personally or through a third party to quote or perform any building work. Despite repeated warnings and prosecution action by OCBA Mr Robinson continued to carry on business as a building work contractor without the appropriate licence. Robinson continued to advertise for building work in the local paper. OCBA then decided that it had no alternative than to seek injunctive relief to protect consumers.

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat, said the case highlighted the benefits of the licensing system, which aims to protect consumers by ensuring that tradespeople are adequately qualified and reputable.

“Traders such as Mr Robinson show a total disregard for licensing requirements and pose a serious risk to consumers. The licensing system is in place to ensure only those that are suitably qualified are entitled to work in South Australia. The system is designed to protect consumers from builders like Mr Robinson.”

“This is a typical example of why people should seek more information and check to see if the tradesperson they are dealing with is adequately licensed. Anyone can view the Licensing Register on the OCBA website or contact the Office to check whether the tradesperson is licensed.”

Mr Bodycoat said, “Builders and tradespeople need to understand that the licensing system is in place for consumer protection. It contains measures to reduce financial risk and the risk of poor quality work. If they contract for or do work which they are not licensed to do then they risk being caught and facing prosecution action.”

To report unlicensed building activity or substandard work contact OCBA on (08) 8204 9777 or 131 882 for country callers. To verify that a person or company is licensed visit the Licensing Public Register at [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au)