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### ARTFUL DODGERS TARGET SA HOUSEHOLDS

South Australians are being urged to be on the lookout for fly by night door-to-door sales people who claim to be struggling “art students” selling their paintings to raise money.

“People should know they’re more than likely going to end up with a huge hole in their pockets if they buy artwork from door-to-door sales people posing as overseas students,” Ms Rankine said.

Reports to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) indicate that people claiming to be international students have been targeting households in an attempt to sell their wares for exorbitant amounts. Information suggests a group of ‘students’ are currently targeting residents in the State’s South East. While trying to sell these paintings, they’re also offering frames and borders in an effort to boost sales.

“What these fraudsters forget is that there are provisions in legislation for door-to-door selling in South Australia. People who purchase any product in this manner need to be aware of their rights, including the right to ‘cool off’ within 10 days of signing the contract,” Ms Rankine said.

Another concerning aspect of this scam is the risk associated with people who may not have purchased genuine items, but instead obtained mass-produced copies of art pieces.

“People could be misled into thinking they’re getting original and valuable paintings. This appears to be a long-running, international scam and indications from authorities overseas are that these art pieces are mass produced,” Ms Rankine said.

It is a breach of the Fair Trading Act 1987 to misrepresent the characteristics of goods. If there are any problems with the goods, these transient salespeople will be almost impossible to track down.

“When considering the purchase of art pieces, people are encouraged to always deal with reputable art dealers,” Ms Rankine said

Buyers should also:

- Never pay for the item upfront. Under fair trading door-to-door provisions, people are entitled to withhold payment for goods over \$50 until after the 10-day cooling off period expires
- Ask the salesperson for ID, the name of the company they represent and the company’s physical address
- Ask the salesperson to leave they’re feeling pressured into buying an item they’re not sure they want

If anyone has information about these scammers they should contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs on 8204 9777 and 131 882 for regional callers.