

Saturday, 1st September 2007

RECORD FINE FOR BACKYARD CAR DEALER

Unlicensed car dealer, Raymond Leslie Reubenicht, has been convicted of a range of offences including running a business as a second-hand vehicle dealer and falsely representing the histories of vehicles.

68 year-old Reubenicht, of Camden Park, was fined a total of \$25,000 late last week for operating a business as a second-hand vehicle dealer whilst unlicensed, and 5 counts of falsely representing that a vehicle had a particular history.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Jennifer Rankine, said, "Unlicensed backyard car dealing and falsely representing the histories of vehicles is a serious offence and of great concern. Our experience with backyard car dealers is that they often set out with the sole intention of ripping off unsuspecting clients."

Between September 2005 and November 2006, Reubenicht ran a business as a second-hand vehicle dealer whilst unlicensed. During this period Reubenicht sold 7 second-hand motor vehicles.

Five of the vehicles had been the subject odometer interference. They had been reduced by a total of approximately 892,000 kilometres - equal to 2.3 trips to the moon.

"Despite being warned by was warned by the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs back in 2006 that he was under investigation, Reubenich continued to operate his business without a licence," Ms Rankine said

Reubenicht went to great lengths to conceal his deception. Entries in log-books made it appear as though Dandenong Mitsubishi had serviced the vehicle regularly. Odometer readings in the log-book contradicted the genuine odometer reading of the vehicle. Investigations revealed the car was never serviced by Dandenong Mitsubishi and that the stamp used in the log book was a fake.

In another attempt to avoid detection by Consumer Affairs, Reubenicht arranged for another person to sell two vehicles on his behalf as well as advertising another car using bogus registration details.

"The licensing system is designed to protect people and the industry from deceptive vehicle dealers such as Reubenicht.

The result of this case should serve as a warning to others considering selling cars without a second-hand vehicle dealer's licence. You will eventually be caught out and face the full force of the law," Ms Rankine said

Under the Second-hand Vehicle Dealers Act 1995 a person who sells, or offers for sale, four or more second-hand vehicles in a 12 month period is presumed to be a dealer and must be licensed.

People are encouraged to report unlawful activity by second-hand vehicle dealers to Consumer Affairs on 8204 9777 or 131 882 for country callers.