

Thursday, 27 May 2010

WHITE VAN SCAMMERS BACK IN BLACK

South Australians are being asked to watch out for a suspicious crew of dubious salesmen offering cheap electrical goods from the back of a black Hyundai van.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gail Gago, said the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) has again received reports of two men setting up shop and selling cheap TVs, projectors and sound systems from the back of a black 2010 Hyundai ILOAD van with Queensland registration plates.

“Usually referred to as ‘White Van Salesmen’, these operators could turn up anywhere around Adelaide so I’d urge consumers to be vigilant and help us to curb their antics by reporting any sightings to OCBA on 8204 9777 or 131 882 for regional calls”.

White Van Salesmen work in groups of two or three and drive a minivan or a commercial vehicle sometimes displaying a company logo. To find suitable targets, the van operators set up their con in moderately-trafficked areas, such as car parks, shopping centers or petrol forecourts.

“So far these dodgy operators have been plying their trade in Queenstown and Mile End retail car parks, approaching shoppers and attempting to sell them cut price electrical goods.”

“They use the line that the goods are surplus stock over-ordered by mistake and therefore they are selling them off at a fraction of the usual price.”

“There is no comeback for consumers when they buy goods from street traders and often the products are of inferior quality and could even be stolen.”

“This particular black Hyundai van is registered as a business listed in Queensland.”

Distributors rent a warehouse and obtain licenses and distribution rights, then import large quantities of poorly made goods. They ship these goods to local warehouses in major cities and hire 'salesmen' to distribute the shoddy goods locally.

“Van salesmen are on our streets and back in business - these people appear to be operating in breach of the door-to-door sales provisions set out in the *Fair Trading Act 1987*.

“This law is an important protection for both consumers and reputable traders, giving a 10-day cooling off period during which the trader must not provide any goods or services or accept payment until the cooling off period expires.”

Door-to-door trading is defined under legislation as the practice under which a person goes from place to place to sell goods.

If consumers are approached by the salesmen selling goods from a black Hyundai van, they are urged to contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs on 8204 9777 (131 882 for regional calls).