

News Release

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Hon Gail Gago
Minister for State/Local Government
Relations
Minister for the Status of Women
Minister for Consumer Affairs
Minister Government Enterprises
Minister Ast Minister for Transport, Infrastructure & Energy

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BLIND RETAILERS CAUGHT IGNORING SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Five big name curtain and blind retailers have been found selling banned pre-packaged blind products, with one retailer offering three non-compliant products for sale.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Gail Gago says the retailers have shown a complete disregard for children's safety and the mandatory safety requirements.

"These safety requirements have been in place for nearly five months and businesses have had ample time to ensure they are compliant."

"We are not talking about small businesses here; the non-compliant retailers are large traders who should have processes in place for these sorts of changes", Minister Gago said.

"It is extremely poor that three of the businesses were warned by OCBA four months ago about stocking non-compliant products, and yet here they are again selling banned items."

The retailers have stocked products without the correct warning labels or instructions - a critical part of the safety requirements as recommended by the Coroner. Blind and curtain cord products that do not comply with labelling safety requirements are considered dangerous goods and are effectively banned from sale and supply in South Australia.

OCBA is investigating non-compliance and taking the next steps in the legal process with a view to prosecution.

Retailers caught selling banned products despite previous warnings could be subject to fines of up to \$10 000 under the *Trade Standards Act 1979*.

In Australia, the deaths of at least 10 toddlers have been linked to looped blind cords since 2000. The new bans were brought in to protect children by bringing in tighter regulations on the sale of potentially hazardous blind cords.

Information about the requirements for blind cords and curtains can be found on the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs website www.ocba.sa.gov.au by searching for 'blind cords'. Consumers can also contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) on 8152 0732 or 131 882 for country callers.