

Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and
Business Affairs

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13 November 2006

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Elusive concrete layers creating chaos

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) is warning consumers about what appears to be a group of concrete layers who demand upfront payment, advertise using false building work contractors licence numbers and quote using aliases.

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat said OCBA was alerted by consumers who had hired them from advertisements in their local paper.

“Many people look through their local paper hoping to find someone who can do the job immediately and at a good price. Beware; this one group of concreting tradespeople are not licensed and use false license numbers. They do little work for upfront cash payments and produce receipts using aliases.”

Consumers have been caught out responding to an advertisement that looks legitimate. The advertisement contains a builders licence number and a mobile telephone number, giving no indication of who the concreter is. Once the concreter comes out they will only provide a verbal quote and insist on an upfront payment in cash. If the consumer does pay upfront they will never see the concreter again. If the consumer decides to not pay immediately, the concreter will start work but do minimal work and ask for payment to complete the job. Again the concreter disappears never to be seen again. One consumer also asked for a receipt and received one, but this was issued using an alias making the trader nearly impossible to trace. Paying by cash also makes it nearly impossible to trace the trader should they disappear.

Mr Bodycoat warns consumers not to pay large amounts upfront for building work. He said, “Tradespeople who ask for large deposits or full upfront payment can leave consumers stranded with unfinished work. The more you pay the less bargaining power you have, especially in seeking recourse in relation to poor quality work and unfinished jobs.”

Consumers and businesses are encouraged to check OCBA’s licensing public register before they contract any tradesperson.

“Consumers need to check their licensing details. They can look up a licence number on the OCBA website or contact OCBA. It is also important to compare quotes and ask advice from friends or relatives about tradespeople they would recommend.”

To find a licensed tradesperson or to verify someone’s licence details, consumers and businesses are encouraged to visit the Licensing Public Register at www.ocba.sa.gov.au or telephone 8204 9644, country callers 131 882.