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### SCAMS TOP COMPLAINT LIST FOR 2008

Scams and get rich quick schemes top the list of complaints to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) in 2008.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Gail Gago says “Scams consistently feature in the top three complaint categories, and last year there were more than eleven hundred complaints about scams and get rich quick schemes, making these the most complained about consumer issues.”

“Obviously many of these scams originate from overseas, outside our jurisdictional capacity to prevent them, however OCBA has staged a number of campaigns to heighten public awareness of the dangers of responding to scam attempts.

“Eleven alerts have also been issued about employment scams, itinerant traders, a travel scam and other schemes.

“I urge South Australians to avoid being scammed by checking information on the OCBA and scamwatch websites that spells out the warning signs, common types of scams and how to protect yourself as well as providing avenues to report it.”

Around 5625 formal complaints were lodged with OCBA in 2008, a 27 percent increase on the previous year.

The top five areas of complaint for 2008 were:

1. Scams	1278 complaints
2. Residential building and construction	869
3. Communication and information products and services	487
4. Travel, hospitality and tourism	281
5. Motor vehicle sales	187

Minister Gago says that complaints about communication and information products and services recorded a sharp increase from the previous year.

“Complaints about telephone services and products, computers, software and the internet moved into the top five – with 487 complaints compared with 376 the previous year.”

Overall OCBA received 87,829 enquiries from consumers and also some traders wanting to know about their rights and responsibilities.

Minister Gago says “I encourage consumers to contact OCBA for advice if they’re unsure about their rights. The OCBA website also provides useful information about a range of issues from buying a mobile phone to purchasing big ticket items such as a car or real estate.”

“OCBA continues to play a crucial role protecting consumers by responding to complaints and queries as well as conducting a range of monitoring programs focusing on various industries and sectors to ensure that traders comply with their fair trading responsibilities.

For consumer advice about your rights and responsibilities contact OCBA on 8204 9777 or country callers 131 882 or visit [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au). You can also visit [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au)