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ADELAIDE HOSTS NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION DEBATE

South Australians can expect far stronger consumer protection in future relating to product safety, unfair contracts and payday lenders after national and international experts hotly debate ideas in Adelaide next month.

SA Minister for Consumer Affairs Gail Gago says these matters are on the national consumer law agenda with detailed policy approaches to be influenced during the 2009 National Consumer Congress hosted by the SA Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA).

“Nationally, consumer law is undergoing significant change and this congress is set to contribute to the positive outcomes these changes hope to achieve,” says Minister Gago.

“Product safety is to be co-ordinated nationally providing for closer scrutiny and follow up.

“Tighter regulation of the credit industry is now being formulated to put dramatic pressure on payday lenders in a bid to stamp out unconscionable conduct.

“Unfair contracts legislation will be paving the way to change the unreasonable terms of a contract or even void it altogether.

“The reform of consumer law in Australia is gaining momentum and this will be an exciting opportunity for consumer leaders from Asia, Europe and the UK to join their Australian counterparts from industry, academia and national consumer groups to influence that change.

“Some of the brightest and best consumer professionals from all over the nation and the world are being attracted and the theme ‘A fair marketplace?’ will inspire discussion about fostering a fair marketplace in a changing global environment.

“Our guest speakers are eminent heads of their professions and this is a fantastic opportunity for South Australia to really tap into cutting edge thinking.”

The congress will encompass a series of presentations and debates around this year’s theme, and will also address current consumer issues such as sustainability and consumer and business ethics.

The 2009 National Consumer Congress will be hosted by the SA Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) from 11 – 13 March. For more information and bookings visit www.ncc2009.com.au