

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005

### **ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT ALWAYS GOLD**

The Minister for Consumer Affairs, Karlene Maywald, today warned consumers to be careful about buying jewellery from temporary stalls at the Royal Show.

"Most traders accurately represent their products, but consumers can still be misled", Minister Maywald said.

"You get what you pay for. You should always ask questions of the trader about the quality of the goods you are thinking about buying."

Recently, thanks to the sharp eyes of a careful consumer, the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) caught out a trader (John Kendall) who led consumers to believe that the jewellery he was selling was genuine gold, when, in fact, it was only gold plated.

The same trader had claimed that the jewellery was high quality fashion jewellery made using a unique process. OCBA has since ascertained that it consisted of an inner base of diamond cut jeweller's metal, permanently bonded to a thin covering of gold, and sold in lengths off a roll or in pre-made sizes. The total gold content was less than 1%.

The trader, who regularly visited South Australia from Victoria, was selling the jewellery from temporary stalls in a number of suburban shopping centres in Adelaide.

"Falsely representing that goods are of a particular standard, quality, value, grade, composition, style or model contravenes the Fair Trading Act", Minister Maywald said.

OCBA has secured an enforceable assurance from the trader that he will not falsely represent that goods are of a particular standard, quality, value, grade, composition, style or model or have had a particular history or particular previous use. If the trader fails to comply with the assurance, he may be guilty of an offence under the *Fair Trading Act 1987* and liable to prosecution.

"This should be a lesson to others, if you are misrepresenting goods or services you are breaking the law. You will get caught," Minister Maywald said.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission will shortly be releasing guidelines for advertising and promotion in the jewellery industry. These guidelines aim to provide practical guidance to members of the jewellery industry - manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and valuers - about their obligations under the consumer protection provisions of the Commonwealth Trade Practices Act 1974 (Act)

For further information on consumer rights contact OCBA on 8204 9777 or 131 882 (country callers).  
[www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au)