

Thursday, 15 May 2008

DODGY TRADERS HIT CITY STREETS

South Australians are being urged to keep a look out for scammers who've reportedly been infiltrating the CBD, targeting unsuspecting office workers.

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) has had reports of people driving around Adelaide selling audio speakers from a white Toyota van with Victorian number plates.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Jennifer Rankine, says people should be alert and keep their eyes peeled for these nomadic traders and to report them to OCBA.

"It's a scam that recurs frequently, where itinerant sales people target unsuspecting South Australian consumers selling 'expensive' plasma televisions, digital cameras and stereo speakers for a 'great deal', with the products generally turning out to be cheap copies."

"The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs want to hear from anyone who has been approached by these scam artists."

According to one victim, approached on the corner of King William and Grenfell Streets, the scammers claimed the speakers were worth \$6000 but being sold for \$1000 cash.

It's understood he then went to the ATM while one of the sellers stood by while he withdrew the money. A receipt was issued under the name of 'Paramount Audio Performance', which is not a registered business in SA. The boxes containing the speakers are branded 'Denmark Audio' speakers and are likely to be cheap imitations.

Itinerant traders have to adhere to door-to-door trading laws. Customers who purchase goods or services valued at more than \$50, are entitled to a 10 day cooling off period during which they can change their mind. Door-to-door traders are prohibited from accepting any payment until the 10-day cooling off period expires.

"It is a major concern that these salespeople are flouting the door-to-door selling provisions of the *Fair Trading Act*, and preying on consumers who may not be aware of their legal rights," Ms Rankine said.

Once people discover problems with products purchased from itinerant traders, they soon realise it's all too late and the salespeople are unreachable as they've moved on.

"The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs is keen to hear from anyone with information about the conduct or whereabouts of these particular traders, and our primary concern is to ensure they don't take South Australians for a for a ride," Ms Rankine said.

For further information or to report a nomadic trader contact OCBA on 8204 9777, or for regional callers 131 882 (local call cost).