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UNLICENSED AND UNINSURED BUILDER FOUND GUILTY

A dodgy builder has been found guilty in a Magistrates Court judgement handed down last week for trading unlicensed and performing domestic building work while uninsured.

John Joseph McMahon has been ordered to pay a fine of \$14,000 following an investigation launched by Consumer and Business Services (CBS) that found Mr McMahon was in breach of the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995* by continuing to trade while unlicensed between October 2008 and August 2009.

Mr McMahon performed a house extension which involved converting an existing carport into a family room while being unlicensed and in the absence of the required policy of insurance.

In addition, Mr McMahon failed to complete the home extension, with some of the work found to be defective and consequently needing substantial repair, causing emotional and financial stress for the consumers.

Mr McMahon also undertook building work on a CBD hotel whilst unlicensed

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Paul White, said "Mr McMahon was trading illegally and his actions have had an adverse impact on the consumers he was dealing with.

"Consumers rightfully expect to engage in honest dealings, yet Mr McMahon carried out work when he ceased to hold a licence, and during this time failed to bring the cancellation of his licence to the attention of the consumers he was contracted to."

Mr McMahon had already repaid the owners of the house \$5,000 and was ordered to pay further compensation amounting to \$4,874.31.

The court found that although Mr McMahon had held a building work contractors licence and supervisors registration from 1992 to March 2008, he continued carrying on business as a building work contractor without a licence and performing domestic building work without having a current insurance policy.

"I encourage consumers to research prospective traders before entering a contract, which includes checking the trader's licence card or the licensed contractors' register on the CBS website," the Commissioner said.

"Instances of dodgy or unlicensed building work should be reported to CBS."

To report concerns about suspected unlicensed builders, or to lodge a complaint, contact CBS on 13 1882 or visit <http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au/>.

For all media inquiries contact the 24-hour AGD Media Line 0422 007 069