

Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and
Business Affairs

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9 May 2008

Protection for disadvantaged consumers

Sessions to tackle injustice for disadvantaged consumers will be held this coming week as part of the annual Law Week initiative.

Acting Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Judy Hughes is concerned that many South Australian consumers may be at risk because they do not know their rights and are not able to access services readily due to geographical isolation, low income, unemployment, gender, disability, age, literacy or cultural factors.

“There are a range of factors that can contribute to consumers not being aware of their rights or important protections available to them. Consumers need to know what services are available so that they can seek support and exercise their consumer rights” said Ms Hughes.

Law Week is held in May each year to promote greater community awareness of the legal system and justice related issues. This year’s theme is ‘Getting the Balance Right’. Events will focus on ways to improve community access to justice and explore issues relevant to a fair and equitable justice system.

Community Legal Service agencies are hosting information sessions on **Consumer Law for the Vulnerable & Disadvantaged**. Speakers from the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA), the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Insolvency & Trustee Services Australia will present information about the services and consumer protections available through each agency.

“By working together consumer protection agencies can share information and develop strategies to address consumer issues.”

The sessions are open to the public and will have particular relevance to community based groups and service providers who work directly with vulnerable or disadvantaged people. These information sharing workshops will help provide an understanding of the consumer protection legal framework and information about the role and function of each consumer agency.

Some of the topics that will be covered include debt management, unconscionable conduct, misleading and deceptive conduct, scams, payday lending, consumer credit, mobile phone purchases and bankruptcy.

Sessions will be held in Christies Beach, Berri, Mt Gambier, Adelaide and Salisbury.

Ms Hughes said “OCBA has supported Law Week for over 10 years and we welcome the opportunity each year to engage with consumers and service providers.”

Law Week '08 ~ Getting the Balance Right ~ May 11 - 18

For more details on the dates and times of the OCBA sessions please visit www.ocba.sa.gov.au and go to the Coming Events section. For a full Law Week program call 8207 8819 or visit www.justice.net.au.