

News Release

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Hon Gail Gago
Minister for State/Local Government
Relations
Minister for the Status of Women
Minister for Consumer Affairs
Minister Government Enterprises
Minister Ast Minister for Transport, Infrastructure & Energy

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WEIGHING UP TRADERS IN THE SOUTH EAST

South East residents can be assured that follow up visits to traders from South Australia's consumer watchdog will help ensure they get the right quantities of items they're paying for.

Checks carried out two months ago uncovered significant problems, with many hardware stores using length measures that were not approved for trade and some traders were selling pre-packaged items not marked with their weight.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Gail Gago says the checks next week are part of an ongoing regional monitoring program by South Australia's Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA).

"South East residents deserve to know that they get what they pay for," says Minister Gago.

"Whenever consumers are being charged per weight, length or volume it is important that traders use correct measuring instruments

"If consumers receive less than they are entitled to, they have every right to feel ripped off. But if traders are giving away more of their product than necessary they are reducing their own profits.

"Where discrepancies are found, traders are put on notice to rectify the problems and become compliant. Follow-up checks are then done to make sure this has happened."

While the inspectors are in the region next week they will also check on other traders in the area to make sure that diesel and petrol pumps are dispensing accurately, and that scales used by traders are showing correct weight.

By law, scales must operate within a very tight range of accuracy. Those measuring outside of this range are deemed illegal for trade and must be rectified by a licensed repairer and certified before reuse.

Traders can avoid these problems by making sure that they maintain and regularly service their measuring instruments to ensure that they give a correct reading or dispense the correct quantity.

Traders found to be non-compliant in follow up checks can be subject to penalties of up to \$20,000 under the Trade Measurement Act 1993.

Consumers can report any concerns to OCBA's Trade Measurement section by calling 8234 2036, or 131 882 for regional callers. For more information consumers can also visit the website at www.ocba.sa.gov.au