

# 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

Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2009

## **ITINERANT ROOF REPAIRERS NOW OFFERING CHEQUE SERVICE**

South Australians are warned to be on the lookout for itinerant roof repairers following reports of activity in the Port Adelaide area, with the repairers even offering to swap a cheque in return for cash.

A Birkenhead resident was approached last Friday by a man offering to carry out roof repairs and the repairer also tried to swap a cheque supposedly for \$15,000 with the consumer.

The man was driving a black car and refused to give his name or any other details.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Gail Gago said, “Consumers should be wary if they’re invited to exchange large amounts of money, especially with a stranger who comes knocking on their door.”

“It’s quite possible that the trader’s cheque would bounce, and any money handed over by the consumer in exchange for the cheque would be lost forever.”

Minister Gago says that itinerant traders have a history of performing substandard work, accepting payment and then quickly disappearing, but the cash-for-cheque offer is a new twist to the approach.

The Birkenhead consumer had previously paid \$10,000 to an itinerant roof painter for shoddy work, so he was quick to decline this recent prospect as well as the dubious money swap offer.

Under door-to-door provisions of the *Fair Trading Act 1987*, consumers are entitled to a 10-day cooling-off period when they purchase goods or services costing more than \$50. The trader must give consumers written information detailing their cooling-off rights, and cannot accept any payment or supply services until the cooling-off period expires.

Door-to-door traders who breach these provisions face penalties of up to \$10,000 if caught, whilst unlicensed building attracts penalties of up to \$20,000 under the relevant acts.

“Fly by night traders seem to ignore the legal requirement to inform consumers of their cooling off rights, and the traders also ignore the rule that no money should change hands until the ten day cooling off period has passed,” says Minister Gago.

“Consumers should never hire itinerant traders because of the risks involved, and they should report any details to Consumer Affairs.”

Anyone with information about itinerant traders can contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) on 8204 9777 or 131 882 for country callers.