

News Release

www.ministers.sa.gov.au



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

Wednesday, 23rd September 2009

SEAFOOD LOVERS SHORT-CHANGED

Consumers haven't been getting the amount of frozen seafood they've paid for, with many packs of prawns found to be under-weight.

Trade Measurement inspectors from the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) recently examined 102 pre-packed products at metropolitan supermarkets and fish mongers, with almost half (46 packs) found to be underweight. Products tested include prawns, squid, fish cakes, fish fingers and fillets.

New uniform test procedures were followed to ensure that the actual seafood content was measured rather than the surface ice content.

Of the 46 underweight packs, one was Atlantic salmon and the rest were prawns.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gail Gago says "seafood lovers have every right to be disappointed with these results."

"Consumers think they're paying for a certain quantity of seafood, but in actual fact they're getting less for their money.

"All pre-packed prawns checked in this exercise came from local fishmongers who had sourced the packs from the same interstate wholesaler. Nearly all of them failed weight tests, which simply isn't good enough."

The average deficiency was less than two percent, however the greatest deficiency was found with a one kilo pack of prawns that was nearly 100 grams underweight.

"It is important that these problems are addressed now as seafood sales will likely increase as we get closer to Christmas," says Ms Gago.

The retailers caught selling under-weight items have been issued with warning notices, and OCBA is working with its interstate counterparts in relation to the seafood suppliers. The local retail outlets have stopped selling the whole packs to the public.

Minister Gago said "As this is the first time that frozen seafood has been tested by Trade Measurement inspectors in SA the retailers have been cautioned, but the same leniency won't be shown if any problems are found during follow up visits."

Traders caught selling inaccurate quantities risk a maximum penalty of \$20,000 under the *Trade Measurement Act 1993*.

To report any concerns about short measure of goods consumers can contact OCBA's Trade Measurement section on 8234 2036 or 131 882 for regional callers. More information is also available at www.ocba.sa.gov.au