

Thursday, 10th December 2009

SOUTH EAST TRADERS QUICK FIX MEASUREMENT PROBLEMS

South East traders have lifted their game following recent inspections to ensure consumers are getting what they pay for.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Gail Gago says stores whose equipment or practices for weighing and measuring supplied goods fell short of requirements in September have come up trumps in the follow up checks, despite problems found at two other stores visited for the first time.

Trade Measurement inspectors from the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) conducted follow-up inspections at twelve stores - mainly hardware stores - who were previously warned, with a further ten traders visited as part of the Christmas season checks.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gail Gago says follow up visits are important to encourage traders to address any issues quickly.

“When inspectors find an incorrect or unapproved set of scales or other measuring device the trader is warned and follow up visits are conducted to make sure any problems are fixed.”

All twelve hardware and automotive traders previously visited and issued with warning letters were found to be compliant.

Minister Gago said “It’s pleasing to see that these traders have heeded the warning and resolved these issues. After all, it’s not just consumers who may be getting ripped off here, the traders may also be giving away more of a product than they need to.”

Of the other ten stores visited for an initial inspection two traders - also hardware stores - were found to be using unapproved measures of length and issued with written notices.

Trade measurement laws require scales and other measuring devices to operate within specific calibrations. Any instrument that measures outside of the prescribed range is illegal to use for trade. Any incorrect instrument must be corrected by a licensed repairer and certified before it can be used again for trade.

Penalties of up to \$20,000 apply for repeat offenders under the *Trade Measurement Act 1993*.

To report any concerns about inaccurate quantities consumers can contact OCBA’s Trade Measurement branch 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