

# Media Release

Contact: **Tanya Berryman**  
Phone: (08) 8204 9507  
0417 815 800

2 August 2005



**Education and  
Information Services**

Level 1 Chesser House  
91-97 Grenfell Street  
Adelaide SA 5000

GPO Box 1719  
Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone (08) 8204 9516  
Facsimile (08) 8204 9509  
[www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au)

## Hard sell tactics - don't become a victim

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) is concerned about door to door traders targeting consumers in Pt Lincoln persuading them to switch electricity retailers. Reports received indicate the traders may be using unscrupulous sales tactics and not informing consumers that they can cool off on their decision to purchase.

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat says "It seems that the elderly in particular are being targeted, but all consumers should be on their guard."

"Complaints to date indicate that one trader is very persistent. If the consumer is reluctant to sign up, the trader changes tack and invites the consumer to take part in a survey. The consumer is then asked to sign a document which is actually a contract."

OCBA is investigating the allegations and, if the reports are correct, the trader is misleading consumers and is failing to provide consumers with information about their cooling off rights.

Mr Bodycoat said "Whether you are signing up for appliances, security monitoring services, a roof restoration or changing your electricity retailer, it is important that you know your rights so that you don't leave yourself vulnerable to door to door traders that use hard sell tactics".

"It is good advice to read anything carefully before you sign. However, when buying goods or services from a door to door trader many consumers sign a contract and think they are locked in. They don't realise that in many cases they are entitled to "cool off" or change their mind without penalty."

If consumers purchase goods or services costing \$50.00 or more in the course of door-to-door trading and sign a contract, they have a 10 day cooling off period, by law. Door-to-door traders are required to give consumers written information outlining the right to cool-off and a form to use if consumers wish to do so. It seems that an electricity retailer is not doing this.

Electricity retailers must comply with the door to door provisions of the Fair Trading Act 1987 as well as the Electricity Marketing Code which prescribes appropriate conduct for approaching consumers either in person or over the phone.

Consumers with information about any door-to-door trader who appears to be acting in breach of legislation should contact OCBA on 131 882. A senior OCBA officer will be at Service SA in Port Lincoln this Thursday. To make an appointment please phone 131 882.

For more information about cooling off rights contact OCBA on 131 882 or visit [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au)



**Government  
of South Australia**