

# Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and  
Business Affairs

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29 September 2006

## Unlicensed activity caught

In the Christies Beach Magistrates Court Mr. Randall Bartram, of Yankalilla, was convicted and fined on one count of carrying on business as a building work contractor without being authorised by licence, and one count of carrying on business under an unregistered business name.

A consumer complaint brought Mr Bartram to the attention of the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA). The consumer had contracted Bartram to repair the fascias of a house, replace rotting woodwork and supply and install roofing on the back porch. The consumer had paid \$1946 upfront for work that was never performed.

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat said this action highlighted the risks consumers take if they choose to pay a large sum upfront. Mr Bodycoat urged consumers also to check that any contractor is appropriately licensed.

“Consumers are encouraged to check the OCBA licensing register on the website ([www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au)) to ensure that the person they are considering for the job is appropriately licensed.”

“Consumers are also advised to only pay a relatively small deposit. Consumers lose bargaining power if they pay the full amount. For smaller jobs costing less than \$12 000, like this one, 10-15% of the full value of the contract is a general guide to how much is a reasonable amount.”

Not only did Mr Bartram contract for building work without a licence, he also carried on business with an unregistered business name.

“If you are carrying on business under a name other than your own name (without addition), you must register that name as a business name. Mr Bartram neglected to register his.”

Magistrate Ms Bolton imposed a conviction and a fine in the amount of \$2,200 for a breach of the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995* and imposed a conviction and fine in the amount of \$800 for a breach of the *Business Names Act 1996* plus legal costs.

Consumers can contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs on (08) 8204 9777, country callers 131 882 or visit the Licensing Public Register at [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au) to check whether a person is appropriately licensed or to find a licensed tradesperson in their local area.