

Monday, 11 August 2008

### **KNOW YOUR WARRANTY RIGHTS**

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs will soon stage a blitz on warranty and refund rights issues.

Consumer Affairs Minister Gail Gago says that traditionally, a significant number of complaints received by the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) are related to issues about warranties affecting products and services ranging from mobile phones and second hand cars to whitegoods and hi-tech gear.

“Last financial year there were more than 1700 warranty-related complaints to OCBA. That shows that both consumers and traders are not clear about their rights and obligations when it comes to statutory warranties,” Ms Gago said.

“It appears that when it comes to warranties, traders aren’t giving consumers the correct information because they’re either unaware of it, or because they’re reluctant to honour their legal responsibilities.”

To help consumers and traders understand their rights and obligations OCBA will be staging an education campaign in coming weeks which will also include a week long phone-in from the 18th-22<sup>nd</sup> August via OCBA’s consumer advice line – 8204 9777.

The phone-in will help OCBA raise consumer and trader awareness, as well as gather information from consumers about general warranty problems and to receive reports about non-compliant traders.

The education campaign will involve reminding traders of their warranty obligations through a series of advertisements in community newspapers. There will also be more information added to OCBA’s website, including a fact sheet for traders.

Ms Gago says that by law, every product or service sold in South Australia is covered by a statutory warranty.

“That means that if a consumer has paid for a product and used it in line with the instructions then that product is expected to last for a reasonable period of time and consumers should be entitled to a refund or to have the product repaired or replaced, should something go wrong.

“Most products come with a warranty which is offered by the manufacturer. What consumers need to understand is that no matter what, the statutory warranty applies.”

Businesses must make sure that the product or service they're selling meets the following conditions:

- It is fit for the purpose for which it was sold;
- It is not faulty;
- It performs to an appropriate standard;
- The sample matches the supplied product; and
- Warranties must be honoured and spare parts should be made available within a reasonable time frame.

For more information, visit OCBA's website [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au) or phone on 82049777 or 131882 for country callers.