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Thursday, 10 June 2010

### **WEST COAST TRADERS UNDER SAFETY SPOTLIGHT**

More than 200 traders came under the spotlight in one of the biggest trade audits carried out on the West Coast.

Officers from The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) spent one week cold calling retailers, car dealers, builders, service stations and pubs to ensure they were operating in line with current fair trading and product safety laws.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gail Gago, said “West Coast residents can rest assured that they are getting a fair deal. The majority of traders were found to be complying with the law and selling products that were safe and correctly labelled, honouring their warranty, lay-by responsibilities and selling accurate measures of goods.”

From a fair trading perspective, OCBA visited 124 stores to check warranty practices and lay-by terms, with all stores found to be complying with their obligations. OCBA’s product safety inspectors called on 25 retailers and examined 783 new and second hand products to identify any safety concerns for consumers.

“From bicycles to motor cycle helmets and sunglasses, this was a huge operation of product safety checks to ensure traders were complying with the law,” Ms Gago said.

“Overall compliance by retailers was very high with only minor breaches detected - one pram was subject to further examination to ensure it complied, while two trolley jacks, not displaying the required safety warning labels, were taken off the shelves.”

OCBA’s trade measurement specialists also visited a selection of businesses and scrutinised 172 measuring instruments such as petrol pumps, weighing scales and spirit measures as well as examining 136 pre-packaged products.

“Seven traders found in breach received written warnings in relation to four unapproved measures of length, two spirit measures incorrectly used, and one for incomplete labels on bags of firewood.”

“Written warnings were also issued to six second hand car dealers and an auto electrician is being further investigated by OCBA about alleged odometer adjustments. While most traders are doing the right thing, we have uncovered some unfair trading practices on the West Coast that we are taking a closer look at.”

“It also serves as a reminder to consumers to stay informed about their rights, and when in doubt, contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs.”

For more information or advice consumers can contact OCBA’s local office at Port Augusta on (08) 86485152.

Towns targeted in the West Coast blitz include Port Lincoln, Coffin Bay, Smoky Bay, Elliston, Streaky Bay, Wudinna, Kimba, Port Pirie, Gladstone and Georgetown.