



Tuesday, 27 November 2007

YOUNG JOB SEEKERS BEWARE

As thousands of school students celebrate the end of their secondary education, many will soon be on the hunt on for permanent paid work or temporary employment to tie them over until university courses begin next year. Minister for Consumer Affairs, Jennifer Rankine, is warning job seekers to be cautious of 'too good to be true' job opportunities, as many turn out to be scams.

"With exams complete, many school and tertiary graduates will be entering the workforce, and while some employment opportunities can look extremely enticing, they can be the handiwork of scammers trying to snare their next victim," Ms Rankine said.

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) receives reports every year of bogus job offers, the majority being scam emails sent to individuals offering opportunities to '*earn big dollars from home with very little effort*' or '*no experience required*'. People have also reported dubious job advertisements featuring in magazines, on posters or flyers, or via the internet.

Employment scams include:

- Pyramid schemes - where money is passed up the chain, and either no product or only a gimmick product is involved
- Overseas companies seeking help to facilitate their operations in Australia. They will ask for bank account details, supposedly to be added to their payroll
- Making handicrafts and selling them to anyone who will buy them
- Envelope stuffing scams that are advertised as real jobs, with consumers being paid a pittance
- Sending money to get a kit, accompanied by instructions to photocopy and market identical kits to other people

"Don't be lured into believing or responding to these advertisements. If you provide your bank account details on the understanding they will be added to the company's payroll you might find your savings are siphoned rather than added to."

"Demand as much information as possible about the job offer, and only give out your personal details if the job checks out and you have secured the position," Ms Rankine said.

Scammers are notorious for targeting people who may be considered vulnerable, either due to their lack of previous experience in applying for jobs, their present financial constraints, or migrants new to South Australia's job market.

"Employment scams blatantly misrepresent the work involved and the potential earnings. Alarm bells should start ringing if you have to pay a fee to get further information or provide bank account details to overseas companies before you can begin work," Ms Rankine said.

To report a suspected scam contact OCBA on (08) 8204 9777 or 131 882 for regional callers, or visit www.ocba.sa.gov.au