

Media Release

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VAN SCAM IS BACK: CONSUMERS WARNED

Acting Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Anne Gale, is warning people not to buy goods from travelling conmen selling from the back of vans or cars.

The warning follows a recent report received by Consumer and Business Services (CBS) of a white van with NSW registration plates selling audio visual equipment in the South Plympton area. CBS issued a similar warning in October 2011, for the Victor Harbor region.

“Typically, these traders will tell consumers that they have surplus stock of high quality equipment that they can sell at greatly reduced prices by cash only,” Ms Gale said.

“Any product guarantee that might be provided with the goods is worthless. Don’t be fooled by their to-good-to-be-true, cash-only prices for ‘high-end’ multimedia and electronic goods.

“These goods are likely to be poor imitations and may not work properly. Consumers should not deal with these dodgy traders.”

The person in the van in South Plympton sold some audio visual equipment that the conman claimed was excess stock from a well-known retailer, worth \$12,000 but available through him for \$3,000.

The person who purchased the audio visual equipment received a receipt with the company name Harman Group Electronic Pty Ltd handwritten on it.

Under Australian Consumer Law, for unsolicited sales consumers have a 10-day cooling off period during which the trader cannot provide any goods or services or accept any payment in relation to that sale.

“Any traders selling products from vans are breaking the law, and consumers are entitled to have their money refunded and the contract nullified.” Ms Gale said.

“However, these are travelling conmen who will disappear as soon as money changes hands, making it extremely difficult to receive your entitled compensation for the dodgy products.

“Breaches of these laws are subject to penalties of up to \$10,000 for individuals and \$50,000 for companies.”

If consumers are approached by someone selling goods from a van or car, or come across anyone claiming to be from the Harman Group Electronic company, they are urged to contact CBS on 131 882.



Government of South Australia
Attorney-General's Department