

Media Release

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CBS SOLAR CRACKDOWN SEES COMPANY PUT ON NOTICE

South Australia's consumer watchdog has cracked down on the poor conduct of a solar company before cause for concern escalates.

Today, Consumer and Business Services (CBS) took compliance action against GreatSolar Solutions Pty Ltd. which is licensed to supply and install solar systems.

Consumer Affairs Commissioner, Paul White said today, "Solar complaints have grown in recent years with 2012 topping the list at 218 complaints relating to solar panel installations."

"We take complaints from South Australian consumers very seriously and as a result of increasing solar complaints CBS is proactively monitoring the industry to ensure that traders are complying with the law.

"Earlier this week, CBS conducted an audit of several solar companies to investigate whether they were meeting their contractual obligations.

"Upon close examination into the conduct of GreatSolar, it was identified that the company was accepting deposits from consumers for the supply and installation of solar systems when there were reasonable grounds to indicate that they could not supply these goods.

"This is in direct violation of the Australian Consumer Law, subsequently CBS has stepped in by obtaining an Enforceable Undertaking from the company and its directors personally, which imposes specific obligations on the company that it must fulfil or face prosecution.

"At this point GreatSolar is cooperating and has signed the undertaking, which states they will not accept any more deposits from consumers until I am satisfied that the company can meet its obligations under any new contracts.

"GreatSolar has also committed to fulfil all existing contracts with consumers within two calendar months from today.

"CBS will continue to work with the company directors until I am satisfied consumers can safely engage with GreatSolar.

"Our aim is to ensure that consumer contracts are fulfilled and any potential detriment is eliminated."

Commissioner White said, "This should serve as a warning to all solar traders that we are watching closely - if you do not do the right thing by your customers CBS will take action."

"A range of enforcement mechanisms are available under the Fair Trading Act and the Australian Consumer Law and we won't hesitate to use them.

"If consumers have complaints about a solar provider they should contact CBS on 13 1882 for assistance and advice."

Further advice about solar panel installation is available on the Solar Systems fact sheet: www.cbs.sa.gov.au/assets/files/solar.pdf



Government of South Australia
Attorney-General's Department