

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 6 June 2012

More door-to-door complaints sent to ACCC, but further protections needed

Another 26 complaints about door-to-door salespeople have been lodged with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) as part of the Consumer Action Law Centre's *Do Not Knock* Campaign. The complaints, received from around Australia, were made against a range of businesses including pay TV providers, home improvement companies and newspapers seeking subscriptions—but almost half of the complaints were about door-to-door energy sales.

Gerard Brody, Director of Policy and Campaigns at Consumer Action, said in the latest round of complaints lodged by consumers through www.donotknock.org.au included complaints about pushy salespeople, misleading tactics and being visited on a public holiday. Mr Brody said recent complaints also showed salespeople were developing strategies to circumvent Do Not Knock stickers.

'We've had a number of people with Do Not Knock stickers report being visited by people claiming that "they're not selling anything" so the sticker doesn't apply to them. Consumers shouldn't be fooled by these claims - in all the cases we know of the "free trial" or "investigation of overcharging on energy bills" is the lead in to a sales pitch.'

Mr Brody said Do Not Knock stickers are a clear request from the resident that they wish to be left in peace and that traders should respect that. 'The ACCC has a case before court which will clarify the legal standing of the sticker but, whatever the result, people need to respect a consumer's intent when they have displayed a sticker.

'If businesses are going to knock on doors when there is a sign clearly requesting that they don't, we'll need to look at introducing further protections such as a do not knock register or an outright ban on door-to-door selling. Our organisation continues to see cases of vulnerable people being taken advantage of by unscrupulous salespeople so something needs to be done.

'Recently Steve Georganas, Federal Member for Hindmarsh, introduced a private member's bill to establish a do not knock register which would run along the same lines as the Do Not Call Register. We're pleased to see politicians acknowledging the need for greater consumer protections and we look forward to working with Mr Georganas and other MPs to ensure consumers have a simple and effective way of protecting themselves from door-to-door salespeople,' said Mr Brody.

END

Media contact: Dan Simpson, 0413 299 567