



FAIR TRADING COMMISSION

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Comments for Consumer Affairs Commission Press Briefing, November 30, 2017

The Fair Trading Commission continues to work hand in hand with the Consumer Affairs Commission (CAC) in monitoring the market for the benefit of consumers. While the CAC interfaces directly with consumers, we at the FTC look at activities of merchants as they relate to consumers.

Our primary role therefore is the oversight of conduct or behaviour by firms or enterprises in market activities. That is, the manner in which firms relate to consumers through conduct such as the representation, displaying or advertising of their products or services.

As we are all aware, shopping activity increases during the Christmas season and this is the high season for sales by most merchants. It is normal that we have a notable increase in complaints in January, and I do believe that the CAC also experiences a similar spike in complaints received. The FTC is asking that consumers:

- be aware of the goods and service that are on offer
- to make enquiries whenever they are unclear
- to look closely on the items for terms and conditions, where applicable.
- exercise reasonableness in assessing your choices and in making selections
- compare prices
- look for warranty documents & terms and conditions

To the merchants, we are not here to stand over you with a 'big stick' but rather to work with you in ensuring that you provide good quality goods or services as you seek to satisfy your customers. Accordingly, we ask that merchants:

- strengthen their customer service facilities
- make all relevant information available
- make all material information available
- be clear in whatever they are offering for sale available
- review the Fair Competition Act, the Consumer Protection Act & the Sales of Goods Act
- consult with the FTC or the CAC where clarification is needed.

The FTC thanks the CAC for allowing us this opportunity to speak at their Press Briefing and we wish for all consumers, a safe and happy holiday season.