

ACCC CALLS FOR FAIR TRADING IN THE *jewellery industry*



CONSUMERS SHOULD EXPECT THAT ANY PRODUCT THEY BUY WILL MATCH THEIR PERCEPTION OF IT AND THAT THEY WILL GET IT FOR A FAIR PRICE. BUYING A PIECE OF JEWELLERY SHOULD BE NO EXCEPTION.

However, many consumers have told the ACCC they are concerned about how some in the jewellery industry advertise their products. The ACCC has published, in consultation with members of the jewellery industry, a guide and checklist to help manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and valuers understand their obligations under the consumer protection provisions of the Trade Practices Act. An associated consumer guide has also been published. The three publications *Advertising and promotion in the jewellery industry—a guide to the Trade Practices Act*, *Industry checklist for jewellery manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and valuers* and *Buying jewellery? Know your rights* are available from the ACCC website at www.accc.gov.au.

Types of advertising practices prevalent in the jewellery industry and targeted by the guide include:

- > not disclosing when gemstones have been treated
- > not describing gems as 'cultured', 'imitation', 'synthetic' and 'created' when that is what they are
- > not telling consumers when gemstones have been treated to disguise imperfections, enhance their appearance or make artificial 'gemstones' look more like their natural counterparts
- > 'two price advertising'—for example, saying a product is 'valued' at a particular figure and offering it at a 'special' price
- > using 'in house' jargon when presenting items for sale—for example, jewellers understand that a 'Biron emerald' is laboratory emerald, whereas a consumer may assume it is a natural emerald from a place called Biron
- > comparative price advertising, including 'was/now', strike-through price advertising and the use of valuations in the sale process.

What you can do if your rights have been infringed

- > Contact the trader and try to resolve the dispute—put your complaint in writing.
- > Find out whether the trader or the relevant industry association has any procedures for resolving disputes.
- > Contact your state or territory office of fair trading for further options.
- > Read about your rights in the ACCC warranties and refunds brochure available from the ACCC Infocentre on 1300 302 502 or online at www.accc.gov.au.