

Peter Kell

Since joining the ACCC, Peter Kell has dealt with everything from unsafe kids' floaties to the floating queue of coal ships off the Newcastle coast.

Mr Kell is a former Chief Executive of CHOICE and was appointed as an ACCC Deputy Chair in August 2008.

He has also worked in a number of consumer protection roles at the Australian Securities and Investment Commission and has extensive experience in advancing consumer and market reform issues.

With major law reforms under way, Mr Kell is particularly looking forward to working in consumer and competition regulation.

'Ultimately both the competition and consumer reforms share the aim of making markets work better for the community. On the consumer side, we will see a wide-ranging package of reforms to Australia's national consumer laws that will significantly improve the ACCC's enforcement toolkit. This will include the introduction of civil penalties and banning orders, substantiation notices and unfair contracts laws,' Mr Kell said. 'This package will improve the ACCC's consumer protection capacity so that we can more effectively ensure that markets are fair for all consumers.'

Mr Kell also has scams in his sights. Since his appointment, the ripple effect of the global financial crisis has contributed to an increase in scam activity.

In 2008, more than 17 500 complaints and inquiries about scams were received by the ACCC, up from 10 500 in 2007. With such complaints on the rise, Mr Kell led the 2009 Australasian Consumer Fraud Task Force to spread its message about how consumers can protect themselves.

Last year an ABS survey commissioned by the ACFT found almost six million Australians were exposed to scams and frauds during any given year, with more than 800 000 falling victim in some way.

Mr Kell said the ACFT campaign highlighted the real impact scams can have on consumers and the fact that anyone can fall victim in a time when scams are increasingly sophisticated and widespread.

He also represents the ACCC on the international stage through agencies such as the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN).

'The ACCC takes on the presidency of ICPEN later this year. Consumer markets increasingly operate across borders, and we will be seeking to ensure that ICPEN, which represents consumer protection agencies around the world,



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helps regulators to cooperate and share information about market problems.

'Consumer fraud is also an issue where cooperation is increasingly required at an international level as scammers work through the internet. Combating these scams will be a key part of the agenda of ICPEN,' Mr Kell said.

Mr Kell also chairs the ACCC's Adjudication Committee and is a member of the Enforcement and Communications Committees.