



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
MINISTRY OF FAMILY, YOUTH & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
14 Governor's Parade
Gibraltar

PRESS RELEASE

No. 288/2008

Date: 24 November 2008

Maruchi Risso, Director for Consumer Affairs, attended as an overseas guest, the Consumer Week in London recently. She is pictured here with John Fingleton, Chief Executive of the Office of Fair Trading and Ron Gainsford, Chief Executive of the Trading Standards Institute.

This is the 21st year that the Trading Standards Institute have organised Consumer Week. Consumer Week is a platform to raise awareness about specific consumer issues and particularly to highlight new developments in an increasingly complex and competitive marketplace. It has increased in strength and influence since its debut in 1989. As one of the major events in the UK consumer calendar, it has informed the public, supported the fair trader and showcased the role of Trading Standards services across the UK. The topics covered this year were online shopping, on line fraud and malpractice, the benefits of accredited internet retail services and the perils of counterfeit s, the dangers of unsafe products and dealing with cross-border consumer complaints, and the issues surrounding Christmas shopping especially unsafe toys and Christmas decorations.

The Department for Consumer Affairs feels it is important for people to be able to shop with confidence in that they are getting value for money. One of the ways that the department feels this can be achieved is by ensuring that the general public is well informed of their rights and responsibilities as consumers. For this reason the Consumer Affairs Department would like to once again take the opportunity of the advent of Christmas before us, to make the public aware of some general pointers that they should bear in mind whilst shopping.

- Ensure that products bought especially electronic goods (Christmas lights, irons, chargers etc.) and toys are EU compliant and certified.
- When purchasing toys check that they are age appropriate for the recipient in order to ensure their safety when using them.
- Familiarize yourself with the exchange / refund policies of the shops from where you are purchasing.
- When purchasing over the Internet, ensure that you are doing so from a trust worthy source and that the website you are using is secure. Exercise caution when giving out your credit or debit card details on the Internet.
- When placing orders for goods to be delivered at a future date, from either a shop, catalogue or the internet, you may want to make 'Time of the Essence' in your contract with the supplier so that you may ask for your money to be refunded if these are not delivered on time.
- If buying gift vouchers, find out if these have to be used within a certain time frame.

- If putting down deposits for goods to be bought at a later date, please note that these deposits are usually non-refundable if you later decide to pull out from the purchase.
- Always keep your purchase receipts or any other suitable proof of purchase, in case you encounter problems with them in the future.
- Ask about the guarantee offered with the product. Guarantees cannot affect your statutory rights.
- Please note, that shops are NOT obliged to exchange or refund, unless the product does not comply with the following:
 - Fit for the purpose bought
 - Is as described
 - Is of satisfactory quality

The Department of Consumer Affairs in Gibraltar will be having their usual Christmas shopping awareness campaign on the 2nd and 3rd December. Once again the department would like to furnish the general public with some points, which they should keep in mind whilst shopping in order to avoid problems or disappointments with their purchases. On the 3rd of December staff will be outside the Gibraltar Parliament handing out leaflets to the general public on how to be a 'Savvy shopper this Christmas.'

For further information and advice or if you should encounter problems when dealing with a trader please contact the Department of Consumer Affairs, 10 Governors Lane Gibraltar, Tel: +350 20050788 Fax: +350 20047995 E-mail: conaffairs@gibtelecom.net. Information can also be found on the Government Website: www.gibraltar.gov.gi (Government & Public Services – Ministry of Family Youth & Community Affairs – Department of Consumer Affairs)

