

Crisis factsheet – *information to consider during or after a catastrophic event*

Price rip-offs

Catastrophic events affect the economy and you may notice increases in the price of basic goods during or after a crisis. This usually happens because:

- it costs traders more to get goods into the shop – for example, they may have to transport things further due to road closures, which means bigger fuel bills
- supply and demand - prices go up when there is a lack of goods and greater demand.

However, the Australian Consumer Law protects you from ‘unconscionable conduct’ by traders.

Generally, unconscionable conduct is a statement or action so unreasonable it defies good conscience.

A business must not act unconscionably when:

- selling or supplying goods and services to a consumer
- supplying or acquiring goods and services to or from a business.

Traders who act unconscionably can be fined up to \$220,000 for individuals and \$1.1 million for corporations.

What can you do if you suspect profiteering?

Ask the trader to explain price increases that seem excessive or unreasonable.

If you are not satisfied with the trader’s response, you can lodge a complaint with Consumer and Business Services (CBS).

When lodging a complaint, provide as much information as possible including:

- the trader’s name and location
- a description of the goods and the price
- copies of any receipts
- a photo of the sale sign.

Need more help?

Visit the CBS website

www.cbs.sa.gov.au

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