

## Consumer issues report 2014 – background

In May 2015 this report was released under the Official Information Act.

The report focuses on complaints and complaint data. Where this assessment refers to the volume of complaints against a particular trader, or identifies a particular type of complaint, readers should note the following caveats:

- The complaints data on its own does not indicate that any law has been breached.
  - The complaint data also does not establish that any harm has been caused to any consumer or competitors.
  - Larger traders are likely to generate more complaints as a function of their scale. We have not adjusted for this.
  - Complaints volumes for a trader can be about a single matter or multiple matters. Issues that attract a high level of publicity can generate a large volume of complaints on the same or similar matters.
  - The complaints data only reflects what consumers have chosen to report to the Commission or to other organisations that have in turn provided information to the Commission.
- The data is, however, indicative of a level of public concern about a trader or issues, and we use it for that purpose.

The Report contains some redactions either denoted as [ ] or blacked out text. We have redacted information where we consider that there is good reason for withholding it under:

- Section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect the privacy of natural persons;
- Section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA to protect information where making available of the information would be likely to unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information;
- Section 9(2)(ba)(i) of the OIA to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information – would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied; and
- Section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the OIA to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty.