



**INDEPENDENT CONSUMER AND
COMPETITION COMMISSION**

CONSUMER PRODUCTS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

1st Floor Garden City, Angau Drive,
P.O. Box 6394, BOROKO,
National Capital District
Papua New Guinea
Telephone: (675) 325 2144
Facsimile: (675) 325 3980
Toll Free # 180 3333
Email: infor@iccc.gov.pg
Website: www.iccc.gov.pg

CPCC MEETING NO. 01/2008 - 27TH MARCH 2008

1. INTRODUCTION

CPCC is now in its third year since its launching in March 2005. The forum has created an environment that has brought together participants from the Industries/Business Houses, relevant Government Agencies, Stakeholders and the Consumers to freely air their views on consumer issues that are affecting the industries and the consumers.

Through the CPCC forum, ICCC has established contacts with the Industries/Business Houses, relevant Government Agencies and Stakeholders to address common issues such as Food and Food Product Standards, overlapping functions that are related to Consumer Protection that affect the Health and Safety of the people. The forum also brings to the attention of the Industries/Business Houses, relevant Government Agencies and Stakeholders the Regulatory and Competition functions of ICCC.

In the first CPCC Meeting of 2008 held on the 27 March 2008 two guest Speakers were invited from the Health and Police Departments. The speakers from Health Department presented the ongoing issue on Food and Food Products Standard on Date Marking and the Police Department presented its views on the how the Police can assist the relevant Government Agencies on some of the overlapping functions related to Road Safety and Vehicle Inspections.

2. ISSUES RAISED IN THE MEETING

The following presentations were made in the first CPCC Meeting of 2008:

- PMV/Taxi Fares Service Standards (ICCC);
- How Police can assist Government enforcement Agencies (Police Department);
- Expiry Dates of Consumable Products (Health Department Food Sanitation Council);
- Commercial Banks and Merchants EFTPOS Fees and Charges (ICCC).

It was also brought to the attention of the forum during this meeting the recent issue on the sale and import of snake bite anti-venom by CPL. ICCC through its own investigations established that the snake bite anti-venom was not suitable for PNG snake bite victims and with the cooperation of CPL who voluntarily destroyed the 5 remaining vials of the anti-venom.

3. ISSUES

In the CPCC Meeting #1/2008 it was discussed that the Industries/Business Houses, Government Agencies and Stakeholders have a part to play in performing its duties for the benefit of the consumers. It was realized that the cooperative effort in exercising each

"Friend to Businesses, Friend to Consumers"

Southern Regional Office
1st Floor, Garden City
P.O. Box 6394, BOROKO
National Capital District
Phone: (675) 325 2144
Fax: (675) 325 3980
Email: southern@iccc.gov.pg

Highlands Regional Office
1st Floor, Gouna Centre
P.O. Box 1070, GOROKA
Eastern Highlands Province
Phone: (675) 732 1077
Fax: (675) 732 1414
Email: highlands@iccc.gov.pg

Momase Regional Office
1st Floor, Vele Rumana
P.O. Box 1107, LAE
Morobe Province
Phone: (675) 472 2859
(675) 472 6122
Fax: (675) 472 6188
Email: momase@iccc.gov.pg

Islands Regional Office
1st Floor, William Kaputin Building
P.O. Box 461, RABAU
East New Britain Province
Phone: (675) 982 9711
Fax: (675) 982 9712
Email: islands@iccc.gov.pg

others functions would assist each other to prosper and to achieve the objectives for the maximum benefit of our consumers.

(a) Police Functions

The primary role of the Police Department is Peace and Good Order, Prevention of Crime, Reinforcement of Law and Order and Enforcement of Traffic with an integrated approach and partnership with the relevant Government Agencies, Community and the Stakeholders.

The Police Department has an overall jurisdiction in the control of motor vehicle traffic and prosecution in liaison with the relevant Government Agencies such as National Road Safety Council, Department of Transport, National Capital District Commission and ICCC.

(b) Central Traffic Registry

The Central Traffic Registry is an institution established by the Traffic Registry Act to issue licenses to motor vehicles. Apart from issuing of license, it has an obligation to check as to whether the particular vehicle is road worthy. Concerns have been raised at the meeting that the Traffic Registry is registering vehicles without the proper check on the condition of the vehicles as to whether the vehicles are road worthy. There are many unroadworthy vehicles on the road and most times these vehicles break down in the middle of the roads causing disruption to the traffic and the safety of the commuters. It is proposed that the Central Traffic Registry should consider deregistering such vehicles as it poses risk to the commuters and the road traffic.

(c) PMV Routes

The Land Transport Board is the body authorized to create and allocate routes for the PMVs in the country. The current routes are established by the LTB to control the PMV routes and the PMVs are required to operate within the assigned routes.

However, concerns have been raised at the meeting that the city PMVs are not completing their routes particularly at the busy times of the day that is early hours of the mornings and the afternoons which are considered to be the busy hours of the day. This leads to the working class commuters getting two different bus rides to come to work and eventually turning up late for work.

The Deputy Police Commissioner assured the members of the CPCC that although it has a limited manpower e it would do all it can to control the traffic and the Police undertake to assist ICCC in enforcing its functions as and when required.

(d) The Chamber of Commerce

The representative from the PNG Chamber of Commerce has expressed that they would assist the ICCC to distribute brochures to their staff and they will make it available at the counter for distribution without cost.

(e) Food Sanitation Act

The Food Sanitation Act and the Food Sanitation Regulation is administered by the Health Department. The Act and the Regulations gives power to the authorized Health Inspectors to ensure that the service standards required under it are enforced.

One of the important issues raised was regarding the preparation of food by the Fast Food Stores and the shelf life duration of foods with regard to the date marked foods. The participants were informed that the date marked food comes under two categories. These foods are referred to as *best before* food and *use by* dates foods. The best before date foods are foods that are still in good condition but may lose the quality attributes after the date specified in the package and the use by date foods are to be sold within or before the date due. The use by date foods is not allowed to be sold after it passes the date stated on the package of the product.

The authorized officers of the Health Department are authorized to destroy or take possession of the food that are not properly stored or being on the shelf after the use by dates. Once the food is in the possession of the Health Authorities, it becomes the property of the state for the purposes of destroying the food.

(f) Commercial Banks and Merchants EFTPOS Fees and Charges

ICCC has brought it to the attention of the Commercial Banks the various fees and charges that are charged by the Banks and the Merchants.

The Banks have clarified that the Merchants should not be charging fees for the EFTPOS transactions as this is not sanctioned by the Banks. As a way forward the Banks have given its undertaking to insert the provisions in its Merchants Agreement not to charge fees to the Customers. They have also given their undertaking to provide more information and awareness to the customers on the services they provide and the various fees that are charged for the services.

4. GOING FORWARD

The CPCC presentations and ICCC's own investigations and networking have clarified a lot of issues that require the input of both the Industry/Business Houses and the Government Agencies especially in enforcing overlapping functions such as that of Road Safety, PMV and Taxi Fare enforcement.

The support and undertaking by the Police Department and the Chamber of Commerce is timely and very welcoming. The Government Agencies must improve their work processes under their respective legislations and liaise with one another including the private sector in enforcing the laws in protecting both businesses and consumers.

THOMAS ABE

Commissioner/Chairman CPCC