



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FCCC: Traders Overcharging Despite Warnings during outside Suva Lockdown Areas**

**Friday 17 April 2020**

The Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) had found some traders outside of the Suva lockdown area increasing the price of basic, critical and essential items in an attempt to take advantage of the Suva lockdown which was lifted yesterday.

FCCC conducted a total of 8 inspections from 8 -10 April 2020 around SawanLomivuna, Vunidawa and Serea in the Naitasiri Province, resulting in 6 traders being warned with prosecution while 2 were issued with infringement notices.

“These unscrupulous traders believed that due to the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, we wouldn’t be able to do inspections so they hiked up prices on items that Fijian consumers need, from basic food items to even fuel products,” said FCCC CEO, Joel Abraham.

“In some instances, when consumers complained to the traders about the price of the goods, their response was that FCCC Officers were unable to come to check their shop since the Central & Eastern Division was on a major lockdown and traders can do anything they want.”

According to earlier inspections by FCCC, these traders had been compliant.

“It is extremely disappointing to say the least, that during a time when we should be looking out for each other, there are those who want to use this as an opportunity to take advantage of Fijians,” said Abraham.

“This kind of heinous conduct will not be tolerated and the current circumstances will not stop us from conducting our duty of protecting Fijian consumers. Make no mistake, FCCC is still on the ground conducting inspections and you will no get away with breaking the law.”

Some traders have also increased prices and failed to issue receipts to consumers, or if they issued receipts, the items were not clearly mentioned on the receipts as per the requirements under Section 55A of the FCCC Act 2010 which states that:

- a) A trader shall supply at the time of sale to every purchaser a receipt containing the following particulars and shall retain a copy of the receipt –
  - i. The name, address, and tax identification number of the trader.

- ii. The date.
- iii. The individual description of the goods or services.
- iv. The quantity of the goods or services.
- v. The prices charged inclusive of tax.
- vi. Other relevant requirements in any written law.
- vii. Such other particulars as the Commission may, with the approval of the Minister, the order require generally or with reference to any certain goods or services, or class of goods or services.

Abraham said he was grateful to the Fijian Government and the Commissioner of Police, for allowing FCCC's central team to conduct inspections at Sawani and other major shops in the Naitasiri Province.

**For more information/details please contact the FCCC on 8921991 or send in your complaints/query via our live chats on our website [www.fccc.gov.fj](http://www.fccc.gov.fj). Send complaints by emailing [oncomplaints@fccc.gov.fj](mailto:oncomplaints@fccc.gov.fj) and [business@fccc.gov.fj](mailto:business@fccc.gov.fj) or going to FCCC.APP**

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