



FIJI COMMERCE COMMISSION

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7th January, 2014

Press Statement

School's Cannot Restrict Purchases to a Particular Brand

The Fiji Commerce Commission (“Commission”) has noted from its market surveillance, monitoring and complaints received, that some schools are alleged to have been engaged in unfair and restrictive trade practices by directing parents, guardians and students to buy a particular brand(s) of exercise books, note books, Maths 4c Books and other similar items. In doing so they are restricting parents from buying other brands, some which may be priced cheaper than the brands sought in the school’s book lists.

The Commission wishes to advise that the book lists should only state the number of pages and size required for each exercise book and not the brands and parents should be free to choose any brands as far as they meet the school’s requirements in terms of the number of pages. The conduct of some schools in restricting this choice is a violation of the Fair Trading and Restrictive Trade Practices provisions of the Commerce Commission Decree 2010. The schools having a relatively stronger bargaining power are forcing the students and parents to buy a particular brand of exercise books. This apart from restricting choice, could also have a detrimental effect on consumers as they may be deprived of the opportunity to buy cheaper books for their children. It also tends to reduce competition among book sellers.

The Commission would like to inform all Schools and their Principals, Head teachers and Management that such conduct is a breach of Commerce Commission Decree 2010 administered by the Commission

All School management and committees currently engaging in such practice are required to immediately refrain from issuing and/or cancel instructions to the parents/guardians/students, thus removing brand preference being imposed on the consumers. Schools have the right to enforce the

requirements for the number of page requirements for the exercise books, but not to demand students, parents and guardians to purchase only a particular brand.

Failure to ensure full compliance with the above said directive shall make the School Principal, Head Teacher and Management liable for penalties under the Commerce Commission Decree 2010.

Members of the public, in particular parents are required to contact the Commission on Telephone 3372178 or email on helpdesk@commcomm.gov.fj should they encounter any evidence of such practices.



Dr. Mahendra Reddy,
Chair, Fiji Commerce Commission
7th January, 2014