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PRESS RELEASE

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Worrying duping tactic noted by council

A new duping tactic used to swindle consumers has come to light where fly by night traders are setting up fake companies to con consumers out of money.

The latest case reported to the council involves a Labasa school which received an email from a phony trader- Pacific Technologies Office Supplies- offering desktop computers for sale.

The school paid more than \$7,000 in March for the computers but did not receive the products despite repeated assurances that delivery would be made.

Almost two months lapsed after the order was placed with no sign of delivery.

While this issue initially seemed to be a delay in delivery of goods, further investigations by the council proved that the company was set up for the express purpose of obtaining money by deception.

Numerous attempts by the council to locate this business proved futile. The addresses supplied in business invoices and obtained from the Registrar of Companies were occupied by individuals with no links to the company.

Even phone contacts provided by the company were not answered despite numerous calls made to them.

Consumers must exercise their rights to make well-informed decisions before spending their money, ensuring to conduct background checks on all companies. This is especially important in transactions arranged online where the authenticity of traders and goods is difficult to verify.

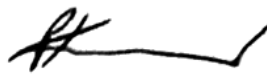
The Council also notes that a common practice for business operations involves traders sending mass emails advertising their specials and advises Consumers to be extremely wary of these sales tactics.

While there are legitimate traders who use an electronic mail platform, there are also numerous phony traders who are using email offers to fleece consumers.

The Council also notes that because of this unethical behavior, school children who expected to use the computers now face unacceptable delays in receiving their education.

Failure by the trader to deliver the item is a breach of Section 88 of the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission Act 2010 of accepting payment without being able to supply as ordered.

Consumers with questions or complaints can seek the Council's assistance by calling our toll free helpline number 155 or email us on complaints@consumersfiji.org.



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