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Consumer Council of Fiji



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08 April 2023

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Aluminum Service Provider Under Scrutiny - Council**

A local aluminum service provider has come under the radar of the Consumer Council of Fiji for taking large sums of money from consumers and failing to deliver on promised services. The company, which operates primarily through Facebook has been accused of taking payments as high as \$18,000 from several customers, but has yet to either begin any work or only doing partial work. Attempts to obtain the physical address of the said company over phone call as a mystery shopper by the Council proved futile. Whilst the Council currently cannot release the name of the company, consumers should note the initials of its name is “AA”. So far, the Council has registered 9 complaints against the company with a monetary value of \$82,000.

In a recent case being investigated by the Council, a consumer who was constructing a new house gave a contract for complete aluminum door and window installation to the company in question at a cost of \$17,250 and paid a 70% deposit. The payment was done in November 2022, however, the company only performed basic installation of windows and door frames, leaving the task incomplete. Despite multiple follow-ups and requests for updates by the consumer, the company in question started avoiding calls and intentionally delayed the completion by providing excuses. The consumer had also requested a refund, which was refused.

In another similar case, a customer paid the said company a \$13,000 deposit for aluminum works. However, the company failed to complete the work and ignored the consumer’s phone calls. According to the customer, only 10% of the work has been completed to date.

“The mere value of the coffers which has been swindled by this company is quite alarming and further stresses the need for consumers to be highly vigilant and not blindly hire any trader/individual which they come across on social media,” said CCoF Chief Executive Officer Ms Seema Shandil.

It is imperative that consumers do their due diligence before paying any home improvement company in order to avoid falling victim to these types of scams and fraudulent practices.

“The Council is also reminding consumers to always request for and verify physical address, particularly when dealing with companies/individuals operating through Facebook or on any other social media sites. The company under spotlight refuses to provide their physical address to



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consumers when requested; this should be a major red flag relating to the authenticity of the business," Ms Shandil stated.

It is paramount that all companies, especially the ones operating through social media platforms provide clear and concise information about their services, pricing, and physical locations in order to instill greater confidence and trust among consumers.

The Council encourages consumers who have been victims or notice such practices to contact the Council on toll-free helpline 155 or email [complaints@consumersfiji.org](mailto:complaints@consumersfiji.org). Alternatively, consumers can lodge complaints via the Consumer Council of Fiji Mobile App.

**Ms Seema Shandil**

**Chief Executive Officer**