



# ICCC *brief*

**OUR COMPETITION WATCHDOG. SHAPING OUR MARKET ECONOMY AND PROTECTING OUR CONSUMERS**

*The Quarterly Newsletter of the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission*

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Bishop Brothers Engineering Limited Head Office and main warehouse in Wards Road, Hohola, Port Moresby. *Business Advantage* picture

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission ('ICCC') has given clearance to the shareholders of Feel-J Pte Ltd ('Feel-J') to acquire all of the shares in Bishop Brothers Engineering Limited ('BBEL') from Feel-J Limited.

ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain said Mark Colin Bishop, Scott Leonard Bishop and Jason Edward Johnson, who are the shareholders of Feel-J (together the "Shareholders" or "Applicants") proposed to collectively acquire all of the issued shares of Feel-J in BBEL ("Proposed Acquisition" or "Transaction").

Mr. Ain said following ICCC's assessment, the Proposed Acquisition would not have, or would not be likely to have the effect of substantially lessening

competition in any market(s) in PNG.

"The Proposed Acquisition, in concurrence with available information, does not change the ultimate control of BBEL, and does not combine the BBEL business with any other business," Mr. Ain explained.

"The ICCC noted that the Proposed Acquisition would be an internal restructure of ownership within BBEL where the Shareholders' ownership, through Feel-J, would now be directly held post-acquisition."

Given the Proposed Acquisition would be an internal restructure, the ICCC considers that it would not be likely to have any detrimental competition effects in any domestic market(s) that BBEL is currently operating in.

"Therefore, the Proposed Acquisition was cleared to proceed," Mr. Ain said.

# FROM THE COMMISSIONER'S DESK *Mr. Paulus Ain*



**Mr. Paulus Ain**

**N**o one could ever wish to begin a business year with unfortunate news. Surely, this was the least I expected to go through in just two weeks after resuming operations at the ICCC.

I lost two members of my team in a space of three days apart to underlying health conditions. We were devastated. All Commission work were put on hold which means our major deliverables for the month and quarter were two weeks behind schedule.

On January 18 2024, we lost one of the longest serving staff, Late Mr. Dennis Jerry. Late Dennis's journey started during the days of Consumer Affairs Council in the 1990s. Due to circumstances at that time, he was forced to leave and recalled on legal grounds. Late Dennis is from Kubalia in East Sepik Province was serving in the Consumer Protection Division as a senior investigation officer during the time of his passing.

Three days later, we heard another devastating news. We lost yet again Late Jerry Kevin Maki, an investigation officer attached to our Highlands Regional office.

Late Jerry from Hagen Central, Western Highlands, we lost Late Jerry to a long underlying medical condition.

We put aside work and concentrated on preparing to accord our fallen colleagues farewell in their respective homes. Still trying to fully recover from the losses, we lost another investigation officer, Late Jeffrey Khar in late March.

This was the toughest moment the Commission has ever gone through but God is surly good to pick us up when we are down. We managed to get our major reviews, price monitoring and adjustments including mergers and acquisition off foot.

Embarked on phase two of our nationwide price surveillance exercise was one of the highlight where our officers were geared up to get back into the field to show our presence. The first leg of this exercise was done in the Southern Region covering, National Capital District, Central, Gulf, Milne Bay, Oro and Western provinces. We inspected a total of 238 shops and issued 119 non-compliant shops with Infringement Notices (INs) during this operation.

As challenging as it sounds, our officers were up on their toes braving the extreme weather conditions and locations to ensure shops are compliant and do not increase prices of the declared goods above 10 percent

without seeking approval from us.

We understand that shops need to recover their costs but we urge them to communicate with us before increasing their prices.

While on that note, it was overwhelming to see a Minister take time to visit our office, a place where most decisions of major companies merging or acquiring interests or shares take place and we like to call it, 'the engine room'. I would lie if I have to say we have it all and like other agencies, we have our own struggles, challenges but we have a dedicated team who are passionate to do so much for the country even with very little to compensate for.

And the meeting with the Rural and Economic Development Minister and Member for Kandrian-Gloucester Hon. Joseph Lelang has created an easier pathway for us to seek directions and assistance to carry out our duties.

To know more about the highlights of our work in this quarter, do take time to read through the newsletter.

If you have any comments or queries, please contact our Media & Publications desk on 312 4600 or email: [infor@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:infor@iccc.gov.pg) or [ncholohei@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:ncholohei@iccc.gov.pg)

Wishing you a happy reading, cheers!

## Our Offices:

**Head Office**  
Independent Consumer & Competition Commission  
2nd Floor, Post Office Bldg  
P.O Box 6394  
Boroko, NCD  
Ph: 312 4600  
M: (675) 7693 3005  
Email: [infor@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:infor@iccc.gov.pg)

**Momase**  
ICCC  
P.O Box 448 Lae, MP  
Ph: 472 2859  
Email: [momase@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:momase@iccc.gov.pg) or

**Highlands**  
ICCC  
P.O Box 1581 Mt Hagen, WHP  
Ph: 472 2859  
Email: [highlands@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:highlands@iccc.gov.pg)

**New Guinea Islands**  
ICCC  
P.O Box 461 Kokopo, ENB  
Ph: 982 9711  
Email: [islands@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:islands@iccc.gov.pg)

**Southern**  
ICCC  
P.O Box 6394 Bko, NCD  
Ph: 312 4600  
Email: [southern@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:southern@iccc.gov.pg)





Lae Port. Picture courtesy of ICTSI

## 2023 Stevedoring and Handling services pricing review temporarily suspended: ICCC

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission ('ICCC') has temporarily suspended the implementation of its Final Determination contained in the Final Report for the 2023 Stevedoring and Handling Services Pricing Review.

The 2023 Stevedoring and Handling Services Pricing Review, dated 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023, set out in the *National Gazette No. G595 of 2023* was suspended due to a Stay Order obtained in the National Court by the ICTSI South Pacific Limited (ISPL), and its related corporations, namely, South Pacific International Container Terminal Limited and Motukea International Terminal Limited against the ICCC on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023 in proceeding styled

*OS (JR) of 137 of 2023 – ISPL & Ors. Vs The ICCC.*

*OS (JR) 137 of 2023 – ISPL & Ors. V the ICCC* was instituted by ISPL and its related corporations against the ICCC, in essence, challenging the 2023 Stevedoring and Handling Services Pricing Review process and subsequently *National Gazette No. G595 of 2023*, which sets out the new regulated stevedoring and handling services tariffs.

The Stay Order prevents the imposition of the reduced tariff rates pending the determination of the Court proceedings in both the Motukea International Terminal and the South Pacific International Container Terminal.

Essentially, the tariff rates that

have been applied by ISPL in 2023 continues to apply pending the determination of the Court proceedings.

The ICCC's position is that it has concluded the pricing review into the Stevedoring and Handling Services under the *Prices Regulation Act Chapter 320 (Amended)* through a transparent public consultation process, and has published the Final Determinations in the *National Gazette No. G595 of 2023*.

The ICCC urges its stakeholders and the general public to adhere to the Court's orders in the interim, until the Court's further determination.

The ICCC will further advise on the outcome of this matter.

# ICCC addresses fuel shortage in the country

IN light of the reduced fuel supply in the country as a result of Puma Energy's inability to supply the market, the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) has stepped in to ensure there is sufficient supply during this time.

According to ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain said ICCC has commenced discussions with alternate supplier and found ways to maintain the supply of fuel going forward.

"The ICCC is looking at two feasible options whether to face a situation of fuel shortage at the current regulated prices or to avoid it by charging an additional premium on the current prices," Mr. Ain said.

"With that, we would like to inform consumers to expect an additional charge on fuel prices by March 2024 onwards.

"ICCC has secured a supplier coming into the market to relieve the situation we are currently facing in the country.

The supplier will divert some of its shipment meant for other economies into PNG.

"We have discussed with the supplier on what the prices would be like. The price would be to compensate the supplier for diverting its shipment into the country. This is to ensure there is no fuel shortage in the country."

This diversion is a short-term measure the ICCC is relieving the current shortfalls experienced at the moment.

## VB (Reagents) given clearance to invest in Central Lime project

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission ('ICCC') has given clearance to VB (Reagents) Limited ('VBR') to proceed with its investment of US\$40 million (about K154 million) in the Central Lime Project ("CLP" or "Project") for a 49 percent (49%) equity interest in MR Industrials PNG Pte Ltd ("MR Industrials") ("Proposed Transaction" or "Acquisition").

ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain said ICCC made this decision following its assessment and considerations that the proposed transaction will not affect competition or change the competitive dynamics of market structure in any related market in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

"The ICCC was satisfied that the Proposed Transaction of VBR investing in the Central Lime Project ('Project') in return for the acquisition of 49% equity interest in MR Industrials would not have, or would not be likely to have, the effect of substantially lessening competition in any market (s) in PNG," Mr. Ain said.

"The ICCC noted that VBR has no business operations anywhere in PNG, and Mayur Resources who is MR Industrials Parent Company is not yet producing any limestone or other



**A 3D model of the proposed general layout of the Central Cement & Lime Project — Kido quarry, plant site and wharf. Picture credit: Mayur Resources**

products from the Project and as such, VBR does not have any influence on any markets in the country.

"Whilst VBR has a global presence through its minority investment portfolios in natural resources and mining projects around the globe, these are outside of PNG."

The Proposed Transaction enables the Central Lime Project to commence which would be beneficial to industries such as construction and agriculture. This would also give competitive constraints to imports and would give cost-cutting benefits to users of limestone and related products.





ICCC Commissioner and CEO, Mr. Paulus Ain, seated fourth from left, at a photo shoot after the Pacific Islands Network of Competition, Consumer and Economic Regulators (PINCCER) workshop in Tahiti, French Polynesia, in February 2024. *Picture supplied*

## PINCCER meet beneficial for ICCC

THERE is a great potential for the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) to benefit as a member of the Pacific Islands Network of Competition, Consumer and Economic Regulators (PINCCER) workshops said Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain.

Mr. Ain, along with two other officers from ICCC's Competitive Market and Fair-Trade Division who attended a two-day PINCCER Competition workshop in Tahiti, French Polynesia, in February said being part of such meetings would upskill staff knowledge in the areas of investigating cartel conducts, evidence collection and prosecution.

Mr. Ain said the main focus of the Competition Workshop was to gather the PINCCER members to initiate discussions and develop a roadmap for translating strategic objectives into tangible outcomes.

"The primary objective of the workshop was to deepen the understanding of the benefits of competition laws, integration

and its value to small economies like the Pacific Island countries," Mr. Ain said.

"Staff training, sharing of software and filing practices would assist when handling confidential information including evidences collected.

"Pacific Island countries face similar challenges and issues. Most of the competition agencies are small and lack capacity therefore, there is a need for information sharing and collaboration to address some of these issues. And harnessing competition and enforcement plays an important role in addressing some of these issues."

PINCCER was established in 2023 during the Pacific Islands Regional Engagement in Sydney, Australia, where ICCC's Consumer Protection Division was part of the initial discussion that made ICCC a pioneer member to it.

The 2024 PINCCER Competition Workshop was hosted by the French Polynesian Competition Authority and attended by all PINCCER members including ICCC.

## ICCC notes price changes of certain goods since 2022

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) has noted changes in the prices of certain goods at the factory gate level since 2023.

In an effort to give an update on the elevated food prices experienced in the country, ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain said the ICCC observed that an elevated food prices began in mid-2022, reached its peak in 2023 and continues into the first quarter of 2024.

Mr. Ain said food and fuel prices are sensitive to economic shocks and cyclical shifts and their movements are reflected mainly in the Headline inflation (total inflation in an economy).

"There was an increase of about 13 percent for the 1kg medium grain/blended rice; a slight decrease of 4% for the 1kg plain flour, and an increase of 5% for the 1kg refined white sugar since March 2023," Mr. Ain said.

"A significant increase in the wholesale and retail prices of other basic food items like canned mackerel (between 12% and 19% increase) since September of 2023 in NCD.

"The underlying inflation measures the change in the prices influenced by the structural characteristics on an economy and the ever-present underlying factors that sustain the general prices at a certain level over time."

The increased domestic prices of food and basic household items are attributed mostly to international factors like international food and fuel prices.





## MINISTER'S VISIT |

For the first time, Rural and Economic Development Minister Hon. Joseph Lelang paid a visit to the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) Head Office in Boroko to learn about ICCC's work.

Following his appointment in early March, Minister Lelang had taken time out to visit all agencies he now oversees in the ministry.

"I want to acknowledge that you have been doing a lot of work and I appreciate the fact that you are doing that within a tight budget constraint," Mr. Lelang said.

"One of the things Prime Minister James Marape wanted when he appointed me was to focus on the agencies in my ministry.

"These agencies play an important role in this country and the fact that they are overlooked by other priorities of the then minister responsible, they are not performing to the fullest and as a result, the important function of the state is not being performed 100% and leaving us with policy gaps and other challenges."

Mr. Lelang added that ICCC play an important role dealing with shops which are far and wide and it is tough.

"I take note of your challenges and I want you to look at your legislation and ask to bring back some powers. At this point in time, inflation will be here for a while and of course many retailers are price gouging particularly in the rural areas," he said.

"How do we address that; do we have a hand in the market? Or maybe we should zone out into different parts of the country and maybe put a cap, you can't go beyond this cap when you do your mark up.

"We expect price pressure to come as a result of external or domestic pres-



## Lelang pledges to support ICCC and focus on ministry



**Top: Rural and Economic Development Minister Hon. Joseph Lelang talking to ICCC staff. Bottom: ICCC's Sharon Atuai welcoming Minister Lelang during his official visit to ICCC HQ in late March, 2024. ICCC Media**

ures but those price increases must be fair so that businesses can make their profits, we don't want to kill businesses but at the same time, we have to protect our consumers from bad practices.

"ICCC was included in my ministry so that I can give that 100% focus and attention so that we can fight for those resources, our legislation and let's go out there and do what is right. I assure you all that I am here to work with you

all. ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain said it was overwhelming to host the minister for the first time and pledged the ICCC's commitment to work closely with Minister Lelang.

The Rural Economic Development Ministry oversees the Office of Rural Development, National Economic and Fiscal Commission, Sovereign Wealth Fund and the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission.

# Hike in domestic rice prices concerning: ICCC

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) is concerned about the continues hikes in domestic prices for rice products.

According to ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain, the domestic prices for rice products have remained high for some time and further increased in early 2023 to the beginning of 2024 as a result of number of global and domestic factors.

Rice is one of the declared goods directly under the ICCC's price-monitoring oversight. As part of its price monitoring role, the ICCC has noted the following increases in the prices at the factory level (factory-gate price), and the international prices since 2023:

- AN increase of about 12.88 percent (12.88%) for the 1kg medium grain (blended), since March 2023;
- AN increase of about 12.96 percent (12.96%) for international prices of rice since January 2023.

"The ICCC has been closely monitoring the trend in domestic prices of rice at the factory-gate level as well as at the whole-sale and retail levels, to identify and address any inefficiencies that may add to increased prices of rice domestically," Mr. Ain said.

"Whilst a few of the retail shops may decide to increase their prices for genuine and valid reasons, some retailers may use such opportunities to increase their prices at unreasonably higher levels than what they should be charging. With the Government's initiatives to help the consumers during these unprecedented times, the ICCC is keeping a close watch on businesses to ensure they do not increase their prices unnecessarily to the detriment of consumers."

Since the ICCC's mandate on rice as a declared good is more light-handed meaning it's limited only to price monitoring as opposed to price controlling the price for rice, it will be recommending to the Government to seek exceptional powers outside of its legislative limita-



Prices of rice product in shops. ICCC Media

tions to impose stringent controls (maybe price control) on the wholesale and retail prices for some basic food items, including rice.

Mr. Ain emphasised more on the ICCC's implementation of the Price Controls Measure No. 4 which is intended to prevent price gouging, during the post Covid-19 period, and which is not intended to address inflation since price control is not the appropriate tool to address inflation.







## The ICCC nationwide price surveillance exercise

PURSUANT to the National Pandemic Act 2020 and under the Office of the Controller, the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) has been given the powers to set new price measures that started last year (2023).

The ICCC under the Office of the Controller was given the powers in March 2023 to set new price measures to prevent price gouging in the market in light of the global inflation pressures experience in the country.

These new price measures are that businesses should not at retail or wholesale; increase the prices of the declared goods.

A business that increases a price

above 10 percent permitted under this measure commits an offence, unless prior approval is sought from ICCC or the trader does not reflect the taking of an unfair advantage over a consumer, and does not unconscionably exceed the price at which the good was offered for sale prior to this Measure coming into effect.

The trader can demonstrate that the price increase reasonably reflects additional direct costs, not within the control of that business, that were paid or incurred to produce, distribute, obtain, or sell the relevant good under the circumstances attributable to local, national or

international market conditions. A business that commits an offence under this Measure is liable for a fine not exceeding K10,000.00.

The ICCC since then, has carried out a nationwide price surveillance exercise in which began as inspection and base price collection.

Major and mini supermarkets, shopping centers and well-established trade stores were visited and shelf price during that time were collected and recorded.

These shelf prices were then used as base prices where ICCC is using in its second enforcement phase to monitor any price increase in those respective shops.



# 86 NCD shops fined for increasing prices of certain goods above 10%

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission ('**ICCC**') has fined more than 80 shops in the National Capital District (NCD) for increasing prices of certain goods.

The shops were issued with an Infringement Notice (IN) for increasing their prices over 10 percent (%) without seeking prior approval from the ICCC.

The ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain said there are about 150 shops in NCD that were inspected last year (2023) during the phase 1 exercise to collect base prices (shelf prices at that time).

"In the first phase, shop owners and managers were instructed to apply to ICCC to get approval should they want to increase prices of any goods listed in Schedule 1 of the Price Control No. 4 (Measure No.4) above 10 % before imposing any increase," Mr Ain said.

"In this second phase, the ICCC officers inspected 155 shops in NCD and

parts of Central province within close proximity of the city and issued 86 Infringement Notices (**INs**) to the non-compliant shops for increasing the prices of certain goods without seeking prior approval from the ICCC." Mr. Ain said respective shops were given 14 days upon issuance of the IN to settle their fines of K10,000 or they can appeal their case but if they fail to settle this fine, or do not justify their reasons for imposing an increase, the ICCC will take them to court for breaching the Price Measure No. 4.

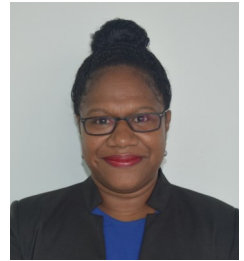
"We acknowledged that prices are increasing due to increases at the supply end, however, it is advisable that traders must approach the ICCC to seek approval before increasing the prices of listed goods," Mr. Ain added.

"The ICCC noted that a few shops have maintained their prices at reasonable levels not above the 10 % limit, and commended those shops for complying with Measure No.4."

## BRIEFS

### ICCC hosts CPCCC meet

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission's (ICCC) Consumer Protection and Competition Consultative Committee (CPCCC) has brought together gov-



**Jacqueline Waffi**

ernment departments and institutions to discuss issues in line with market prices, competition, inflation amongst others. ICCC Consumer Protection Division Executive Manager Jacqueline Waffi said the closed-door meeting with government bodies was to give them an opportunity for an active engagement and open dialogue.

"This meeting allows participants to seek clarification, share insights and express concerns related to the discussions," Mrs Waffi said.

### IOs undergo TM training

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) has embarked on upskilling its investigation officers to carry out trade measurement inspections after 20 years. Five officers from Southern, Highlands, Momase regional offices made up the first batch to undergo a two-week trade measurement training in Malaysia.

ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer Mr. Paulus Ain said the ICCC has a mandatory function under the Trade Measurement Act and Weight Measurement Regulation that empowers inspectors to certify inspections on various weights and measures or weighing machines.

### Market efficiency is vital: Ain

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) facilitate market efficiency through mergers and acquisitions and regulations of industries and State-owned Entities. This was a statement made by ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer Mr. Paulus Ain during the 17<sup>th</sup> PNG Resources and Energy Conference in Brisbane, Australia recently.



**ICCC officers explaining to a shop manager on the ICCC documents. ICCC Media**

## BRIEFS

**Misina leaves after 11 years**

The Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) has farewelled one its long serving staff and manager, Ms. Grace Misina. Ms. Misina, from Central province, joined the ICCC in 2011 as a legal officer after her three-year engagement with the Office of the Public Solicitor. She spent a significant amount of her professional career with the ICCC after serving for more than 12 years and said her career had gone way differently then she imagined.

**Proposed online system**

A final year Business and Informatics student, Sandra Ralai presented her final year paper on ICCC's Online Regulation Monitoring System. Miss Ralai said every year Information Systems students present on their final year projects and hers was to implement an online regulation monitoring system for the ICCC. "The online price regulation monitoring system is a system that would regulate and monitor prices of goods and services for consumers. The project is developed into two parts, an online hub providing prices of goods and services and, web-based application system specifically for Prices and Productivity Division," Miss Ralai said.

**ICCC roles clarified**

The Independent Consumer and Competition Commission ("ICCC") is the statutory body established and empowered under the *Independent Consumer and Competition Commission Act 2002* ("ICCC Act"). It is Papua New Guinea's consumer protection and competition authority. Its main functions are to promote competition; regulate prices of certain declared goods and services and service standards of regulated entities; protect consumers' interests. The ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain, made this statement before government departments and agency representatives during the Consumer Protection and Competition Consultative Committee (CPCCC) meeting in Port Moresby recently.



ICCC Officers talking to a shop owner in Port Moresby. Inset: List of shops visited in the Southern Region. ICCC Media picture

# Traders, shop owners warned

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) is warning shop owners, wholesalers and traders throughout the country that it will not be lenient to those who are non-compliant to its Measure No.4 orders.

The ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr. Paulus Ain said this during the completion of the recent price surveillance enforcement exercise in the Southern Region.

Mr. Ain said after the inspection in the region, it was understood that most traders have communicated amongst themselves to change their current shelf prices overnight back to the base prices (from 2023) to avoid being caught and penalized by the ICCC for price-gouging.

"We (ICCC) understand that traders need to recover costs for shipment and others and they needed to add a mark-up on their shelf prices but they must always apply and seek approval from us before doing so," Mr. Paulus Ain said.

"It's unfortunate that many were quick enough to do the changes and got away with it but you must know that this exercise is an on-going exercise and we (ICCC) will continue to visit and inspect your shop anytime therefore,

you must work with us or if caught, you will be penalized.

"You must work with us, communicate your request so we can help you help and serve our consumers."

Meanwhile, Mr. Ain said a total of 119 shops in the Southern Region were issued with Infringement Notices (INs) during the inspection for non-compliance.

The ICCC, in its second phase of the price inspection had identified these shops and traders to have increased their prices for rice and tinned fish above 10 percent without seeking prior approval from the ICCC.

With the INs, the traders are given 14 days from the day of issuance to either appeal and justify their increase or pay a fine of K10,000 and ICCC will not hesitate to take them to court if they fail to do so.

"It is when they didn't apply and increase their prices without our approval or knowledge that we fine them for non-compliance," Mr. Ain added.

Here are the shops inspected in the centers with respective number of INs issued.



# ICCC concludes price inspection in Southern Region



The Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) has successfully completed its phase two price surveillance enforcement exercise in the Southern Region.

Covering the National Capital District, Central, Gulf, Milne Bay, Oro and Western, the ICCC officers have inspected a total of 238 shops throughout the region.

The two-month long inspection was aimed at ensuring shops do not unnecessarily over-charge consumers or price-gouging without seeking prior approval from the ICCC.

While many shops were compliant, others were caught increasing their prices without seeking prior approval from the ICCC and therefore, were fined.

From the 238 shops, 119 shops were issued with Infringement Notices (INs) for non-compliance to the Measure No. 4 orders.

Shop owners especially in the outside centers have raise concerns over price increase at the wholesale level that triggered them to increase their shelf prices to cover cost of shipment including others.



Many said the main reason for them increasing their prices was because they had to look at cost of transporting the store goods from Port Moresby, wharf storage fee, fuel for genset if there's constant power outage in the area and many more.

ICCC Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Paulus Ain said traders and shop owners who have been issued with INs can appeal their cases if they have good grounds to justify their reasons for increasing prices.

However, if they do not have sufficient evidence, the ICCC will proceed to take legal actions against them.

Mr. Ain added that the ICCC's Prices and Productivity Division, that leads 'Price monitoring' have received a good number of applications from shop owners and traders requesting

to put a small mark-up on to prices of certain goods.

"The division, upon assessment would either approve or disapprove their request depending on their justification to increase the prices or not," Mr. Ain said.

This was evident in one of the shops in Daru, Western Province where during the inspection, the officers picked up an increase on prices of a particular brand of tinned fish product.

Fortunately, the shop had sought prior approval from the ICCC to put a 0.5 percent mark up on the base price of the said tinned fish product.

Therefore, the shop was not issued with an IN for being compliant.

Mr. Ain further applauded those traders who were compliant and urged them to continue communicating with the ICCC in the event they want to impose price increment on the declared goods.





## CONTACT DETAILS

### HEAD OFFICE & SOUTHERN REGION

2nd Floor, Post Office Building  
Nita Street, Boroko  
P.O Box 6394, Boroko  
National Capital District  
Papua New Guinea  
M: (+675) 7693 3005  
F: (+675) 325 380  
E: southern@iccc.gov.pg

### HIGHLANDS REGIONAL OFFICE

Tininga Central Building,  
Suit 4, Level 1  
P.O Box 1581  
Mt Hagen  
Western Highlands Province  
Papua New Guinea  
T: (+675) 542 1356  
E: highlands@iccc.gov.pg

### MOMASE REGIONAL OFFICE

2nd Level, Nambawan Supa Haus  
P.O Box 448, Lae  
Morobe Province  
Papua New Guinea  
T: (+675) 472 2859  
M: (+675) 7531 4319  
F: (+675) 472 6788  
E: momase@iccc.gov.pg

### ISLANDS REGIONAL OFFICE

Ground Floor, Matanitu Building  
P.O Box 461, Kokopo  
East New Britain Province  
Papua New Guinea  
T: (+675) 982 9711  
M: (+675) 7546 5067  
F: (+675) 982 9712  
E: island@iccc.gov.pg

## CONSUMER COMPLAINT

**TOLL FREE NUMBER: 180 3333**

**Contactable during business hours**  
**Monday – Friday (Not public holiday)**  
**8am to 4.30pm**

The *ICCC Brief* is the quarterly newsletter of the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC).

All information in this newsletter has been verified before publication. We welcome your feedback and suggestions for *ICCC Brief*.

Please contact us to receive the newsletter electronically or printed copies.

**Editor:** Brian Ivosa (General Manager)  
**Writer:** Natalie Cholohei (Media & Publication Officer)  
**Pictures:** Natalie Cholohei

Independent Consumer & Competition Commission  
P.O Box 6394,  
Boroko,  
NCD

**Contact:** ncholohei@iccc.gov.pg