

Released under FOI

Vaughan, Sharyn

From: Anderson, Michael
Sent: Wednesday, 21 March 2018 2:14 PM
To: Rickard, Delia
Cc: McDonald, Melinda; Godfrey, Emma; Black, Jane; Vaughan, Sharyn; Ayres, Lisa Anne; Campbell, Lisa; IMedia; IExecutiveOffice; Stark, Natalie; Peter, Wendy; Fleming, Richard
Subject: For approval, media release: Action over alleged misleading Indigenous art claims [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Attachments: IMAG1578.jpg; IMAG1574.jpg
Security Classification: For Official Use Only

Good afternoon Delia, please note a media release below for your approval. Attached are some images that will accompany the release also.

For distribution – tomorrow.

arah to do media.

ACTION OVER ALLEGED MISLEADING INDIGENOUS ART CLAIMS

The ACCC has taken Federal Court action against Aboriginal art products and Australian souvenirs wholesaler Birubi Art Pty Ltd (Birubi), alleging it made misleading Indigenous art claims.

The ACCC alleges that between July 2014 and November 2017, Birubi contravened the Australian Consumer Law by making false or misleading representations that some of its products were made in Australia and/or that Aboriginal people had made or hand painted them, when in fact they were made in Indonesia.

The products include Aboriginal cultural objects such as boomerangs, bullroarers, and didgeridoos. The products displayed a combination of words and artwork including 'hand painted', 'handcrafted', 'Aboriginal Art', and 'Australia'.

"We allege that Birubi's conduct is damaging as it is likely to mislead consumers into thinking they are buying genuine handmade Aboriginal art when they are not. This has the potential to undermine the integrity of Aboriginal art and negatively impact Indigenous artists, including by undervaluing their authentic works," ACCC Commissioner Sarah Court said.

"We allege that over 18,000 of these Birubi products were sold to retail shops in key tourist spots around the country. In the lead up to the Commonwealth Games in Australia next month, with tens of thousands of tourists visiting Australia, this action by the ACCC is a timely reminder to traders to ensure that products they are selling as Indigenous cultural objects or art are authentic."

The ACCC is seeking declarations, pecuniary penalties, injunctions, corrective notices, compliance program orders, and costs.

Notes to editors

These proceedings form part of the ACCC's work addressing conduct impacting Indigenous Australians, which is an enduring priority for the ACCC.

Michael Anderson

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Assistant Director, Media and Internal Communications | Strategic Communications Branch
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission
23 Marcus Clarke Street Canberra ACT 2601 | www.accc.gov.au
T 02 6243 1081 | M 0409 120 830 | F 02 6243 1110

The ACCC acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to the land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures; and to their Elders past, present and future.

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BIRUBI ART

BY TV 173



Aboriginal artwork is the written language of the Australian Aboriginal people developed and passed on through the generations spanning over 50,000 years of Aboriginal culture. The artworks depicted on this artifact signify the Aboriginal peoples relationship with the land and their ancestral spirits. This piece has been individually hand crafted and painted.

