

## **Consumers urged to call funeral industry survey hotline**

*27 May 2005*

The Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS) and the Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association (CPSA) are calling on all NSW citizens with experiences of the funeral industry to give their comments to the NSW Fair Trading Department's telephone hotline and/or website.

"We welcome today's announcement by Minister, John Hatzistergos, of the Government's intention to identify and research consumer views of how the funeral industry operates in this State," said NCOSS Director, Gary Moore.

"Over the past few years, our organisations have been made aware of major price rises for funerals and heavy marketing of a plethora of add-on services by funeral operators to people who are at the most vulnerable times in their life."

"A growing body of research and media investigation suggests that ownership of the funeral industry is falling into the hands of a few very large national companies, with this trend likely to accelerate as the population ages, and bigger profit margins are perceived."

"In our view, funeral industry regulation and consumer protection measures are poor and disjointed. It is partially for this reason that the NSW Legislative Council has established its Inquiry into the funeral industry in this State."

"We hope that NSW consumers will flood the Department's Hotline and website with their stories and their issues, both positive and negative."

"We also hope that the NSW Government will consult with a full range of stakeholders, including CPSA and NCOSS, before it releases its proposed discussion paper on the status of the industry and any proposals for change in regulation and consumer protection", added Mr Moore.

**Hotline number:** 1800 055 555 (open from today until Friday 3 June).

**On-line survey website:** [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)

### **Media Contact**

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