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For immediate release

CONSUMER ALERT: ONLINE CAR PARTS

The Consumer Goods and Services Ombud (CGSO) has received 98 complaints against *Online Car Parts*, a Randburg-based online retailer. The complaints primarily involve the delivery of incorrect motor vehicle parts and a failure to process refunds.

Despite multiple attempts by the Ombud to engage *Online Car Parts*, the company has remained unresponsive. Consequently, the CGSO has issued 36 termination notices for non-compliance with the Consumer Goods and Services Industry Code of Conduct.

A termination notice is issued by the CGSO to close a consumer complaint when a supplier has not engaged with the process. If the CGSO cannot resolve a complaint within 60 business days or if a supplier refuses to cooperate, the CGSO issues a notice allowing the consumer to escalate the matter to the National Consumer Commission (NCC), which has the power to prosecute and levy fines against non-compliant vendors.

Under Section 46(3) of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (ECTA), suppliers who cannot fulfil an order must immediately notify the consumer and issue a refund within 30 days. Because these disputes remain unresolved, the CGSO is now advising affected customers to escalate their claims to the NCC for further action.

Consumers are urged to be mindful of these risks when transacting with *Online Car Parts*. Consumers should protect themselves when making any online purchase by proactively researching the suppliers, organisers or vendors, reading reviews, and making an informed decision before making payment.

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About the CGSO

Established in 2013, the CGSO is an independent and accredited alternative dispute resolution scheme as defined in the Consumer Protection Act (CPA). Its accreditation derives from section 82 of the CPA, and its dispute resolution mandate from section 70 of the CPA. The services of the CGSO are free to consumers.

In addition to providing for a scheme of alternative dispute resolution as described in section 70 of the CPA, the CGSO's mandate includes raising the standards of good conduct in the industry; offering guidance to participants around the implementation of and compliance with the CPA; and educating consumers as to their rights and redress available to them should an industry member breach the CPA or the Code.