

Grey Product Imports – FAQ's



What is a grey imported product & where do they come from?

Products that come into the country through unauthorized distributors are "grey imports". These products can be sourced from any country privately or via a solar installation company. Many grey imported products which come into NZ are from a variety of sources and historically are from third party trading agents in China however many come from distributors located in Australia, South East Asia and the UK.

Why are they coming to NZ?

The NZ Government allows parallel imported products to enter the country without permission of the intellectual property owner (manufacturer and/or local agent). This can result in products of a lower and/or different specification to those sold by the authorized NZ distributor which can create issues around certification, compliance and warranty support.

How does this impact the warranty?

Grey imported products have no local manufacturer warranty and will not benefit from NZ based after sales service and support from the manufacturer and their local agent/distributor. Many consumers find this out after the installer has closed their business and they discover their 10-year warranty is non-existent.

Am I covered under the Consumer Guarantees Act?

Consumers can rely on the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA) if the company they purchased through is still in business as the company that sold the goods to the consumer has a duty of care under the CGA to remedy any issues. The CGA does not extend to the overseas manufacturer or supplier therefore the company that supplied the grey imported goods is liable to put matters right under the CGA. If the company that imported the grey goods is no longer in business the consumer has very little support and protection.

How can I be confident I am not purchasing grey imported products?

There are several ways to check if you are being sold grey imported products:

- Ask the retailer/installer for verification they are procuring the products from the authorized local agent/distributor.
- The authorized agent/distributor will be able to provide a letter from the manufacturer or a website link noting them as an authorized agent/distributor.
- Contact the manufacturer directly for a list of their local agents/distributors

If the company you're buying from is unable to supply this information and confirm they're supplying via the correct channels, you will need to decide if you're happy to proceed based on the risk that you may be supplied grey imported products.

I've already purchased my system; how can I check the products have been supplied by the authorized importer?

If you have the serial number for the product, you should be able to call the local distributor for verification they supplied the products. If the local agent/distributor is unable to assist, try contacting the manufacturer directly as most manufacturers hold detailed records of products supplied, their serial numbers and who they were supplied to.