

No need to watch out, Fridays can't hurt you

BLACK cats, broken mirrors and bad luck — Friday the 13th is here again.

Through various religions, cultures and eras, the date has garnered itself a bad reputation.

So bad in fact, that there is a recognised phobia of Friday the 13th, called friggatriskaidekaphobia.

In the US, it even has an economic impact, with many fearers taking the day off work, so paralysing is their fear of the day.

But Launceston Skeptics organiser Jin-oh Choi said that if any employees take sick days today, they'd better make sure they have a doctor's certificate.

"Friday the 13th is seen as unlucky, all through history and textbooks, but really it's just the same as any other day," Mr Choi said.

"Most superstitions, myths and old wives' tales come from the era where adults used them to tell their children about what they can and can't do.

"All bad luck omens like walking under ladders, opening umbrellas inside and breaking mirrors, they're just commonsense."

— ZONA BLACK



Jin-oh Choi, organiser of Launceston Skeptics, believes there is no bad luck to be had, breaking a mirror, standing under a ladder, or even on Friday the 13th. Picture: SCOTT GELSTON

Jobless rate worst in the nation

By ROSEMARY BOLGER

TASMANIA'S jobless rate remains the worst in the country with about 18,400 people out of work.

The latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed the state's unemployment rate held steady at 7.3 per



the redundancies will be confined to support functions, rather than customer service.

Opposition finance spokesman Peter Gutwein blamed the Labor and Green minority government for stalling the economy.

"With nearly 20,000 people on the unem-

"The challenge now is to rebuild confidence and create new jobs in the economy."

He listed a range of projects under way or being planned that would create jobs, such as the \$400 million Musselroe windfarm and Bunnings' plans to build a second store in Launceston.

He accused the Liberal Party of relentless