

[First importer convicted of illegal import of waste REE \(with photo\)](#)

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has successfully intercepted an illegal import of waste regulated electrical and electronic equipment (REE) from Panama at the Kwai Chung Container Terminals (KCCT). The importer involved, Fourgood Overseas (HK) Co., Limited, was convicted and fined \$15,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (December 24) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO). This is the first importer successfully prosecuted by the EPD since the import and export control on waste REE came into effect on December 31 last year.

An EPD spokesman said that with the assistance of the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED), the EPD inspected a container that claimed to contain computer products at the KCCT in April this year. After the inspection by the EPD, it was confirmed that the container was loaded with about 700 waste computers, which are classified as waste REE, with a market value of about \$100,000. The EPD immediately returned the intercepted waste to the place of origin and notified the local enforcement authority concerned about the return shipment. The EPD also instituted a prosecution against the importer under the WDO.

The spokesman stressed that, under the WDO, anyone who imports or exports waste REE (including abandoned air-conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, computers, printers, scanners and monitors) must obtain a permit issued by the Director of Environmental Protection in advance. Otherwise, it constitutes an offence. To prevent Hong Kong from becoming a dumping ground for imported waste or a distribution hub for the illegal import and export of waste, the EPD will strictly enforce the law. The department also closely collaborates and exchanges intelligence with the C&ED on strengthening the interception of waste of various types entering Hong Kong illegally through different channels. Before the import and export control on waste REE came into effect, the EPD had explained the relevant measures to the trade, and reminded them of the new control requirements, through briefings, letters and visits to concerned recycling operators. These aimed to ensure that the operation of their businesses comply with the requirements of the relevant laws.

The spokesman reminded importers and exporters of the waste electrical equipment recycling trade not to illegally import (including import into or transship through Hong Kong) or export waste REE. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction. For subsequent offences, offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment.

For more information about the import and export control on waste REE, please visit the EPD's website:
www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/wdo_e-waste.html.

