

Hong Kong Customs arrests director of wedding rings design company

Hong Kong Customs arrested the sole director of a wedding rings design company yesterday (March 19) on suspicion of engaging in wrongly accepting payments when selling products, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

The company concerned had been constantly delaying the delivery of wedding rings ordered by consumers recently by making up various reasons. The company eventually lost contact with consumers and closed its retail shop earlier this month. As of 8am today, Customs had received a total of 57 complaints against the company concerned. Complainants reported making prepaid orders for wedding rings, but failing to receive the goods or obtain refunds from the company. The total amount involved in the case is approximately \$520,000, with the largest of individual cases amounting to around \$20,000.

In view of the sudden business suspension of the company and its suspected violation of the TDO, Hong Kong Customs promptly established a special task force to follow up on related cases and took enforcement action yesterday. The 41-year-old male sole director of the company was arrested during the operation. He has been released on bail pending further investigation.

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Under the TDO, any trader commits an offence if, at the time of acceptance of payment, the trader intends not to supply the product or intends to supply a materially different product, or there are no reasonable grounds for believing that the trader will be able to supply the product within a specified or reasonable period. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment of five years.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and refrain from engaging in unfair trade practices when supplying goods.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).