

Hong Kong Customs combats counterfeit electronic goods activities involving cross-boundary transshipments and local deliveries (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs conducted a three-week special enforcement operation from June 13 to yesterday (July 3) to combat counterfeit electronic goods activities involving cross-boundary transshipments and local deliveries. During the operation, Customs detected a total of 17 related cases and seized more than 26 000 items of suspected counterfeit electronic goods, including earphones, mobile phones, electronic watches and mobile phone accessories, with an estimated market value of over \$6.8 million. Four men were arrested.

Through risk management and intelligence analysis, Customs detected 15 related cases at various express couriers and local logistics companies. More than 19 000 items of suspected counterfeit electronic goods with a total estimated market value of over \$4.6 million were seized.

After follow-up investigations, Customs believed that some of the suspected counterfeit electronic goods would be posted from Hong Kong, while the rest would be re-exported to overseas destinations. Subsequently, Customs officers on June 16 conducted a controlled delivery operation and a 25-year-old male consignor was arrested outside an industrial building in Chai Wan. The arrested person attempted to post a batch of suspected counterfeit earphones via an express courier.

Meanwhile, through risk assessment, Customs detected two related cases at the Man Kam To Control Point and the Shenzhen Bay Control Point respectively. Customs officers intercepted two incoming trucks on June 13 and 27, and seized a total of about 1 800 items of suspected counterfeit electronic goods with an estimated market value of over \$1 million therein. Two male truck drivers, aged 52 and 60, were arrested.

Follow-up investigations revealed that some of the suspected counterfeit electronic goods would have been sold locally while the rest would have been re-exported to overseas destinations. Customs officers then organised two controlled delivery operations at two industrial building units in Kwun Tong on June 14 and 26 respectively. About 1 400 suspected counterfeit mobile phones and about 3 900 pieces of suspected counterfeit mobile phone accessories with a total estimated market value of over \$1.2 million were seized. A 39-year-old male shop owner was arrested.

Investigations of the above-mentioned cases are ongoing. The four arrested men have been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs appeals to consumers to purchase goods at reputable shops or

websites and to check with the trademark owners or authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt to avoid buying counterfeit goods.

Customs reminds practitioners in the logistics industry to comply with the requirements of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO) and to check with the trademark owners or authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt. The department also reminds traders or online sellers not to sell counterfeit goods, and to be cautious and prudent in merchandising since selling counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Customs will continue to step up inspection and enforcement to vigorously combat different types of counterfeit goods activities.

Under the TDO, any person who imports or exports, or sells, or possesses for sale, any goods to which a forged trademark is applied commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected counterfeiting activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).

