

Hong Kong Customs combats online sale of infringing teacher's e-textbooks and examination papers

Hong Kong Customs today (April 10) conducted an operation to combat the online sale of infringing teacher's e-textbooks and examination papers. During the operation, two persons were arrested and a batch of items suspected to be involved in the case were seized, including three USB flash drives, a batch of discs, two mobile phones and a notebook computer.

Customs earlier received complaints from a copyright owner alleging that suspected infringing teacher's e-textbooks and examination papers were put on sale through online platforms.

Through the big data analytics system, Customs officers found that sellers solicited business via a "cross-platform, multiple accounts" approach. Buyers would receive a hyperlink via email to download the suspected infringing teacher's e-textbooks and examination papers after they had transferred money to the designated bank account.

After investigation, Customs officers took enforcement action today and arrested a 64-year-old man and a 28-year-old woman in Kwun Tong for selling suspected infringing teacher's e-textbooks and examination papers, as well as laundering the relevant crime proceeds.

Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Copyright Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any infringing goods commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 per infringing copy and imprisonment for four years.

Under the Organized and Serious Crimes Ordinance, a person commits an offence if he deals with any property knowing or having reasonable grounds to believe that such property in whole or in part directly or indirectly represents any person's proceeds of an indictable offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and imprisonment for 14 years.

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