

Hong Kong Customs combats supply and sale of counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs conducted an anti-counterfeiting operation from July 10 to yesterday (July 14) in various districts to combat the supply and sale of counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. During the operation, Customs smashed two suppliers distributing suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. Seven shops and three storage facilities were raided and a total of about 6 400 items of suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products with an estimated market value of about \$590,000 were seized.

Customs earlier conducted patrols and discovered shops selling suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. After an in-depth investigation with the assistance of trademark owners, Customs officers took enforcement action in various districts during the above-mentioned period.

Six retail shops in Causeway Bay, Yau Ma Tei and Sheung Shui were first raided and about 1 400 items of suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products were seized. After further investigation, Customs then cracked down on two suppliers distributing suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. A retail shop in Sheung Shui and three storage facilities of the two suppliers located in Yuen Long and Fanling were raided. About 5 000 items of suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products were seized.

During the operation, suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products including toner, lotion, moisturising gel and sunscreen were seized. Seven men and five women, comprising five directors, one shop owner and six salespersons, aged between 23 and 46, were arrested.

Investigation is ongoing and all arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

The Divisional Commander (Intellectual Property General Investigation) of Customs, Ms Peggy Tam, said at a press conference today (July 15) that Customs has been taking stringent enforcement actions against the sale of counterfeit goods. She reminded traders to be cautious and prudent in merchandising since the sale of counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions. She also appealed to consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark 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 infringing activities to

Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

