

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at barista training centre

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (October 27) arrested a male director and a female staff member of a barista training centre suspected of having applied false trade descriptions to a barista skills certificate course supplied, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a barista training centre had claimed that it is an approved centre of an international accreditation organisation, and customers would receive a certificate issued by the accreditation organisation upon completion of the barista skills certificate course. However, some customers eventually did not receive the relevant certificate. After investigation, it was revealed that the training centre is not an approved centre of the accreditation organisation, which was contrary to what had been claimed.

Customs officers yesterday arrested a 45-year-old male director and a 39-year-old female staff member.

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

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to procure services at reputable shops.

Under the TDO, any trader who applies a false trade description to a service supplied or offered to be supplied to a consumer 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 violations of the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).