

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at employment agency

Hong Kong Customs today (March 29) arrested a female salesperson of an employment agency suspected of having wrongly accepted payment in the course of selling employment service, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a staff member of an employment agency had failed to provide employment service after accepting payment. The agency was later found to have ceased business and did not return the payment to the customer.

After investigation, Customs officers today arrested a 37-year-old woman.

Investigation is ongoing and the arrested woman has 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 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 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).