

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices by consultant company providing building surveying services

Hong Kong Customs today (April 12) arrested a male director of a building surveying consultant company for suspected unfair trade practices of making a misleading omission in the sale of a piece of building work, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a director of a building surveying consultant company was suspected of omitting material information when selling a piece of building work related to demolition and construction of a planter barrier, saying that the total construction cost has already included the submission of application to the relevant government department for discharging the removal order of the barrier. However, the director said testing works were further required for discharging the removal order and requested an additional testing fee from the customer after the work was completed.

After investigation, Customs officers today arrested a 53-year-old male director of the company concerned.

An investigation is ongoing and the arrested man 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 who engages in a commercial practice that omits or hides material information or provides material information in a manner that is unclear, unintelligible, ambiguous or untimely, and as a result causes, or is likely to cause, an average consumer to make a transactional decision, 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).