

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices by renovation company

Hong Kong Customs today (September 20) arrested a male director cum salesperson of a renovation company who was suspected of engaging in wrongly accepting payment in the sale of a renovation service and having applied false trade descriptions to the renovation service he supplied, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TD0).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a renovation company director cum salesperson had made a false claim to a customer that the design of an indoor staircase designated by the customer was not approved by the relevant government department after receiving payments for the renovation works of a house, and misled the customer to accept another design with material difference, with the intention of not providing the indoor staircase work according to the original design.

Also, the director made another false claim to the customer about the progress of the indoor staircase work that the application for a certificate of completion had been submitted to the relevant government department, which was contrary to the fact.

After investigation, Customs officers today arrested a 46-year-old man.

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 TD0 and consumers to procure services at reputable shops.

Under the TD0, 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.

Moreover, any trader who applies a false trade description to a service 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 violation of the TD0 to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).