

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices in employment agency services

Hong Kong Customs today (February 26) arrested a woman suspected of having wrongly accepted payment in the course of selling employment agency service, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a woman had claimed that she could arrange for relatives and friends of a foreign domestic helper to come and work in Hong Kong. After receiving a fee of about \$30,000, the woman failed to provide the relevant employment service and did not offer a refund.

After investigation, Customs officers today arrested a 45-year-old woman, who 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).