

Hong Kong Customs highly concerned about business closure of bakery chain causing losses to consumers

Hong Kong Customs noticed that a bakery chain suddenly announced last night (September 13) that it had suspended its business. Customers who had purchased cake coupons or gift vouchers therefore could not redeem the products concerned.

As of 5pm today (September 14), Customs had currently received one complaint regarding the bakery chain. The department has been contacting the complainant for case details in order to commence an investigation.

Customs appeals to consumers who have purchased cake coupons or gift vouchers from the bakery chain to contact Customs as soon as possible. Customs will immediately conduct an investigation based on the information upon the receipt of complaints.

Customs is highly concerned about the incident and has set up a dedicated team to conduct a follow-up. The department will continue to closely monitor the situation. Should there be any violation of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO), Customs will take enforcement action.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO. Consumers are also reminded to procure cake coupons or gift vouchers at reputable shops and think prudently before making consumption decisions with a prepayment.

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).