

## Hong Kong Customs highly concerned about business suspension of beauty group causing losses to consumers

Hong Kong Customs noticed that three beauty parlours under a beauty group had suddenly announced in recent days that they were suspending operations. Customers who have purchased prepaid beauty services therefore could not use the services concerned.

Customs immediately deployed staff to expedite the handling of complaints. As of 11am today (September 3), Customs had received a total of 15 complaints regarding the beauty group. The department has been contacting the complainants for case details in order to commence investigation.

A spokesman for Customs said that Customs is highly concerned about the incident and has set up a dedicated team to follow up with a view to handling the cases as soon as possible. The department will also continue to closely monitor the situation and is maintaining close liaison with the designated officers of the Consumer Council to assist affected customers. Should there be any violation of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO), Customs will take decisive enforcement action.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO. Consumers are also reminded to procure services at reputable shops and think prudently before making decisions for consumption with 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](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).