

Hong Kong Customs steps up consumer protection work during National Day Golden Week period (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs launched an operation today (September 28) to step up patrols during the National Day Golden Week period at popular shopping spots in various districts and to remind traders to comply with the requirements of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO), with a view to safeguarding rights of local consumers and visitors.

Apart from patrolling popular shopping spots, Customs officers will also drive publicity at dried seafood and ginseng shops, pharmacies and jewellery shops in different tourist shopping areas such as Yau Tsim Mong and Causeway Bay. Retail shops and workers in the tourist industry will be reminded to comply with the requirements of the TDO.

Customs will also remind local consumers and visitors that they should have a good understanding of a product's specifications and make comparisons before purchase. They should patronise shops with a good reputation. They are also reminded to check carefully the total price and unit price of the goods before making payment, and to retain the transaction receipts and related records, which can become basic information in case a complaint is lodged in the future.

Customs has all along been concerned about visitors being misled to make purchases by unfair trade practices and has established a Quick Response Team to handle urgent complaints lodged by short-haul visitors. The complaints will be promptly referred to investigators to handle with priority.

Under the TDO, any trader who adopts unfair trade practices, including making false trade descriptions in relation to goods, misleading omissions, aggressive commercial practices as well as bait and switch practices, 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 suspected violations of the TDO to the Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).

