

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

The Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) launched an operation codenamed "Aurora" today (September 28) to step up patrols for consumer protection during the National Day Golden Week period.

The Deputy Head of the Trade Descriptions Investigation Bureau, Mr Ma Kwong-cho, and the Divisional Commander of the Unfair Trade Practice Investigation Group, Ms Sun Wai-ye, said that during the operation the C&ED would step up patrols at shopping spots, as well as dried seafood and ginseng shops, jewellery shops and other shops in shopping areas such as Yau Ma Tei, Tsim Sha Tsui, Mong Kok, Wan Chai and Causeway Bay. The C&ED will also remind retail shops and workers of the tourist industry to abide by the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TD0).

Furthermore, a Quick Response Team of the C&ED will attend to short-stay visitors' urgent cases pertaining to unfair trade practices report.

According to the TD0, any trader who adopts unfair trade practices, including making false trade descriptions in relation to goods and misleading omission, 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.

Customs also reminds shoppers that they should have a good understanding of the product specifications before purchase. They should do price comparisons and patronise shops with a good reputation. They are also reminded to check carefully the price and unit of measurement before making payment and retain the receipt after purchase.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TD0 to the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182, or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

