

## Renovation company and its male director fined and convicted for applying false trade description

A renovation company and its male director were convicted of applying a false trade description to renovation services, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO), and were fined \$3,000 and sentenced to imprisonment for eight months respectively at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (February 29). The imprisonment sentence laid down by the court on the director is the highest penalty imposed on unfair trade practices cases relating to renovation services since the TDO was amended in July 2013.

Hong Kong Customs in January 2022 received information alleging that a renovation company and its director had engaged in unfair trade practices in the supply of renovation services.

An investigation revealed that the renovation company and its director made a false claim to a customer that the renovation services would be commenced on a specified date. However, no services had been provided to the customer at the end. The total amount of the contract involved was about \$190,000.

Customs welcomes the sentence which has achieved a considerable deterrent effect and given a clear warning to unscrupulous practitioners in the industry. The department has all along been concerned about the unfair trade practices in the industry and will continue to take stringent enforcement actions and will not tolerate any illegal acts.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO. Consumers are also reminded to procure services from reputable shops. After purchasing services, they should keep the relevant records, such as transaction receipts and contracts, which can become basic information in case a complaint is lodged in the future.

Under the TDO, any person who in the course of any trade or business applies a false trade description to any service 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 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)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/)).