

Hong Kong Customs arrests male owner of wedding decoration company suspected of engaging in unfair trade practices in sale of services

Hong Kong Customs today (June 20) arrested a male owner of a wedding decoration company suspected of engaging in wrongly accepting payments in the sale of services, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a wedding decoration company in San Po Kong failed to provide wedding decoration services purchased by customers. Customs officers immediately conducted an investigation and found that customers who had purchased prepaid wedding decoration services were unable to use the services after the company suddenly suspended the business earlier. The company also failed to arrange refunds to the customers.

After a follow-up investigation, Customs officers today conducted an enforcement operation and arrested a 40-year-old male owner of the wedding decoration company connected with the case.

An investigation is ongoing, and the arrested man has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs has been paying close attention to the incident and called on members of the public affected by the incident to provide information. As of 3pm today, Customs had received 166 complaints, involving wedding decoration contracts amounting to about \$1.9 million.

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 182 80 80 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk), or by filling in an online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).