

Hong Kong Customs concludes Regional High-Level Conference on IP Protection (with photos)

The Regional High-Level Conference on IP Protection held by Hong Kong Customs concluded today (March 14).

In his concluding remarks delivered on the conference, the Deputy Commissioner (Control and Enforcement) of Customs and Excise, Mr Mark Woo, said that the conference had yielded fruitful results with participants reaching consensus in three major aspects. Firstly, in "Enforcement": continuing to consolidate and improve the co-operation mechanism for IP protection and law enforcement in the Asia-Pacific region; collaborating with relevant international organisations such as the World Customs Organization (WCO), Interpol, and Europol to further fight against cross-boundary infringing activities; and establishing intelligence sharing mechanisms and joint enforcement and capacity-building programs with the WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific and the WCO Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building, so as to comprehensively crack down on IP crimes. Secondly, in "Engagement": strengthening information exchanges, training, prosecution, and public education in the field of IP to deter IP violations through collaboration with different stakeholders. Thirdly, in "Education": continuing to implement promotion and education campaigns to raise public awareness about the economic, health and safety issues caused by infringement activities, and organising seminars and activities regularly to encourage young people to respect IP.

In this three-day conference, Hong Kong Customs also held bilateral meetings with India and the Philippines Customs respectively. During the meeting with the Indian Customs, both exchanged views on combating money laundering and cross-boundary trafficking of wildlife, aiming to enhance collaboration and facilitate a more comprehensive intelligence information exchange. The meeting with the Customs administration of the Philippines focused on strengthening contact and communication regarding IP and combating transnational drug trafficking issues to bring about closer co-operation. In addition, the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, took the opportunity to have a meeting with the Deputy Leader of the Guangzhou Intellectual Property Leading Group, the Director-General of the Guangzhou Administration for Market Regulation, Mr Zhao Junming; Executive Vice President of the China Association of Enterprises with Foreign Investment Mr Cao Hongying; and the Chair of the Quality Brands Protection Committee of the China Association of Enterprises with Foreign Investment (QBPC), Mr Michael Ding, to strengthen collaboration with Mainland law enforcement agencies and industries in the protection of intellectual property rights.

On the third day of the conference, Hong Kong Customs signed a memorandum of understanding on IP protection co-operation with the QBPC, which aims to further reinforce the partnership in various scopes of IP and

anticipates four major benefits. First, through close collaboration, Hong Kong Customs will gain a better understanding of the market information on the Mainland's IP industry, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of combating cross-border infringement. Second, by holding regular seminars that allow Mainland enterprises and trademark holders to share forgery-proof features of goods and authenticity techniques, Hong Kong Customs can enhance its enforcement capabilities and confidence. Third, Hong Kong Customs aims to deepen Mainland enterprises' and brand owners' understanding of Hong Kong's trademark registration system and filing procedures, and encourage QBPC members to undergo IP registration procedures in Hong Kong. By leveraging Hong Kong's advantages as a platform, they can actively and confidently engage in IP trading. Fourth, by exploring the establishment of a mechanism for information sharing of IP recordation among the customs authorities of the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao, the connection between the three customs authorities and the IP industry can be strengthened.

Also, through presentations and discussions on IP-related topics, representatives from different law enforcement agencies and industry stakeholders explored enforcement effectiveness and strategies from multiple angles and established stronger co-operation and information exchanges.

As many as 200 participants, including representatives from law enforcement agencies, the WCO, Interpol, Europol and the business sector, attended the conference.



