

Hong Kong Customs strives to combat sale of suspected illicit TV set-top boxes (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs conducted a two-day operation codenamed "Trojan Horse" on May 25 and 26 to combat the sale of suspected illicit TV set-top boxes and seized a total of 354 suspected illicit TV set-top boxes with an estimated market value of about \$320,000. Eight persons were also arrested.

Customs has been stepping up patrols at hot spots selling TV set-top boxes in the past few months. Some shops were found selling suspected illicit set-top boxes which can be used to watch pay TV programmes for free by means of bypassing copyright protective measures adopted by pay TV programme copyright owners.

After in-depth investigation with the assistance of copyright owners, Customs conducted an operation on May 25 and 26. Four shops in Sham Shui Po and Wan Chai were raided and the suspected illicit TV set-top boxes were seized.

During the operation, Customs officers also arrested seven men and one woman, aged between 18 and 45. Four of them are shop owners while the other four are salespersons.

Investigation is ongoing. The arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

The Group Head (Intellectual Property Investigation (Operations)) of Customs, Mr Guy Fong, said at a press conference today (May 28) that with the imminence of the 2018 FIFA World Cup, Customs will continue to step up street and Internet patrols to curb any form of infringing activity.

He reminded traders that according to the Copyright Ordinance, a person commits an offence if the person sells or lets for hire a relevant device or provides relevant service for the purpose of a circumvention business. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for four years. He also reminded members of the public to watch pay TV programmes through legitimate means.

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

