



# NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **HONG KONG CUSTOMS SEIZES 120,000 PIRATED DVDS IN ORGANIZED CRIME SWEEP**

### ***Fourteen Arrested In Raids on 20 Sites, Including Three Warehouses***

Hong Kong – On February 14 and 15, after a year-long investigation, the Hong Kong Customs & Excise Department raided 20 premises in Hong Kong connected to an optical disc piracy syndicate controlled by an organized criminal gang, arresting 14 men and women and seizing more than 120,000 pirated optical discs believed to have been manufactured in China and smuggled into Hong Kong.

In a synchronized sweep, 130 officers from Hong Kong Customs' Special Task Force (STF), raided premises in Hong Kong's Kwun Tong, Cheung Sha Wan, Tsing Yi, Kwai Chung, Tseung Kwan O, Ngau Tau Kok, To Kwa Wan, Lam Tin and Causeway Bay Districts, shutting down pirate operations in three warehouses, three retail shops and 14 residences.

The investigation was sparked by information developed during a series of raids undertaken with the Motion Picture Association (MPA) in Kwun Tong last year, and more than 40,000 of the seized discs were found to be infringing MPA member company titles including *Open Season*, *Night At the Museum*, *The Departed* and *Rocky Balboa*.

“By maintaining constant pressure on pirate strongholds, the Hong Kong Customs & Excise Department is sending a powerful message to the criminal gangs that damage Hong Kong's creative industries and investment climate,” said Mike Ellis, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, Asia-Pacific for the Motion Picture Association.

“The Motion Picture Association and our member companies greatly appreciate the efforts of the Hong Kong government, and in this instance particularly, the Hong Kong Customs & Excise Department, in fighting copyright theft and protecting intellectual property rights. These raids, carried out under the direction of Assistant Commissioner Tam Yiu-keung and Special Task Force Group Head Albert Chan, send a strong message to organized criminal gangs that they will

not be given free reign to build criminal enterprises on the foundations of our society's creativity."

### ***Piracy in Asia***

A comprehensive study aimed at producing a more accurate picture of the impact that piracy has on the film industry including, for the first time, losses due to internet piracy, recently calculated that the MPA studios lost US\$6.1 billion to worldwide piracy in 2005. About US\$2.4 billion was lost to bootlegging\*, US\$1.4 billion to illegal copying\* and US\$2.3 billion to Internet piracy. Of the US\$6.1 billion in lost revenue to the studios, approximate \$1.2 billion came from piracy across the Asia-Pacific region, while piracy in the U.S. accounted for \$1.3 billion.

In 2006, the MPA's operations in the Asia-Pacific region investigated more than 30,000 cases of piracy and assisted law enforcement officials in conducting nearly 12,400 raids. These activities resulted in the seizure of more than 35 million illegal optical discs, 50 factory optical disc production lines and 4,482 optical disc burners, as well as the initiation of more than 11,000 legal actions.

*\*Bootlegging: Obtaining movies by either purchasing an illegally copied HS/DVD/VCD or acquiring hard copies of bootleg movies.*

*\*Illegal copying: Making illegal copies for self or receiving illegal copies from friends of a legitimate VHS/DVD/VCD*

*\*Internet piracy: Obtaining movies by either downloading them from the Internet without paying or acquiring hard copies of illegally downloaded movies from friends or family.*

***About the MPA:*** *The Motion Picture Association (MPA) represents the interests of major motion picture companies in the global marketplace. On behalf of its member companies, the MPA conducts investigations around the world, assists with the criminal and civil litigation generated by such cases, and conducts education outreach programs to teach movie fans around the world about the harmful effects of piracy. The MPA directs its worldwide anti-piracy operations from its headquarters based in Los Angeles, California and has regional offices located in Brussels (Europe, Middle East and Africa), São Paulo (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Singapore (Asia-Pacific). The MPA's anti-piracy activities have helped to transform entire markets from pirate to legitimate, benefiting video distributors, retailers, and foreign and local filmmakers alike. The MPA member companies include: Buena Vista International, Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc.*

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