



NEWS RELEASE

Councillors call for clearer sanctions on market operators to tackle counterfeiting

29 July 2010:

Clearer penalties are needed for market operators who fail to take action against illegal traders, according to councillors surveyed by the Alliance Against IP Theft.

The survey, taken at the Local Government Association Conference in Bournemouth over 6 and 7 July, asked councillors and council officials what additional measures Trading Standards needed in order to tackle the impact of piracy and counterfeiting at UK markets and car boot sales. Over **70%** of respondents stated that clearer penalties were needed to deter market operators who did not take action to stamp out the problem.

A further 65% said that greater sanctions need to be imposed against illegal traders themselves, who are using UK markets and car boot sales to sell fake and illegal goods.

Markets and car boot sales are the single biggest source of fake goods in the UK. Around 25% of all illegal purchases take place at markets, while criminals are receiving £750 million each year from the sale of fake clothes and shoes at markets alone.

Susie Winter, Director General of the Alliance said:

“Counterfeiting and piracy in UK markets is a major problem that needs to be urgently addressed. While funding is an ongoing issue, clearer penalties are needed for illegal traders and market operators themselves, to ensure there is a sufficient deterrent and that consumers have confidence in their local markets.

“It is simply not acceptable to have a situation where our markets are being used by criminals to fund other illegal activity. Consumers are being ripped off, legitimate businesses are suffering and criminal gangs are intimidating legitimate traders. The Government needs to wake up to the damage this is causing, and ensure that Trading Standards are given the resources and powers they need to ensure markets remain free of fake goods”.

The Alliance Against Intellectual Property Theft Limited
Director General: Susie Winter

Chair: Lavinia Carey **Vice Chairs:** Ruth Orchard, Michael Rawlinson **Treasurer:** Kim Bayley
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Registered in England and Wales. Company number: 5976983

Members:

Anti-Counterfeiting Group

Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society

British Brands Group

BPI (British Recorded Music Industry) Limited

British Video Association

Business Software Alliance

Cinema Exhibitors Association

Copyright Licensing Agency

Design and Artists Copyright Society

Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association

Entertainment Retailers Association

Federation Against Copyright Theft

Film Distributors Association

Motion Picture Association

Premier League

PRS for Music

Publishers Licensing Society

Associate Members:
Anti-Copying in Design

British Jewellery, Giftware & Finishing Federation

Video Standards Council

“The Alliance raised this issue at a recent meeting with IP Minister Baroness Wilcox, and I look forward to with her and others to help tackle the problem”.

END

About the Alliance

Launched in 1998, Alliance Against IP Theft provides a unique single voice to promote to government the importance of intellectual property (IP) to all sectors of the UK economy and to explain the harm – economic, physical and social – caused by IP theft.

Representing film, music, software, sports and publishing, branded manufactured goods and retailers, individual designers and small businesses, the Alliance has campaigned vigorously to demonstrate the important economic and cultural contribution IP makes to the UK and helped bring about legislative reform to ensure our assets are safeguarded for the future wellbeing of the British economy.

Regulation of Markets and Occasional Sales

The need to protect consumers from counterfeit and pirated goods at markets is well known and with other partners the Alliance has established a voluntary code to encourage markets across the country to do more to take action against those who trade in such goods.

Impact:

- 25% of all ‘illegal’ purchases take place at markets;
- 33% of buyers of counterfeit DVDs purchase them at car boot sales and markets;
- 1 in 3 counterfeit DVDs are sold at car boot sales and markets;
- 29% of counterfeit CDs bought come from car boot sales or markets.
- Criminals are receiving £750 million each year from the sale of fake clothes and shoes at markets alone;
- 33 million items of fake clothing and footwear are sold each year at markets.

Through its ‘Real Deal’ Campaign the Alliance and its partners have shown that the regulation of markets can work and make a real contribution to the protection of consumers in most markets. However, this is a voluntary initiative therefore the Alliance is calling for national common sense, light touch regulation to stop these markets being used for criminal activities, to protect consumers from harm, and to prevent local businesses from having to compete against illegal traders who avoid paying taxes.

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