

LORD TRIESMAN'S ADDRESS TO THE ALLIANCE AGAINST IP THEFT SUMMER PARTY

I am delighted to be the first minister for Intellectual Property and Quality in our new department. The key task that faces our department is the delivery of a truly competitive economy, and intellectual property is clearly vital to underpinning our future success. There can be no doubt that equipping our society with the right skills and the right framework to compete in the global market will remain challenging. It is however a challenge that I am excited about, and one that the new department will champion hard across government.

Counterfeiting and piracy remains a significant threat to the competitiveness of UK businesses. This is a key challenge for our new department. Last month's G8 Summit statements again recognised IP Crime as a threat to the Global Economy and we are working with our G8 partners to take forward the plans to promote and protect innovation as set out in the Heiligendamm G8 Summit Statement "Growth and Responsibility in the World Economy."

So it is vital that enforcers have the right powers to tackle this, and we added new powers to Trading Standards armory earlier this year with the commencement of powers for copyright. We will continue to assess what powers are needed.

However, legislation will only ever form part of the picture of the enforcement response to crime. Resources and prioritisation are also a vital part of the picture. To that end we invested an additional £5 million this year to accompany these new powers. Alongside that there has been significant re-investment of resources through the Proceeds of Crime Act, with nearly £10 million being seized from IP criminals last year.

One of the key outcomes of the IP Crime strategy, however, has been the elevated profile that IP Crime now has amongst all enforcement agencies. At the centre, government has defined IP Crime as a key priority in the National Community Safety Policing plan and in the Rogers review, meaning that individual police forces and trading standards authorities should recognise the importance of IP Crime and draw up responses to on the ground threats. On a national level, the Serious Organised Crime Agency include IP Crime as a key threat in the UK threat assessment, and the Association of Chief Police Officers reflect this in identifying IP Crime as a spotlight crime.

On a local level, the work of the UK-IPO team has helped to ensure that regional IP fora are developed and that trading standards regions in the UK identify IP Crime as a key priority. Amongst the broad range of central and local government priorities, this is significant, and the work involved in getting to this point and in making this work

effectively on the ground should not be underestimated.

There are, however, many innovative things that people can and are doing to tackle IP Crime. It is my firm belief that the partnerships that the IP Crime groups have created can do much to share experiences and develop tools for people to use on the ground to ensure that criminals do not profit from counterfeiting and piracy. We will also need to work hard to address public perceptions of this as a victimless crime. Communities, individuals and businesses all suffer from this illegal trade. There is growing evidence of links between the counterfeiters, the intellectual property pirates and the narco-criminals. These networks of criminals are truly global crime businesses. Our successes in each area impact on the others. Nobody should doubt our seriousness or intent. As always, we need to celebrate the successes that we have had, and knuckle down together to tackling the problems that we still face.