



PRESS RELEASE

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£2 MILLION PIRATE DVD SEIZURE IS LARGEST EVER IN UK OVER 800,000 DISCS SEIZED AND FIVE ARRESTED

FACT investigators were involved in the largest ever single seizure of pirate DVDs in a raid on premises in High Street, Dudley, West Midlands last week where five people were arrested.

In an intelligence led joint operation with West Midlands Police, Sandwell Trading Standards, BPI and ELSPA, warrants were obtained to search four premises - two shops and two home addresses.

The pirate DVD operation was centred on a shop in Dudley High Street, where a concealed entrance opened into an upstairs floor where DVD burners and PCs were located and a counterfeit DVD 'wholesale business' was in operation. The premises were also guarded by extensive CCTV coverage.

Over 800,000 pirate DVDs with a street value of over £2 million were arranged by film type and in alphabetical order. Counterfeit music CDs and video games were also seized. It is believed this enterprise was supplying a large number of traders across the West Midlands with pirate DVDs, CDs and video games.

Kieron Sharp, Director General of FACT, said: *"This is a substantial blow to a sophisticated and sizeable counterfeiting operation trading in illegal copies of films and TV shows and we are grateful for the assistance of the local police and trading standards.*

The message for anyone thinking of buying a pirate DVD is 'don't put money into the hands of criminals'. You are also harming local businesses and traders.'"

BPI anti-piracy manager David Wood added: *"Music fans buying counterfeit CDs are not only ripping off local shops and the artists and record companies who invest in new music, but lining the pockets of organised criminals. Commercial music piracy costs the industry more than £165m in lost sales every year, it fuels other areas of crime, and we welcome the police's move to close down what was a hugely significant operation."*

Mike Rawlinson, Managing Director of ELSPA, commented: *"The replication of computer and video games software and any other multimedia product is illegal and has a negative impact on both local and national businesses. ELSPA would like to thank the efforts of FACT and Sandwell Trading Standards in their attempts to protect legitimate local traders and remove illegal products from the marketplace."*