



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **PIRATE DVD FACTORY RAIDED - STREET VALUE OF OVER £1M A WEEK THIRD MAJOR LONDON OPERATION DISMANTLED SINCE FEBRUARY**

At approx midday on 21.05.06 local officers from Walthamstow borough discovered a large counterfeit DVD and cannabis factory at premises in East Walthamstow, E17.

The Met officers were on patrol in the area, which is known for stolen and abandoned vehicles being dumped at the location when, on further investigation they discovered a huge DVD factory with approx 40 DVD towers, each with 9 DVD burners, 8 DVD label printers and 2 industrial sized machines, which appear to have recently been delivered. The factory would be capable of producing over 300,000 DVDs a week with a street value of over £1m.

Officers also discovered a cannabis factory attached to the unit – containing approx 115 cannabis plants.

London Regional Assets Recovery Team (RART), Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT), Waltham Forest Trading Standards and officers from the Met's Film Piracy Unit have been working at the location and have found tens of thousands of pirate DVDs as well as a large number of blank DVDs. These include hundreds of film titles and a large amount of pornography. Amongst the titles found were copies of 'The Da Vinci Code', which was only released in cinemas last week.

The factory also contained cramped and squalid living quarters, including bedding and a kitchen area. The operation was capable of 24-hour production of counterfeit DVD's.

DCI Tristram Hicks, RART who will be working with the Film Piracy Unit on this investigation said,

*"This is an incredible discovery by local officers from Walthamstow borough. This factory has been designed to be a 24-hour operation. All of our suspects were living and sleeping on the premises, which have the capacity to produce hundreds of thousands of pirate DVD's a week. Today's arrests are a good example of how Met officers are tackling organised crime in and around the capital. These people have the capacity to be involved in a variety of crimes and we continue to strive to put them out of business."*

Raymond Leinster, FACT Director General added:

*"Thanks to the diligence of officers from Walthamstow another major pirate DVD factory has been taken out of operation. The subsequent investigation by the Regional Assets Recovery Team and the Film Piracy Unit should provide detailed intelligence on the criminal network behind this factory."*

*This is the third major pirate operation dismantled since February in the Greater London area and emphasises the increased focus by Met Police officers on film piracy."*

Five men and two women were arrested at the location. They have been taken to an East London police station.

Enquiries continue.

- Ends