



PRESS RELEASE

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FACT SUPPORTS NORTHERN IRELAND ANTI-COUNTERFEITING CAMPAIGN

FACT was pleased to support the latest initiative by the Organised Crime Task Force in Northern Ireland at an event attended by Paul Goggins, Policing and Justice Minister and Chair of the Organised Crime Task Force. He stated that “Buying fakes funds real crime and lines the pockets of criminals”.

He was speaking at yesterday’s launch of the Organised Crime Task Force’s Christmas advertising campaign which is aimed at highlighting the link between buying counterfeit goods and funding crime.

He said *“Before you buy fake goods think about what you are really paying for? You could in reality be funding drugs, violent crime and criminal lifestyles by purchasing a dodgy DVD or a pair of fake designer jeans. That’s not much of a bargain and it’s not something that most people will want to be associated with.”*

“Legitimate businesses continue to be undermined by a criminal underworld intent on flooding the market with illicit and fake goods and this has an impact across all Northern Ireland communities. None of us would feel comfortable knowing that the money we have spent on a counterfeit CD or pair of fake trainers was used to purchase drugs that could be sold on to someone you know.”

The campaign will run in pubs, clubs, restaurants, cinemas and hotels in Northern Ireland over the Christmas period and will use a variety of ambient media including washroom posters, glow-boxes and drip-mats, to promote the message to key audiences identified through rigorous research as most likely to buy counterfeits.

He continued; *“The image of the ‘Del-Boy’ wheeler dealer offering you a bargain for cheap toys, DVDs, football shirts and even cigarettes and alcohol is a long way away from the reality. Counterfeit goods are shoddy and poor quality, electrical products are unsafe and can cause real harm to you and your family - not the kind of Christmas present we want to give those closest to us.”*

“Over the last two years PSNI has seized almost £14m of counterfeit goods at markets and other locations across Northern Ireland. We will continue to take the fight to the criminals but we need the public to help us. By refusing to buy counterfeits you will reduce the demand so you too can play your part in putting the criminals out of business”.

The event took place at Bar 7 in the Odyssey Pavilion, Belfast, which is one of over 100 venues participating in the campaign. Paul Goggins was joined at the launch by DCS Phil Wright from the PSNI, Eddy Leviten from FACT, Peter Holmes, Chief Executive of the Odyssey Pavilion, Bobby Nicholson, Pavilion centre manager and Stephen Kelly, Chief Executive of the Federation of Licensed Retail Trade.

Eddy Leviten, Head of Communications at FACT added: *“FACT is delighted to support this campaign from the OCTF as it highlights the way that organised criminal networks are using audio-visual piracy to generate substantial profits as well as fund other criminal activities. We have a strong working relationship with PSNI and in particular with the IP Crime Unit and we continue to see the benefits of this cooperation across Northern Ireland.”*

The campaign is funded by the Northern Ireland Office, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Federation Against Copyright Theft, and includes funding from the PSNI Assets Recovery Fund. Thanking those involved in the campaign Paul Goggins added: *“This advertising campaign has been part funded with cash taken from criminals in Northern Ireland by the PSNI through the Proceeds of Crime Act. We’re putting this money to a practical use to heighten awareness of the impact of organised crime.”*

“Every seizure, every arrest and every conviction disrupts the supply chain for the organised criminal and if the public vote with their purses and wallets they will disrupt it even further.”

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Notes to editors

- The OCTF ‘What are you really paying for?’ advertising campaign will run in pubs, clubs, cinemas, restaurants and hotels across Northern Ireland from 5 November to 16 December. Attached with this news release is one of the posters that will be used to promote the campaign message.
- The Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) is a multi-agency partnership bringing together government, law enforcement agencies, the Policing Board and the business community to develop strategies to combat organised crime.
- The OCTF includes representatives from the Anti-Counterfeiting Group, British Phonographic Industry, Diageo, Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association, Federation Against Copyright Theft, and the UK Intellectual Property office.
- For the period 2005/06 – 2006/07 PSNI seized counterfeit goods and manufacturing equipment to the value of £14 million. Types of items recovered included: films, music, alcohol, tobacco, clothes, computer and console games, perfume, sunglasses, watches, batteries, washing powder and more.
- ‘Views on Organised Crime: Findings from the January 2007 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey’ included findings on attitudes to buying counterfeit goods. 45% of 16-24 year olds and 40% of 25-34 year olds had bought counterfeit CDs or DVDs. Almost half of all respondents agreed that they had a role in combating organised crime by refusing to buy counterfeit goods.
- The report is available to view online at:
http://www.nio.gov.uk/views_on_organised_crime_findings_from_the_january_2007_northern_ireland_omnibus_survey-2.pdf

About FACT

The Federation Against Copyright Theft is the UK’s leading trade organisation established to protect and represent the interests of the film and broadcasting industry against copyright and trademark infringements. Established in 1983, FACT works closely with statutory law enforcement agencies to combat the growth of pirate DVDs, film and other forms of broadcast material including the increasing threat from online/internet-based piracy. FACT has been accepted as a prosecution authority and engages in criminal prosecutions in its own right. The maximum penalty for offences of film piracy is 10 years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. Proceeds of Crime Act legislation now also enables confiscation of assets and goods obtained through criminal activity.
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