



PRESS RELEASE

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MULTI AGENCY OPERATION TARGETS PROLIFIC DVD SELLERS IN LEYTON

11 pirate DVD sellers were arrested on Saturday 22nd July 2006 in a joint operation by FACT, Metropolitan Police, Waltham Forest Trading Standards and the Immigration Service in a major swoop on Leyton Mills Retail Park in North East London.

Leyton Mills has had a significant problem with Chinese pirate DVD sellers who harass customers and affect the trade of genuine retailers on the site. A large number of complaints to FACT from members of the public led to the operation, which was instigated by FACT and involved a team of over 20 people comprising FACT investigators and Police, Immigration and Trading Standards officers.

Seven Chinese nationals, five males and two females, were charged with offences under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act as well as the charge of 'Going Equipped To Cheat' and appeared in court on Monday, receiving fines and/ or conditional discharges, with one person being remanded in custody for seven days pending a further court appearance.

In a groundbreaking move by Waltham Forest Council all seven of those charged also had injunctions taken out against them in the County Court. The injunctions ban them from returning to Leyton Mills and carry the threat of arrest should the conditions of the injunctions be broken.

In addition to the arrests, over 850 pirate DVDs were seized, including recent or unreleased titles such as 'Superman Returns', 'The Devil Wears Prada' and 'Cars'.

Raymond Leinster, FACT Director General, said "Leyton Mills has been one of the most serious problem locations for pirate DVD selling which was taking place in broad daylight in a busy retail park. Working together with Leyton Police and Waltham Forest Trading Standards we have been able to show the public once again that we are prepared to act in response to their complaints and those of local retailers. This follows recent successes where we have been able to close down pirate DVD factories making millions of pounds for organised criminal networks."

Chief Inspector, Ian Larnder, Head of Waltham Forest Partnership Unit, said:

"These arrests and subsequent charges continue to demonstrate the effective working relationship between several organisations. Selling counterfeit DVDs may not appear to be a priority crime but it is essential to grasp the associated crime that can be generated, such as anti-social behaviour, robbery, violence and further avenues of organised crime. Working together with FACT, police have assisted in reducing crime in Waltham Forest, we will continue this hard work to target illegal sellers and put them out of business."