



INTERPOL

FACT SHEET

Trafficking in illicit goods

Trafficking in illicit goods includes such practices as counterfeiting, piracy, smuggling of legitimate products and tax evasion. Selling fake or counterfeit products as the real thing is one aspect of this crime; so is selling genuine goods on the black market to avoid paying taxes. All levels of society are impacted by trafficking in illicit goods. For example, piracy and counterfeiting harm businesses which produce and sell legitimate products, governments lose tax revenue from products manufactured or sold outside the proper channels, and consumers are at risk from substandard products.

► LEADERSHIP AND INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION

A clear link has been established between the trafficking of illicit goods and transnational organized crime. Criminal organizations are attracted by the lucrative profits involved in trading counterfeit or fake goods, or in trading legitimate goods through illicit channels. Substandard products are often manufactured and trafficked by organized criminals with complete disregard for the health and safety of the consumer.

INTERPOL's activities revolve around three main areas: training, operational support and information exchange.

► TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

INTERPOL coordinates training seminars to teach police, investigators, regulatory authorities and customs officials about the transnational reach of trafficking in illicit goods; to identify and share successful investigative techniques; to increase the number of specialists in member countries and to encourage participation in our operations.

Nine INTERPOL Trafficking in Illicit Goods and Intellectual Property Crime Training Seminars were held in 2011 across Asia, Africa, Europe and Central America. Approximately 500 officers from police, customs and regulatory bodies in some 30 countries took part. Overall in 2011, a combined total of more than 1,000 police, customs and IP officials, private sector experts and investigators from more than 50 countries attended an INTERPOL training event.

International Intellectual Property Crime Investigators College (IIPCIC) is a fully interactive online intellectual property (IP) crime training facility. It delivers leading edge training that is available around-the-clock and around the world via the Internet. Students who successfully complete both the introductory and intermediate levels will receive special certification. The skills obtained by completing IIPCIC training courses are equally applicable to the investigation of trafficking in illicit goods.

► CROSS-BORDER, INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONS

INTERPOL coordinates tactical operations in conjunction with local authorities. The following operations highlight the success of multidisciplinary enforcement action.

- **Operation Jupiter:** Launched in 2004, this operation has targeted an increasingly wide range of illicit goods across Latin America. To date, Jupiter operations have resulted in more than 1,660 arrests and the seizure of more than 12 million counterfeit products worth more than USD 506 million, including car parts, motor oil, sports clothes and shoes, mobile phones and alcohol.
- **Operation Atlantique (2011)** resulted in 16 arrests and the seizure of fake products worth more than USD 1.5 million across five countries in Western Africa. Recovered products included computer supplies, African fabrics, plastic packaging used for food and water, soup cubes, cigarettes and CDs.

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- **Operation Opson (2011)** was the first operation to focus exclusively on everyday food products. Across 10 European countries, hundreds of tonnes of fake and substandard food and drink were seized, including substandard olive oil, tomato sauce, cheese, wine, fish, and confectionary.
- **Operation Maya (2012)** Police, customs and investigators across 11 countries in the Americas recovered more than a million fake goods including computer software, cigarettes, toys and clothing. More than 200 individuals were arrested or placed under investigation.
- **Operation Black Poseidon (2012)** targeted products being traded illicitly across five Eastern European countries by transnational organized crime networks, including computers, pharmaceuticals, electronics, alcohol and cigarettes. Millions of Euros worth of goods were seized at border points, markets and shops.

► RELATED ACTIVITIES

The Annual International Law Enforcement IP Crime Conference focuses on operational activities, allowing those on the front lines of the fight against IP crime and trafficking in illicit goods to share practical solutions that have proven successful. Unlike traditional conferences aimed at developing high-level strategy, the IP Crime Conference targets daily operational needs.

The Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy is convened by a high-level public-private partnership of international organizations, including INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization, which target counterfeiting issues. It serves as an international forum for developing actionable strategies for combating the production and distribution of counterfeit products.

► PARTNERSHIPS

INTERPOL works closely with partners in the public and private sectors to achieve its goals of combating the trafficking of illicit goods. We currently partner with more than 40 different industry sectors and a number of cross-industry associations and representative bodies that offer financial and operational support.



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► CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact us via our web site. For matters relating to specific crime cases, please contact your local police or the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in your country.

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