Russian police seize record 2 million pirate discs

Moscow’s Economic IPR Crime Police raided a warehouse in an industrial district of the city and seized a massive 2.1 million discs. This is the single largest seizure of suspected infringing discs in Russia and is regarded as a significant blow to the organised syndicate behind this storage facility.

Of these, 800,000 were in CD and CD-R format and contained MP3 music files of both Russian and international artists. The non-music discs were DVDs containing film titles and software.

All the discs have been sent for storage and cataloguing under the control of Infomzashita State Enterprise, a Moscow city government organisation that provides expert reports and supplies secure storage facilities in cases involving optical media. This unit specifically works on IPR crime and has a close working relationship with IFPI Moscow.

Initial Police enquiries revealed that the warehouse is suspected of supplying a number of Russian based websites that service the international market. Enquiries into the manufacturing sources are ongoing and IFPI Moscow is assisting in identifying the repertoire.

Italian anti-piracy police have cracked an illicit distribution network operating in Catania, Sicily in raids that uncovered a significant seizure of arms and bombs.

Officers from the First GdF Operational Unit of Catania were involved in a series of seizures this week. During the search of one home the police discovered eight guns, five rifles, ammunition for rifles and machine guns, two kilograms of TNT and bomb making equipment.

More than 2,000 CDs and DVDs were seized during the raids as well as several stolen archaeological treasures, such as ancient Roman and Greek pottery.

Police arrested two men and are now investigating the connection between them and members of criminal organisations closely linked to notorious mafia families.

Source: FPM Italy

Nick Roberts, coordinator for Russia CIS, says: “This tremendous seizure reflects the underlying scale of piracy in Russia and we thank the authorities and IFPI Moscow for their determination and investigative skills in shutting down this massive illegal distribution centre”.

Source: Vladimir Gornostay, IFPI Moscow
**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Record haul of infringing products in KwaZulu Natal**

Three people were arrested in Durban, South Africa after being caught red handed making counterfeit CDs during a police raid.

Officers from the Durban Crime Intelligence and Organised Crime Units were joined by industry anti-piracy experts in a raid against a shop in the city's suburbs.

Further investigations led officers to the homes of two of the suspects, where further CDs, computers and equipment were seized. In total, 67 hard drives, 116 disc burners, 10 computers, 30 canon printers, two industrial photocopiers, 1,000 printed movie covers, approximately 8,000 recorded CDs and DVDs and 30 loose DVD burners and 5,500 blank DVDs were seized by police.

The nine stack burners were capable of duplicating 90 discs every 10 minutes.

*Raj Pather, spokesperson for the RISA in KwaZulu Natal, says: “We are grateful for the diligence and perseverance of very experienced South African Police Service detectives which has led to South Africa’s largest haul of infringing products in one single raid.”*

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**LOCKS DON’T STOP SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE**

A flea market in Bruma was the site of the latest battle between law enforcement and South Africa’s music pirates.

The Anti-Piracy Unit of the Recording Industry of South Africa (RiSA) targeted the market and undertook a series of test purchases. Having confirmed that pirate music and film titles were being sold a complaint was made to the police who took over the investigation, obtaining the necessary search warrants for five market stalls.

On their arrival to execute the warrants the five stalls were locked having been tipped off about impending action. However, the culprit tipping off the pirates got more than he bargained for because he was standing next to a police official in plain clothes when he delivered his message. He was arrested on the spot for attempting to pervert the course of justice.

The police were undeterred by the locked premises and with the aide of bolt cutters gained entry to all of them, much to the dismay of the owners who were watching from a distance. In total 83 bags containing 24,000 counterfeit music CDs and movie DVDs were seized.

*Braam Schoeman, manager of the Anti-Piracy unit remarks: “The Police should never be underestimated when it comes to enforcing the law and I thank law enforcement officials for their initiative and zest to overcome the problem”.*

To date this is the largest quantity of DVDs seized at a flea market in South Africa.

Source: RiSA

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**NIGERIA**

**Raid on CD plant in Lagos**

A suspected pirate CD plant in the Nigerian capital Lagos was raided in July by the country’s elite anti-corruption agency the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

The agency worked with forensic anti-piracy experts from IFPI/MPA to monitor the activities of CVL Technology Ltd, before making it the third suspect plant to be raided in the last three months.

A team of 16 EFCC operatives and 20 armed police officers, with assistance of the head of the combined IFPI/MPA office, Akeem Aponmade, raided the plant in Lagos in the early hours of 25th July 2007. The plant, with five lines in total, had been operational during the night manufacturing unauthorised optical discs.

The authorities seized 714 stampers, containing international music repertoire and Hollywood movies. Officials also found 5,000 copies of the ‘Respect 2’ album, by popular Nigerian Artist K1, as well as 8,000 other CDs and VCDs.

The EFCC also recovered documents showing orders for and production of several local and foreign works including ‘Grass 2 Grace’ album from 2Face, a multiple award winning artist.

Among the wide variety of foreign artists whose works were found were R. Kelly, Wyclef, Luther Vandross, Celine Dion, Phil Collins, Westlife, Toni Braxton, Boys II Men, 50 Cent, Backstreet Boys, Akon, 2Pac, Beyonce, Kent Village, Lucky Dube and Whitney Houston. The works were mostly titled ‘Platinum’ or ‘Best of’ indicating that they contained selected songs from each artist.


The company's head of marketing was arrested and is subject to a police investigation.

Source: Akeem O. Aponmade, IFPI/MPA

*Nigerian National Coordinator*
Three ringleaders of a counterfeiting gang involved in music, film and game piracy were jailed after amassing tens of thousands of pounds through the sale of fake products and extensive benefit fraud.

The sentences followed a trial at Liverpool Crown Court, in which a total of eight defendants pleaded guilty.

Ringleaders Barry Powell and Mark Quincey were imprisoned for 12 and 15 months respectively for their role in the six-month scam. The trial judge also handed down a nine-month prison sentence to fellow ringleader Sarah Haynes, a mother of two.

In passing sentence, the judge said: “I want to send a deterrence message to any people who may think counterfeiting is an easy way to make a lot of money.”

BPI brought a private prosecution, together with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), after a joint investigation with film industry body FACT and games industry enforcement group ELSPA.

The court heard that the criminal operation was run as a well-organised illegal business from the homes of the three ringleaders. Supplying local markets and car boot fairs it generated in excess of £40,000 in criminal proceeds during its six-month operation. The defendants had also illegally claimed £20,000 in state benefits.

Market owners guilty of money laundering

For the first time, a British market operator has been convicted of accepting money - in the form of pitch rents - which it knew, or suspected, had been earned through criminal means. Two directors of a UK-registered company were convicted of money laundering. The company and the two directors benefited financially from the illegal sale of DVDs and CDs at Bovingdon market in Hertfordshire.

BPI welcomed the verdict and said that the case is significant as all previous commercial piracy cases have been brought against sellers or distributors, rather than the market owners themselves.

Both the company, Wendy Fair Markets Ltd - who operate 17 other UK markets, including music and film piracy hotspot Wembley Market - and the directors, could lose their assets as they are now vulnerable to a claim under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Seven traders also face the possibility of custodial sentences having been convicted of selling counterfeit music film and software.

BPI anti-piracy manager David Wood says: “Most markets and car boot sales operate a strict no-fakes policy, but a significant number of owners still turn a blind eye to rampant counterfeiting and piracy, while raking in the profits. It is plainly wrong that rogue market and car boot sale owners are able to generate huge profits from criminal trade that takes place blatantly and openly under their noses. This ruling, we hope, will send a clear message to these market owners that they need to clean up their act or face prosecution.”

Police dawn raid stops allofmp3.com pirate vouchers scheme

Police in London raided and shut down an online voucher system allegedly used by the illegal Russian music download website allofmp3.com to try and sidestep the removal of legitimate credit card payment services in Europe.

The action, which led to the arrest of a 25 year-old man, followed a European-wide investigation conducted by IFPI and BPI. The man was allegedly the UK-based European agent for allofmp3.com, facilitating the sale of digital downloads by advertising and selling vouchers through auction sites such as eBay and the website allofmp3vouchers.co.uk - a website which has now been taken down from the internet.

The vouchers contained a code that allowed UK and European consumers to access and download music illegally from the allofmp3.com website.

Charging £10 per voucher, the suspect was believed to be taking payment from customers and transferring the cash into various offshore accounts operated by the site’s owners.

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As the unlicensed sale of music is a criminal offence in the UK, police executed the raid under Section Two of the Fraud Act (2006), legislation introduced into UK law in January 2007 specifically to combat online fraud. This is the first time the new fraud legislation has been used in a copyright-related case.

Source: BPI

Source: IFPI
IRELAND

Thousands of discs seized in Dundalk raid

Thousands of counterfeit DVDs and CDs have been seized in a raid on a major counterfeit duplication centre near Dundalk. The plant was in operation for a year and had the potential to make Euros 20 to Euros 30million worth of counterfeit discs annually.

During the search 74 high-speed burners, capable of copying DVDs within three or four minutes, were recovered. Sources said the plant was working 16 hours per day, seven days a week and could produce 12,500 pirate discs a day.

Copies of Spider-Man 3 and Blades of Glory were among the new film titles seized, along with pornographic movies and a number of new chart releases. No arrests were made, but one person was on site when 15 officers, some wearing body armour, entered the rented farmyard premises.

A Dundalk Garda spokesman said the suspects involved in the operation are locals known to the police: "It is hoped there will be some arrests on this in the coming weeks. We will certainly be speaking to the premises’ owner. A substantial number of these CDs and DVDs were being sold over the border and countrywide."

Police were involved in a surveillance operation on the premises. Many of the DVDs were being sold at Balbriggan market in Dublin and Jonesboro market in South Armagh. INFECT estimates the industry in Ireland is losing Euros 170 million annually to pirate copies.

Six month jail sentence for counterfeiter

Martin McDonagh was imprisoned for six months and fined Euros 1000 after being convicted at Carrick-On-Shannon District Court for counterfeit offences at Drishogue Market last November.

He is the first person to be jailed in the Irish Republic under anti-piracy legislation and was caught with 226 counterfeit albums and 176 copied films. Among the CDs seized were Scissor Sisters' 'Ta Dah' album, 'Sam's Town' by The Killers, Westlife's 'Face To Face', 'Breakaway' by Kelly Clarkson and Madonna's 'Confessions on a Dance Floor'.

McDonagh admitted 10 charges under the Copyright Act and asked for a further 10 offences to be taken into consideration. He had two previous convictions for counterfeiting offences.

IRMA hailed the jail term as a powerful deterrent in its fight against piracy. Sean Murtagh, head of IRMA's anti-piracy operation, said "District Court judges are beginning to view music piracy as a more serious crime than previously."

Source: IRMA

ITALY

Policeman and court official arrested in Italian piracy crackdown

A policeman and a court official were among 35 people arrested in a major crackdown in the Italian town of Pescara. 'Operation Crack' was aimed at breaking an organised criminal gang that was producing and distributing counterfeit CDs, DVDs and video games. The official from the Civil Court of Pescara and the policeman played a major role in the pirate gang, as did a clerk working for the Ministry of the Interior.

The investigation was coordinated by Aldo Aceto, the public prosecutor from Pescara, and was carried out by local police assisted by music, movie and business software anti-piracy experts as well as SIAE, the authors' collecting society anti-piracy team.

More than 12 CD burning facilities were found and dismantled in and around Pescara and police officers also seized more than Euros400,000 in cash.

Record seizure of illegal copying equipment in Rome

Police in Rome have secured a record seizure of illegal CD and DVD reproduction equipment. The Anti-Piracy Unit of the city’s police force was assisted by experts from the music, film and software federations in seizing 113 burners, the largest haul of such illegal apparatus in its history.

The illegal copying facility was found in a house in Rome's Ponte di Nona district during Operation Spring Master, a four month investigation into street vendors selling counterfeit CDs and DVDs across the city. The leader of the organisation running the plant was arrested to help the police with their enquiries.

Source: FPM Italy
SPAIN

Spanish Police swoop on illegal jukebox makers

Spanish police are toasting the success of ‘Operation Alterne II’, which resulted in the seizure of over 100 jukeboxes containing copyright infringing material. The jukeboxes were found in nightclubs and at the sites of three companies responsible for their production.

The premises of the three companies in Seville, Córdoba, Alicante and Lugo were searched during the action and thousands of illegal music videos in different formats were seized. Seven people were arrested for intellectual property infringement. The companies commercialised the videos through the jukebox which usually included a hard disc acting as a computer where, depending on its capacity, 1,000 to 5,000 video clips could be found. In some older machines the files were stored on a DVD-R.

The arrests and searches follow inquiries initiated by the Department of Investigation and Fraud Prevention of PROMUSICA-E-AGEDI in early 2006. It was established that several companies were producing jukeboxes containing infringing music videos in VCD format and placing them in bars and nightclubs. The rights to the music content in these videos are owned by both Spanish and international record producers.

Important pirate networks dismantled by Granada

Local Police and National Police

During May and June 2007, two operations carried out by the local police of the city of Granada and the Spanish National Police led to the dismantling of highly organised pirate groups operating in Granada, which produced and distributed pirate CDs and DVDs for the Spanish pirate market.

In May, the National Police (Cuerpo Nacional de Policía, UDEV) carried out raids in 10 addresses in the city of Granada. During the operation, codenamed Patio, 57 people were arrested. Material seized included 25,000 burnt CD-Rs and 20,000 DVD-Rs and 9,000 blank DVD-R, as well as 134 DVD-R burners in 13 towers, 4,000 inlays, around 3,000 jewel cases and 1 guillotine. Some 500 psx videogames were also seized.

In June, following a prolonged investigation into an organized network that started in October 2006, the local police of Granada (Polícia Local, P.J. Gruvidpol) carried out Operation Luna, with the support of PROMUSICA-E-AGEDI investigators. During the raids, 4 flats in the city of Granada were searched, resulting in the arrest of 24 people from sub-Saharan Africa suspected of running a highly profitable illegal business. The flats were used as duplication laboratories from which pirate material was distributed to the whole Mediterranean region, including the Balearic Islands. During the raids, 33,913 burnt CD-R, 2,450 blank CD-R; 27,192 recorded DVD-R and 1,920 blank DVD-R, as well as 60 DVD-R burners, 5,000 inlays, 2,000 jewel cases and 1,590 PS2 games were seized, as well as Euros 21,000 cash.

José Luis Pérez Quintero, Head of the Department of Investigation and Fraud Prevention of PROMUSICA-E-AGEDI stated: "These brilliant operations carried out by the Policía local and Policía Nacional of Granada underline the fact that the city of Granada is, together with Madrid, a hotspot of organized pirate activity. The problem is not only that Granada has the highest piracy rate of Spain, but also that this city is being used for the massive duplication and distribution of pirate CDs and DVDs to the rest of the country. We hope that the Spanish Government, following the example of the City of Granada Local Government (Ayuntamiento de Granada), carries out the special plan that all the collecting societies and associations, most affected by piracy, have requested. We hope to see the results in the months ahead, with the streets emptied of street sellers and a significant increase in the number of police actions against these pirate networks"

Source: Promusicae-Agedi

COLOMBIA

Revolver found in CD duplication centre

A .38 calibre revolver was among items seized by Colombian police when they raided an allegedly illegal CD duplication centre in Bogota.

The raid, conducted with the support of APDIF, was part of the ongoing San Adresito project which aims to stop the supply of illegal music and films to the market of that name.

It is estimated that this centre had a monthly production capability of 500,000 CD-Rs, given that it was working round the clock to keep up with local demand for this illegal product.

The raid was carried out by police officers from the computer crimes section of the Judicial Police (DIJIN) who arrested four people and seized more than 5,500 music CD-Rs, 82 burners and nearly 460,000 inlay cards.

Source: APDIF Colombia
PERU

Clandestine print shop shut in Peru

Peruvian authorities carried out an operation in August to close down a clandestine print shop whose sole operation appears to have been providing high quality inlay cards for pirate music and film products.

Observation was kept on the suspect premises which were then raided at an opportune time. During the search the plant was found to be in operation, printing counterfeit inlay cards and evidence was uncovered of a sustained operation.

Also found during the operation were documents identifying the owner of the plant who will now be investigated for IPR crimes.

During the search of the premises officers found two offset printers and two industrial printers, 100 metal printing plates with impressions of music and film titles, 200 label films with infringing artwork and approximately 1,000 sheets of inlays prepared for cutting.

The suspect who has previously been implicated in IPR crimes awaits investigation by the examining magistrate.

Source: APDIF Peru

MEXICO

Raids smash piracy ring in Mexico

Mexican law enforcement authorities teamed up with industry anti-piracy experts to execute several search warrants on a freight forwarding company that was a distribution point for pirated music and film product to be sent to various cities across Mexico.

The investigation came to fruition when the authorities seized 37,000 pirate CD-Rs in the company’s dispatch terminal and then proceeded to other sites in the well-known pirate market of Tepito in Mexico City, raiding a total of nine labs and five warehouses.

The operation, which involved around 300 police units and prosecutors from the Attorney General’s office (PGR), led to the seizure of 416,000 recorded CD-Rs, eight million inlays and 133 CD/DVD burners.

Mexican authorities said the raids had dealt a serious blow to major organised criminal activity in Tepito market. The freight forwarding company had a legitimate operating license but authorities had suspected it of having links to organised criminal syndicates.

Emilio Garcia, Regional Coordinator for IFPI in Latin America said: "The smashing of this criminal syndicate is great news and an excellent example of partnership between the Mexican authorities and private sector anti-piracy experts. Other criminal gangs involved in counterfeiting music should be put on notice that we could be coming for them next."

Source: IFPI Latin America

Huge number of raids in Mexico

Raids were launched against 302 warehouses and 11 clandestine CD duplication sites on the 30th June in a massive blitz against CD piracy in “la Cuchilla” marketplace in Puebla State.

The raids involved personnel from the Attorney General’s Office, the Federal Investigation Agency, District Attorneys and experts in intellectual property, with support from members from the Federal Preventive Police and from APDIF Mexico.

During the searches, officers found an extraordinary quantity of material including 500,000 recorded CD-Rs containing music, one million CD-Rs containing film titles, 15,400 Jewel Boxes, 1,250 CD-R burners and six million inlay cards.

Source: APDIF Mexico
ARGENTINA

Largest seizure of burners in Argentina

Officers from the Gendarmeria Nacional carried out a series of 20 raids during May, the culmination of a lengthy investigation into music and film piracy in the city of Buenos Aires.

The main focus of the raids was centred on two clandestine duplication centres and stalls in the market of La Matanza. These centres were suspected to supply the majority of pirate discs in the eastern and south eastern suburbs of Buenos Aires and their closure has dealt a blow to the gangs behind this trade.

In total 67 CD-R/DV-R burners and more than 22,000 pirate discs were seized.

Source: CAPIF

CHILE

Customs seize CDs smuggled in fuel tank

Customs officers in Arica, Chile stopped a suspect vehicle driven by a Peruvian man on the frontier and conducted a search. Underneath the carpet in the boot of the vehicle, they found a false compartment giving access to the fuel tank.

A search of the tank revealed that it was almost completely full of various packets wrapped in nylon bags and sealed with sticky tape. When these bags were opened a total of more than 2,000 copyright infringing CDs and their corresponding inlays were found. The driver of the vehicle has been reported to the local prosecutor for smuggling offences.

Source: IFPI Chile

CANADA

Toronto Police file criminal charges in counterfeiting raid

Toronto Police have filed three criminal charges against an alleged major counterfeiter of music, movies, video games, electronic equipment and clothes.

Owen Brown, the owner of I-Man Muzik, was arrested during a raid at the Toronto store and held by police. Brown, who faces three criminal copyright and fraud-related charges, has faced similar counterfeiting-related offences before.

In addition to the arrests, police seized suspected counterfeit goods including approximately 20,000-25,000 music CDs, as well as movie DVDs, video games, name brand Bluetooth headsets, iPods, jackets, shirts and other apparel.

Police also seized cash, business documents, and four CD/DVD burning towers, each with six to eight burners, which together are estimated to be capable of producing almost 770 recorded discs per hour or 30,720 discs in a 40-hour week.

At least 100 CD/DVD spindles, most with 100 discs per spindle, were also confiscated along with high-volume colour printers allegedly used to print labels and CDs.

The investigation was initiated by the Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA) and Graham Henderson, president of CRIA says: "These arrests by Toronto Police, and CRIA’s groundwork that led to this action, demonstrate our combined determination to stop the theft of music and other intellectual property. We are grateful to the Toronto Police Service and particularly the officers at 42 Division who arranged and executed the raid, for standing so firmly behind the rights of artists and rights holders."

Source: CRIA
**U.S.A**

**Largest seizure in RIAA history**

RIAA has made the largest haul of illegal counterfeit music material in its history after a series of raids in Phoenix, Arizona.

The seizure is the result of an investigation that began back in January. Information had linked the "España" organization in Phoenix to the distribution of high-quality pirated products throughout several western states. The original leads were developed and then reported to the Phoenix Police Department.

Phoenix police then executed a series of search and arrest warrants between 15th and 18th May. The investigation dismantled a piracy operation, responsible for manufacturing and distributing burned music and movies. Each product was virtually indistinguishable from its legitimate counterpart. The only difference was that most of it was burned to CD-R and DVD-R media, rather than pressed at a replicating plant.

The quality of the product was reflected in the equipment seized. A $500,000 silk screen printer, 28 printer/copiers and commercial cellophane wrapping machines were all confiscated by police.

The operation netted an astonishing 357 burners, 150,000 music and movie finished products, an additional 72,000 "in-process" music and movie discs, 19,000 inlay cards, 121,000 jewel casings and sophisticated commercial equipment. It was the largest haul of such goods in any case the RIAA has worked on.

**Officials uncover one kilo of cocaine at burner lab**

Drugs and money come with the territory of organised crime. Usually if one is present, you are likely to find the other. Recently, pirated CDs and DVDs are being found along with money and drugs in many criminal cases. If these gangs can make money off drugs, they feel nothing can stop them from doing the same with pirated CDs and DVDs. Unfortunately for them, RIAA investigators know their tricks all too well.

On 30th May, investigators assisted police from New Bedford, Massachusetts in executing a search warrant. Officials uncovered more than just CDs and DVDs at the burner lab. Inside a safe, investigators found a kilo of cocaine along with a significant amount of cash. A total of 1,325 CD-Rs and 100 Music DVDs were also seized by police.

**INDONESIA**

**Indonesian authorities step up actions**

Indonesian authorities have recently stepped-up activity against pirate operations in and around Jakarta. The Department of Industry has worked with music industry anti-piracy operatives to initiate enforcement actions against licensed manufacturers suspected of undertaking illegal work.

During routine inspections in May and June the plant monitoring team took action to seal a number of replicating lines. In total 11 replicating machines from three factories were sealed in this manner.

Meanwhile, the Jakarta police continued with their actions against pirate disc manufacturers with a series of actions against both duplicators and retailers of infringing discs. Between April and June the unit conducted several operations against CD-R and DVD-R pirates and seized over 420 burners, 293,000 infringing discs and took 200 individuals into custody.

The Indonesian National Police CID raided two licensed facilities on 1st July. The operation, conducted under the highest security, yielded the most significant anti-piracy results in Indonesia to date. In the first premises, police found more than 91,000 infringing music discs and 50 pirate music stampers in a concealed storage area inside the factory. Five replicating machines were put out of commission and the factory sealed.

The second premises raided on the same day resulted in a six line facility being shut down after the recovery of 65 infringing music stampers. Both facilities had recently undergone recent expansion.

Source: Bob Youill
Enforcement, Asia Pacific
**INDONESIA**

**Factory raids leads to seizure of pirate CDs**

Indonesian police and IFPI anti-piracy experts raided a suspected pirate music factory on Thursday, 16th August and found a large quantity of counterfeit discs and manufacturing equipment. The raid followed on from swoops on two earlier pirate manufacturing sites in July.

Police seized seven manufacturing lines, 125 stampers, none of which were marked with the required mould codes, as well as 40,000 pirate music CDs. The plant owners had failed to register a number of the replication lines as required under Indonesian law and had placed a substance on the mould surfaces to prevent the transfer of SID codes to the optical discs.

A preliminary investigation of the production records has revealed that the plant was replicating in excess of 110,000 discs per day over the last two months.

Six employees were arrested by the police and will now face prosecution. The authorities decommissioned all seven pressing lines and removed all production records for examination.

Investigators followed up the raid by seizing a goods vehicle that had been used to deliver the pirate discs to market. They found an additional 40,000 copyright infringing CDs. The authorities are now working with IFPI anti-piracy experts to discover the quantities of counterfeit CDs that were made and the repertoire that was being illegally reproduced.

Bob Youill, Regional Coordinator said, "This is the culmination of several weeks work by the Indonesian authorities and they have disrupted a major producer of pirate product. We thank them wholeheartedly for their excellent work".

Source: Bob Youill
Enforcement, Asia Pacific

**AUSTRALIA**

**Joint raid busts international piracy ring**

In July 2007, Music Industry Piracy Investigations (MIPI) and the Australian Federal Police staged a joint raid on the Melbourne headquarters of a large-scale global piracy gang who manufactured and distributed copyright infringing CDs and DVDs by artists like Michael Jackson and Robbie Williams.

A simultaneous raid was also carried out by authorities in Britain, following a nine-month investigation by MIPI and the BPI into the web-based operation.

A number of people were questioned after authorities executed search warrants on multiple premises in Moorabbin East, Victoria seizing over 10,000 CDs and DVDs. One woman was also accosted taking CDs and DVDs to the post office to be sent to recipients around the world. It is expected that copyright infringement charges will be laid shortly.

The operators of the website www.shadowgames.com had been taking internet orders and payments from around the world for supplying bootleg concert DVDs and CDs. Branding itself a “DVD superstore” the site boasted more than 300 titles for sale including the work of artists Michael Jackson, Culture Club, Robbie Williams, Darren Hayes and Savage Garden.

The bootleg CDs and DVDs were on offer for between AU$15.00 and AU$30.00 each, with a network of websites in the UK and USA also channelling orders in a choice of 13 different languages. Surveillance has shown that the Australian site was the key to the operation receiving more than a thousand hits a month from the USA alone.

It will be alleged the copyright infringing material was being burnt to order and posted from Australia after the receipt of credit card payments.

Sabiene Heindl, General Manager of MIPI, says: "We have shut down this website and intend to bring the ringleaders of this operation before the courts. MIPI investigators have been able to track down the alleged principals of this racket in spite of the fact that false names are listed as operating the website. The operation was sophisticated and entrenched but the raids by MIPI and the Federal Police show that internet-based music piracy is a crime that can be detected and has consequences".

Source: MIPI Australia
MALAYSIA

Gangsters challenged in Malaysian raid

Malaysian police raided a two-storey home that was acting as a storage and distribution centre for pirated audio discs.

The raid, which took place in June, saw officers executing a search warrant and gaining entry to the home by force. A man believed to be the operator of the facility was arrested.

The ground floor of the property was fitted with several wooden cabinets with discs stored according to genre. They contained around 24,000 audio discs, mostly international repertoire from leading artists such as Christina Aguilera, Justin Timberlake, Linkin Park and Eminem.

It is believed that the distribution centre was the main supplier to at least 10 night markets. During the operation, a group of residents believed to be local gangsters congregated at the scene and began threatening the raiding team. As a result local police were called and on arrival of 15 armed officers the gangsters fled the scene.

Meanwhile, in July a Special Optical Disc Unit of the Malaysian police executed a search warrant on a suspected unlicensed optical disc replication plant situated outside Kuala Lumpur and located two Meiki DVD production lines.

On examination the machines were still hot but the operators had escaped during the forced entry. Approximately 1,000 clear discs were found together with 600 finished pirate discs. On conclusion of the raid the illegal replication machinery was dismantled and removed along with the pirate optical discs.

THAILAND

Thai Police crack down on music pirates

In the past few months the Royal Thai Police have been actively cracking down on optical disc piracy activity in the country and they have notched up some impressive results.

In June 2007, acting on music industry information, officers of the ECOTECH unit raided a licensed optical disc replication facility and caught the operators producing pirate discs. Subsequently the factory was closed down and a number of individuals responsible for the plant’s operation were arrested.

In addition to the factory raid, ECOTECH police officers have raided a number of pirate optical distributors and retail outlets in notorious piracy black spots in and around Bangkok resulting in the seizure of 170,000 pirate optical discs containing both international and local Thai repertoire.

Source: Bob Youill
Enforcement, Asia Pacific

TURKEY

Raids in nearly 50 Turkish cities

The Turkish authorities have carried out anti-piracy operations in nearly 50 cities across the country, targeting 658 points of sale. In total, they have seized nearly 100,000 counterfeit CDs, more than 350,000 fake DVD/VCDs, 234 CD/DVD writers, 16 duplicators and 88 hard discs.

To coincide with the peak tourist season MUYAP organised a new campaign for anti-piracy operations in the west and south of Turkey. The cities of Izmir, Antalya and Mugla cities have been selected as pilot regions and all the hotels, petrol stations and music markets are being targeted in those areas.

In July, a pirate cassette plant was raided in Ankara and the owner of the plant was arrested and released pending trial for copyright offences. During the search of the premises a cassette master, six tape duplicators and ancillary equipment was seized along with cassettes with fake banderols and several hundred DVDs, plus thousands of inlay cards for both DVDs and cassettes.

Source: MuYap

RUSSIA

Raid on Tartar music pirate

Officers from the Economic Crime Police of Kazan in the Russian province of Tartarstan raided premises that belonged to a notorious local music pirate.

During the search of his premises in July a total of 100,000 optical discs, both CD and DVD, including inlays and jewel-cases, were seized.

All the discs were found to be counterfeit and contained both local and international repertoire. IFPI Moscow is assisting police to catalogue and process the seized material. A sample of 3,000 discs has been sent to the Interior Ministry forensic laboratory in Tartarstan for examination and identification of the plants that replicated this product.

Source: IFPI Moscow
PAKISTAN

Vigilance at Pakistani airports pays off

For the past few years, customs officials at Jinnah International Airport in Karachi have done an exceptional job in curtailing the export of pirated optical discs from the region.

In addition to regular couriers, customs have intercepted pirated optical discs concealed in a wide range of objects ranging from brass vases to food containers. Most recently, customs officers at the airport seized 180 DVDs concealed within the wheels of a child’s tricycle, from a female passenger who was travelling to Qatar from Karachi.

Between January and April customs officers seized 8,081 pirated optical discs at Karachi Airport in 23 different cases. Only one of these cases concerned an incoming passenger, the rest involved outgoing passengers.

Elsewhere in the country, the Collectorate of Customs at Rawalpindi destroyed 72,969 pirated CD/DVDs which were seized at Islamabad Airport.

Source: Willem van Adrichem
Enforcement, Middle East/SW Asia

LEBANON

Pirate discs destroyed

On 5th July the Lebanese authorities celebrated the destruction of 100,000 pirated optical discs containing music films and software titles.

This was the second such event to be held in 2007 and received wide publicity from local television and newspapers. After the first destruction event earlier this year, the Cyber Crime and IPR unit headed Major Elie Bitar continued with raids throughout Lebanon despite the complicated political situation.

The Director-General of the Internal Security Forces of Lebanon, General Ashraf Rifi, established the unit about 18 months ago and statistics of IPR raids and seizures have since risen by more than 100 per cent.

Jo Oliver, Vice President, Litigation and Regulatory Affairs at IFPI, says: “This is a landmark victory that sets a precedent which should be a warning to the operators of replicating plants everywhere who produce copyright CDs without authorisation from the rightsholders. The judgment sends a strong message across the region that copyright law will be enforced wherever it is abused. At a time when nearly one in three CDs sold worldwide is a fake, the industry welcomes the damages awarded by the court. It has never been more important to crack down on these activities that hurt all those who invest in the creative process.”

Source: IFPI Litigation

LITIGATION

Baltic CD plant in record piracy payout

Baltic Optical Disc, the largest CD replicating plant in the Baltic States, has been ordered to pay a coalition of record companies a Euros 500,000 payout after a Lithuanian court ruled it was guilty of music piracy.

The civil action, brought jointly by the public prosecutor and 13 IFPI member companies, related to large scale pirate CD manufacture in 2001. The claim stemmed from police and customs’ seizures of more than 210,000 pirate CDs containing a mix of predominantly international and Polish repertoire.

Forensic experts at IFPI traced the origin of the illegal discs, found in Vilnius and on the Czech/Polish border, back to the Baltic Optical Disc factory. This conclusion was confirmed by investigators at the Lithuanian government’s forensic laboratories.

The judge ruled that Baltic Optical Disc should pay Euros 494,000 in compensation to the record companies whose repertoire was pirated, as well as more than €5,000 in costs. Reflecting the flagrancy of the infringements, the court imposed the maximum compensation award it could, given the numbers of discs manufactured.

Source: IFPI Litigation
**Belgium**

**Customs officers trained to recognise counterfeit music, films and games**

IFPI Belgium and the Belgian Anti-Piracy Federation (representing the film and playstation games industries) were invited by the Belgian Administration Office of Customs and Excise Taxes to attend a 2 day-seminar on counterfeiting and piracy. The purpose of this seminar was to inform and train more than 500 custom officers in the identification of counterfeited music, films and games and to show how IFPI and BAF could assist them. During the seminar officers were invited to examine a wide range of counterfeit products which should assist them in their future work.

*IFPI Belgium*

**Columbia**

**Home delivery operation raided in Bucaramanga**

Police in the Colombian city of Bucaramanga have launched the first raid in the city against a "home delivery" pirate music service. Officers from the judicial police (SIJN) teamed up with experts from APDIF to raid premises used by the service.

They arrested the operators for fraud and seized nearly 4,000 discs, four hard drives containing nearly 50,000 music files and two folders containing a catalogue of works available.

*Source: APDIF Colombia*

**Netherlands**

**Dutchman arrested in raid**

A 32-year-old man was arrested following the search of his address in Delft. The suspect had produced approximately 1,500 counterfeit compilation CDs of popular music which he had distributed through three music shops and a website.

Another man from Rotterdam was also implicated in the case and when interviewed admitted that he operated as a middle man.

Both suspects will be charged with copyright offences and BREIN will demand a 'cease and desist' undertaking with a penalty sum for future infringements and damages for past copyright infringing activity.

*Source: Brein*

**Enforcement Bulletin update**

We would like to advise all recipients of the Bulletin that IFPI will now be circulating its Enforcement newsletter via email and will only stock a very limited number of physical copies at its London Office.