



Examples of associated criminal activity

Youth Exploitation

Location: Glasgow

A group of youths, all aged under 16, were arrested as they tried to covertly sell counterfeit DVDs at a well-known market. Surveillance had revealed that the youths were operating under the control of a recidivist DVD seller who was using the youths to sell the product. The ringleader was subsequently arrested.

The use of children in the sale of counterfeit DVDs highlights how easy it is for minors to become involved in criminal activity. The use of children also demonstrates how lifelong criminals exploit minors in order to cover up their own financial greed and attempt to distance themselves from being caught.

Benefit Fraud

Location: North West of England

Barry Powell and Mark Quincey, who ran a well-organised counterfeiting operation in the North-West of England were imprisoned for 12 and 15 months respectively for their role in a six-month scam that also involved an extensive benefit fraud. His Honour Judge Morrow QC also handed down a 9-month prison sentence to fellow ringleader Sarah Haynes. They operated this illegal business from their homes, supplying local markets and car boot fairs, generating in excess of £40,000 in criminal proceeds during its 6-month operation. The defendants had also claimed a total of £20,000 illegally in state benefits. The convicted may now lose all their assets under the Proceeds of Crime Act. These defendants were arrested along with 21 others as part of a massive police operation involving 135 officers, and coordinated with UK record industry body the BPI, FACT, games industry enforcement body ELSPA and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Drugs

Location: Deptford, London

A search warrant was executed at a flat in Deptford, London. The warrant had been obtained by the Metropolitan Police, also present were Lewisham Trading Standards, Borders & Immigration Agency, and FACT personnel. The flat contained a DVD factory consisting of multiple DVD burning units, printers, a large quantity of printing ink, 6,600 blank media discs, 7,600 counterfeit DVDs and false identity documents. An illegal unregistered dental practice was also found to be set up by one of the occupants operating from the living room of the premises. From this, drugs including cocaine-derived dental anaesthetic and arsenic tinctures were seized. One man was subsequently arrested and cautioned under the Dentists Act 1984.

People smuggling

Location: Lancaster, Lancashire

On the 5th February 2004 21 Chinese illegal immigrants tragically lost their lives whilst picking cockles in Morecambe Bay near Lancaster. Investigations by Lancashire Constabulary led the Police to addresses in the Merseyside area. Upon searching the homes Police found over 4000 counterfeit DVDs and computers containing counterfeit material. The two men were arrested for the involvement in the death of the Chinese cockle pickers and named as Lin Liang Ren and Lin Mu Yong.

On the 28th March 2006 Lin Liang Ren was charged with 21 counts of manslaughter, perverting the Course of Justice and manufacturing of false work permits. Ren was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment. Due to the severity of Ren's involvement with the death of cockle pickers the Crown Prosecutor decided that Ren would not be charged with trade mark offences.

Lin Mu Yong was charged with Assisting and Facilitation Illegal immigration and perverting the Course of Justice. Yong was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. Yong also pleaded guilty to 11 offences under the Trade Marks Act of 1994 and was further sentenced to 9 months imprisonment.

Dangerous weapons

Location: Sunderland, Tyne & Wear

A male was stopped by Northumbria Police for appearing to be driving without valid insurance for his vehicle. When told the vehicle would be searched the male advised there was a knife under the driver's seat. A search revealed this to be a 7" kitchen knife. The male was arrested and a subsequent search under PACE of his home address revealed a large quantity of counterfeit DVDs.