

# MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 1 December, 2011



## ***US GETS TOUGH ON COUNTERFEIT BUT AUSTRALIA IGNORES INDUSTRY CONCERNS***

The United States Government shut down over 150 online retailers this week who were found to be selling millions of dollars worth of counterfeit goods. The Australian Sporting Goods Association has used the US 'Cyber Monday' crack down to highlight the different attitudes of policy makers and law enforcement agencies to the sale of counterfeit goods in the United States compared with Australia.

The ASGA has criticised the enforcement of imports by the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and cites increased reports of counterfeit activity through unregulated online channels as a risk to the Australian economy.

ASGA Executive Director Brad Kitschke warned that a get tough approach was needed to deal with the growth of counterfeit imports. The ASGA says that planned legislative reforms contained in the Government's *The Intellectual Property Laws Amendment (Raising the Bar) Bill 2011*, do not go far enough and don't address enforcement failures of the existing system.

***"Trademarks need to be protected and the current compliance and enforcement regime does not work. You only have to go online or visit a market to see that counterfeit is rife and not much is being done to stop it," Kitschke said.***

In addition to tougher legislation, ASGA wants changes to enforcement activities and basic consumer and traveler education. The ASGA says goods purchased online, goods imported and those brought in by travelers cause the greatest problem.

***"We have asked for simple low-cost things like posters in arrival halls warning travelers bringing counterfeit goods into Australia, and a question and check box on the landing cards asking if travelers are knowingly carrying counterfeit items. These are simple low-cost measures to raise public awareness. Unfortunately all have been met with a blanket no by the Government.***

***"Customs is not willing to even talk about simple measures to reduce the influx of counterfeit into this country. In some instances industry has offered to fund these initiatives but the bureaucrats in Customs refuse to consider anything but maintaining the status quo," Kitschke said.***

The ASGA wants Government to assist industry in highlighting the role that sales of counterfeit goods play in funding other forms of serious and organized crime. The ASGA believes that Australians need to be aware that several international reports have linked counterfeit activity with funding terrorism, drug and people smuggling.

***"Australian consumers need to be aware that buying counterfeit goods could mean they are funding serious criminals. Counterfeiting isn't a victimless crime and when it funds serious criminality or terrorism, the Australian Government must do everything it can do stop it," Kitschke concluded.***

For interviews Brad Kitschke call 0403 809 630 or email [brad.kitschke@asga.com.au](mailto:brad.kitschke@asga.com.au)