



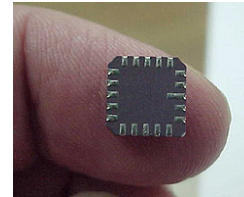
# U.S. Customs and Border Protection

## CBP, European Union Announce Results of Joint Operation to Combat Pirated Goods

(Friday, February 22, 2008)

**Washington** – U.S. Customs and Border Protection Assistant Commissioner for the Office of International Trade Dan Baldwin and Director-General Robert Verrue, European Commission Tax and Customs Directorate, today announced the results of Operation Infrastructure, which took place last November and December.

The Operation resulted in the seizure of more than 360,000 counterfeit integrated circuits and computer network components bearing more than 40 different trademarks.



“The success of Operation Infrastructure clearly demonstrates our commitment to jointly working with our European counterparts to stop the international flow of illicit goods, and protect our consumers and businesses from these harmful products,” said CBP Assistant Commissioner Baldwin. “It is important to also recognize that there is a vitally important but discreet role that these components play in the everyday infrastructure of our societies. We therefore need to be able to rely on systems that are supported by them across various sectors, particularly as it relates to national security.”

Operation Infrastructure was the first joint intellectual property rights enforcement operation undertaken by CBP and the European Union. The two administrations worked together to establish mutually beneficial objectives.

Verrue, director-general for taxation and customs at the European Commission, stated “We will continue to build upon this operation, and a growing cooperation with our U.S. colleagues, to combat the global trade in fake goods. The U.S. and EU are fully committed to effectively combating counterfeiting and piracy at home and abroad. In addition, this also shows that Customs administrations are prepared to tackle difficult enforcement challenges and issues, especially when the health and safety of our citizens is at stake.”

Computer networking hardware is the infrastructure of modern business, healthcare, education and communication and information networks. The counterfeiting of networking hardware and integrated circuits has critical infrastructure, national security, and health and safety implications. Counterfeit hardware lacks the quality assurance and manufacturing standards of genuine hardware. As a result, there is a much higher failure rate for counterfeit hardware. Many counterfeit products fail on installation and more fail weeks or months after installation. Failures impose significant labor, equipment and lost productivity costs on individuals and organizations that depend on these networks.

Integrated circuits are used in a wide range of applications, including automobiles, aircraft, computers, telecommunications, medical devices and consumer electronics. Counterfeit circuits can damage the brand reputation of the rights holders and of the manufacturer that utilizes the counterfeit circuit in manufacturing when the final product fails or does not perform to expectations.

At their 2006 Summit, the European Union and the United States committed to implementing the "EU-U.S. Action Strategy for the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights" This operation, targeting counterfeit semiconductors and computer networking equipment, implemented the "joint IPR border enforcement action" portion of the strategy as agreed to by the EU and US. These products were selected for the joint operation because they present safety and security risks in addition to IPR infringement risk.

Counterfeit network hardware and ICs are just two examples of the many fake goods that threaten the safety of consumers and the ability of companies to fairly compete in the marketplace. Counterfeiting and piracy is a global problem requiring cooperation between private industry and governments to stem the flow of fakes in order to promote economic development and protect consumers.

*U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.*

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