



NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION AGAINST COPYRIGHT THEFT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POLICE AND NZFACT COMBINED TO BUST PIRATE MOVIE BURNER & INTERNET SALES OPERATION

***Operators of Web-based “White Pig” Arrested, Closing Down Operation
Capable of Producing Over 430,000 Pirated DVDs Annually***

Hong Kong/Auckland: On 5th March, police from the Asian Crime Unit supported by investigators from the New Zealand Federation Against Copyright Theft (NZFACT), executed a search warrant at a residential unit in “The Docks” apartments in the Auckland CBD, seizing DVD burning equipment. A 39-years-old Chinese male was arrested in relation to these seizures. Enquiries led to another warrant being executed at a second residential premise in Auckland where a 24-years-old Chinese woman was arrested and further seizures made. The raids were the final phase in a seven-month joint operation involving NZ Police and NZFACT.

During the raids the police seized over 6,000 pirated DVD movies, four computers and eight DVD-R burners. The burning operation had a capacity to burn 430,000 pirated discs per year, potentially generating NZ\$2.6million for the criminals.

Movie titles burned on the seized discs included “Sweeney Todd”, “No Country for Old men”, “Juno” and “Michael Clayton”, all either currently in release or yet to be released in New Zealand cinemas.

The operation was identified by NZFACT investigators, who discovered advertisements for pirated discs being offered for sale via an Internet trading site in September 2007. NZFACT investigators contacted the trader, who used the name “White Pig”, and over the course of the investigation bought a number of DVDs containing infringing movies at a cost of NZ\$6 each.

The arrested man and woman arrived from China on work visas which have expired and they are in New Zealand as “overstayers”. They have been charged with one holding charge under the Copyright Act Section 131 and police are seeking a three week remand in custody without plea for further examination of the seized computers.

“Movie pirates should take note – you can be found, arrested and prosecuted whether you are selling pirated movies in a shop or through the Internet.” said Tony Eaton, Executive Director of NZFACT. “Movie thieves now face a very real prospect of going to prison, as demonstrated last month when one pirate was sentenced to 14 months imprisonment. Kiwis should think before they burn and think before they buy. Buy original, See original and support creativity, local investment and local jobs.”

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Piracy in New Zealand

A study undertaken by independent research firm LEK Consulting on behalf of the Motion Picture Association (MPA) showed that piracy cost the film industry in New Zealand an estimated 25 percent of the potential market in 2005 – \$70 million. Internet piracy via P2P file-sharing networks is a significant concern and accounts for the majority of New Zealand movie industry losses – an estimated \$33 million in lost consumer spending in 2005. NZFACT represents the MPA in New Zealand.

Piracy in Asia-Pacific

In 2007, the MPA's operations in the Asia-Pacific region investigated more than 36,200 cases of piracy and assisted law enforcement officials in conducting nearly 13,000 raids. These activities resulted in the seizure of more than 31 million illegal optical discs, 40 factory optical disc production lines and 6,400 optical disc burners, as well as the initiation of more than 10,000 legal actions.

About NZFACT: The New Zealand Federation Against Copyright Theft was established in 2005 by the Motion Picture Association to protect the film industry in New Zealand from the adverse impact of copyright theft. NZFACT works closely with its members, government and enforcement authorities to protect the New Zealand film and television industry, retailers and movie fans. NZFACT members include: Buena Vista International, Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc. NZFACT works in association with the Motion Picture Association, which represents the interests of the film industry across the world. NZFACT also has an alliance with the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand to share information regarding copyright infringement, and is a member of the recently-formed Anti Counterfeiting Group, which represents the interests of New Zealand's major intellectual property stakeholders, such as the music industry, computer software and publishing. NZFACT has a nationwide hotline that enables the reporting of film copyright theft 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 0800 267 9744.

About the MPA: The Motion Picture Association (MPA) represents the interests of major motion picture companies in the global marketplace. On behalf of its member companies, the MPA conducts investigations around the world, assists with the criminal and civil litigation generated by such cases, and conducts education outreach programs to teach movie fans around the world about the harmful effects of piracy. The MPA directs its worldwide anti-piracy operations from its headquarters based in Los Angeles, California and has regional offices located in Brussels (Europe, Middle East and Africa), São Paulo (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Singapore (Asia-Pacific). The MPA's anti-piracy activities have helped to transform entire markets from pirate to legitimate, benefiting video distributors, retailers, and foreign and local filmmakers alike. The MPA member companies include: Buena Vista International, Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc. For more information about the MPA, please visit www.mpa-i.org.

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