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MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Made and Border Force officials key to piano bust

The challenge of fighting counterfeiters continues for the Australian Made Campaign (AMCL), after the Australian Border Force seized a consignment of pianos falsely claiming to be Australian Made.

On June 5, AMCL received notice that Border Force Queensland had successfully intercepted 10 pianos which arrived at the Brisbane Port from China days earlier. (*editor's note: pianos arrived June 2, 2018, via sea-cargo*).

The pianos carried a number of logos and stamps claiming to be “made in Australia” or “Designed and Assembled in Australia” with one closely replicating the iconic green-and-gold Australian Made logo.

Border Force officials said the imported pianos were to be transhipped back to China presumably so retailers involved could provide documentation showing that they were from or made in Australia.

During the process the importer applied to Border Force to have the seized instruments released.

AMCL Chief Executive Ian Harrison said as part of their claim, the importer provided evidence they had registered a “copycat” Australian Made logo as a Class 15 trademark in China in a bid to further con consumers.

“We discovered the logo they trademarked was not even the logo used on the imported pianos – it was a direct copy of our trusted Australian Made logo,” he said.

Mr Harrison said Australia’s excellent reputation for producing quality products and produce makes certified Australian Made goods a target for cheats and counterfeiters.

“AMCL condemns the use of country-of-origin claims that are intended to mislead and confuse consumers, particularly when those claims involve unauthorised use of the Australian Made logo,” he said.

“Fraudulent manufactures like this one have clear agendas; to swindle consumers. This was a clear cut situation whereby the manufacturer’s intention was to build dubious-quality pianos in China to pass off as premium Australian Made products to sell back to Chinese consumers.

“They put the bogus Australian Made logos on them to further deceive potential buyers then shipped the instruments to Australia and back again in attempt to have appropriate paperwork in attempt to prove they came from here.”

Mr Harrison applauded the efforts of Border Force officials for “yet another successful interception of counterfeit products”.

The importer has since contacted Border Force to rescind its claim for release of the goods – meaning the pianos will be destroyed.

AMCL is investigating what legal action can be taken to challenge the company’s trademark in China.

Earlier this year, AMCL’s action against a chain of misleading websites selling Chinese ugg boots as Australian made, resulted in the cancellation the company’s domain names and take-down of all its websites.



AMCL will continue to work with key bodies such as Border Force and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to enforce clear and accurate country-of-origin branding for products.

– ENDS –

Photo captions:

- Aiming to deceive consumers: This is one of the bogus Australian Made logos placed on the pianos.
- The pianos beared an assortment of misleading country of origin logos and stamps, aimed to trick buyers.
- 10 pianos intercepted falsely claiming to be Australian Made.
- The pianos beared an assortment of misleading country of origin logos and stamps.

Key points about Australian Made Campaign Ltd (AMCL)

- AMCL is the not-for-profit public company that administers and promotes the famous Australian Made, Australian Grown (AMAG) logo.
- AMCL was established by the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ACCI) and the network of state and territory chambers of commerce, with the cooperation of the Federal Government.
- AMCL is not a government body and does not receive government funding for its core operations, which are:
 - Licensing companies to use the AMAG logo
 - Compliance
 - Promoting Australian products that carry the logo both in Australia and overseas
- AMCL is governed by a Board of Directors, which consists of senior businesses leaders from around the country, and who are elected by its eleven Governing Members which are ACCI, the state and territory chambers and the National Farmers Federation.

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Note to media:

Australian Made Campaign Chief Executive Ian Harrison and Australian Made Campaign Deputy Chief Executive Ben Lazzaro, are available for interview and vision opportunities. Please contact us if you would like to schedule a time.

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