Australian Customs Notice 2001 10

**NOTICES OF OBJECTION TO IMPORTATION TRADE MARKS ACT 1995**

The companies referred to in the attached Schedule have given notice under Section 132 of the Trade Marks Act 1995 objecting to the importation of the goods listed in the Schedule which have applied to them, or in relation to them, a sign which infringes the relevant trade mark/s. Unless revoked, these Notices of Objection remain in force for a period of two years from the commencement date shown for the particular trade mark.

The references in the Schedule to particular classes of goods refer to the classes of goods prescribed in Schedule 1 in the Trade Marks Regulations. Unless the Schedule indicates to the contrary, the particular trade mark relates to the specific goods listed in regard to the trade mark/s in question. However, where certain objectors have lodged a Notice of Objection in regard to a variety of trade marks covering a diversity of goods, it has not been feasible to comprehensively reflect the intricacies of some of those Notices. The Schedule clearly indicates where that applies with an asterisk. In any case prospective importers should seek further advice regarding the coverage of the Notice of Objection from their local Customs office (in accordance with the final paragraph below).

Where goods of the kind referred to are manufactured outside Australia and are imported with a sign that is substantially identical with or deceptively similar to the relevant trade mark they are liable to be seized by Customs, unless it can be established that:

* the goods are being imported otherwise than for the purposes of trade (sale, lease, hire, etc.); or
* the goods do not infringe the relevant trade mark.

Part 12 of the Trade Marks Act 1995 details the circumstances in which the use of a trade mark may, or may not, amount to an infringement. For example, a trade mark is not infringed where the mark in question has been applied to, or in relation to, goods with the consent of the registered owner of the trade mark. However, where the trade mark is applied by, or with the consent of, an overseas owner of the trademark and the goods are imported into Australia without the consent of the Australian trade mark owner, this may still represent an infringement.

People who have been planning commitments to import goods that may be liable to seizure under the provisions of the Trade Marks Act 1995 should consider seeking advice from Customs, or a suitably qualified legal practitioner, as to the implications of the trade marks legislation, and the meaning of terms such as "substantially identical with", "deceptively similar to" and "an infringement of" a trade mark.

The trade mark owner's contact particulars have been included in the Schedule to assist importers who may wish to initiate negotiations regarding use of the trade marks in question.

Copies of the relevant Notices of Objection have been forwarded to the Customs office in the capital city of each State and Territory. Importers, or their advisers, who require further information regarding the Notices of Objection, or Customs' role in regard to those Notices, should contact the Commerce Prohibitions and Restrictions Group in the Australian Customs Service Office in their nearest capital city. - see Attachment A

Jeff Buckpitt National Manager Import/Export Management Branch for Chief Executive Officer February 2001