



IPRC CONNECTIONS

Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center

JULY 2018

Operation Pangea targets international mail facilities for illicit pharmaceuticals



Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), through the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center), teamed up with agents from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to seize counterfeit, misbranded, adulterated, and unapproved pharmaceuticals – including controlled substances and schedule drugs – as well as counterfeit and unapproved medical devices. The enforcement effort was part of INTERPOL's global Operation Pangea XI, which was conducted at

international mail facilities at airports in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco.

Operation Pangea was organized to target the online advertisement, sale and supply of counterfeit and illicit medicines and medical devices that threaten worldwide public health and safety. During the operations, agents encountered as many as 300 packages suspected of containing counterfeit and/or substandard pharmaceuticals. The IPR Center's liaison to Mexico, Margarito Ocampo, also participated in Operation Pangea. ICE HSI agents will work with CBP agents and the FDA's Office of Criminal Investigations to identify and investigate the transnational criminal organizations responsible for the illegal importation and distribution of the counterfeit goods and associated money laundering activities.

ICE HSI dismantles transnational criminal organization

ICE HSI in Guangzhou, China reports the arrest of 12 individuals following the takedown of five factories and the seizure of 80 million units of counterfeit and misbranded pharmaceuticals valued at \$40 million dollars. Working cooperatively with the Chinese Ministry of Public Security and ICE HSI agents in San Juan, Puerto Rico, agents managed to dismantle a transnational criminal organization engaged in the manufacture and export of misbranded and counterfeit pharmaceuticals. The investigation was conducted with the assistance of the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico, the FDA Office of Criminal Investigations, CBP and the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Singapore meeting promotes cooperation in international investigations

The IPR Center participated in INTERPOL's Operation Chain at the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore where discussions were held to facilitate international cooperation among countries and support transnational investigations focused on the illicit trade of goods. The discussions focused on trademark and piracy infringements, smuggling of legitimate products, and tax evasion. The event attracted dozens of law enforcement officers from Bangladesh, Cambodian, China, India, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. IPR Center Outreach and Training Section Chief Toshua Williams attended and provided a presentation.

Company raises concerns over counterfeit baby products online

A New York law firm representing a Swedish-based company that manufactures two baby products has expressed concerns over counterfeit "look-alike" products – including nasal aspirators and gas relievers for infants – that have surfaced online. During a briefing at the IPR Center, Craig Whitney and Nicole Bergstrom of Frankfurt, Kurnit, Klein & Selz explained how the products, identified as "Nosefrida" and "Windi," which are Class I medical devices, are being marketed and the potential dangers involving their use. CBP is investigating with the assistance of the FDA.

Did you know...

The IPR Center offers a trade fraud tip sheet with ideas on how private industry can avoid falling victim to trade violations. For more information, please visit the IPR Center website, www.iprcenter.gov and click on "Trade Crimes." You can also stay informed, look us up, like us, and add us to your favorites on Twitter by searching "IPR Center."

ICE HSI agents seize counterfeit apparel associated with 2018 World Cup event



ICE HSI in Bogota reports the seizure of 4,000 counterfeit Adidas Colombian soccer team jerseys for men, 600 counterfeit Adidas Colombian soccer team jerseys for women, 600 counterfeit Adidas Colombian soccer jerseys for kids and 600 pairs of counterfeit Adidas and Nike sandals. Based on information provided by ICE HSI and CBP agents in Cartagena, the Colombian National Customs Police, Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit profiled and inspected a container at the Port of Cartagena resulting in the seizure, valued at \$155,000.

The seizure was the result of an ICE HSI-led investigation that began in Bogota in April 2018. Dubbed “Operation Mundial,” the investigation targeted trade based money laundering organizations dedicated to smuggling counterfeit soccer team jerseys associated with the 2018 World Cup event. Colombian authorities have seized counterfeit Adidas World Cup-related products worth an estimated \$350,000 since the targeted enforcement began. The investigation included significant assistance from Colombian Customs and the Office of the Attorney General of Colombia.

“This seizure is yet another example of how ICE HSI – with the support of its Office of International Operations – conducts multi-faceted, international law enforcement operations while partnering with foreign and domestic counterparts to combat criminal organizations and prevent terrorist activities,” said Luis Sierra, the ICE HSI attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota. News of the seizure comes on the heels of the Intellectual Property & Trade Enforcement Investigations Training Course which is taught at the IPR Center. The course provides specialized training to ICE HSI and CBP personnel on intellectual property rights and trade fraud detection and investigations.

Textile Production Verification Team visits El Salvador

The IPR Center – working cooperatively with CBP – deployed members of the Textile Production Verification Team (TPVT) to El Salvador with plans to visit several textile manufacturers. The team visit was intended to determine compliance with the Central American Free Trade Agreement regarding production of textiles destined for the United States. The TPVT verified claims for preferential tariff treatment and assessed factory production of textile goods. The team also identified any potential indicators/violations of illegal transshipment, forced labor, marking and IPR.

Europol IP Crime Conference convenes in Budapest, Hungary

The IPR Center participated in the Europol IP Crime Conference in Budapest, Hungary. ICE HSI Boston Special Agent Candice Foley provided a case study of the Onyx Pharmaceutical investigation, and IPR Center Deputy Director William Ross provided an overview of *Operation in Our Sites* and the ICE E-Commerce strategy. Additionally, Special Agent John McNair (HSI Dallas), ICE Intelligence Research Specialist Lacey McKindles, Intelligence Specialist Ann-Kathryn So (Naval Criminal Investigative Service), and CBP Assistant Port Director Lynn Brennan in Savannah, Ga., attended the event as representatives of the IPR Center. Approximately 400 people attended. *(photo: L-R: DOJ/IPLEC Anca Pop; USEU/IP Attaché Susan Wilson; U.S. Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator Vishal Amin; Europol Executive Director Catherine De Bolle; and IPR Center Deputy Director William Ross)*



IPR enforcement training conducted in Casablanca, Morocco

The IPR Center, in conjunction with HSI Morocco and representatives from the Department of Justice Intellectual Property Law Enforcement Coordinators in Nigeria, hosted an ICE HSI-led IPR enforcement training workshop in Casablanca, Morocco. The workshop highlighted the dangers of counterfeit products and their adverse effects on the population and economies. Delegations from Algeria, Mali, Morocco and Niger also participated.



The IPR Center encourages companies and private industry organizations to help fight (IP) theft and trade law violations by displaying the “Report IP Theft” button on websites that will link users with a form to detail their allegations. For more information on how to obtain this tool, please visit our website: <https://www.iprcenter.gov>.

For more information on these stories, or to submit information for stories in future editions of *IPRC Connections*, please contact Chuck Jackson, charles.e.jackson@ice.dhs.gov, or (703) 603-3941.