

**Fourteenth Meeting of Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on
the Protection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)**

**Progress of Guangdong/Hong Kong Exchanges and Co-operation on
Intellectual Property (IP)**

1. Refining the Guangdong/Hong Kong co-ordination mechanism for IP law enforcement and IP-related cases

From July 2014 to mid-June 2015, the Customs administrations in the two places exchanged a total of 53 pieces of information of various sorts and jointly conducted parallel enforcement operations on IP protection to combat the smuggling of infringing articles by postal express and sea transport means in the two places. In July 2014, officers from the Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau of the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (Hong Kong Customs) visited the Guangdong Sub-Administration of China Customs (Guangdong Customs). Both sides explored strategies for jointly combating the smuggling of infringing goods by sea transport means using river trade vessels. In January 2015, officials of the Hong Kong Customs and the Guangdong Customs arranged a meeting for senior management to have focused thematic discussions on co-operation of IPR protection, reviewed the achievements of their parallel joint actions and discussed the focus of their co-operation for the next stage. In March 2015, officers from the Guangdong Customs and some customs authorities in Guangdong Province attended the “Seminar on IP Protection and Enforcement in the Mainland”, which was jointly organised by the Hong Kong Customs and the Intellectual Property Rights Protection Alliance (IPRPA) to enhance mutual understanding between the Mainland customs authorities and the Hong Kong industry.

The Hong Kong Customs continued to co-operate with the Economic Crime Investigation Bureau (ECIB) of the Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department (GDPSD) to exchange information on the trend of cross-boundary infringement and explore ways of co-operation between the two places on IPR infringement cases. From July 2014 to mid-June 2015, the two sides exchanged 6 pieces of information through immediate exchange of information and collaboration of investigations.

The Hong Kong Customs and the Guangdong Province Administration for Industry and Commerce (GDAIC) also kept abreast of the latest development of cross-boundary trademark infringements through regular exchange of information.

From July 2014 to mid-June 2015, the Hong Kong Customs provided a total of 12 pieces of information to the GDAIC.

2. Stepping up efforts to combat illegal smuggling of infringing articles by sea transport means and postal express between Guangdong and Hong Kong

From June 2014 to April 2015, the Guangdong and the Hong Kong Customs launched three rounds of joint operation targeting the smuggling of infringing articles by sea transport means and postal express. During the operations, the Hong Kong Customs detected 19 cases involving a total of 48 105 items of infringing goods valued at about HK\$ 7.69 million while the Guangdong Customs detected 6 cases involving a total of 1 760 items of goods. During the targeted enforcement operations against the smuggling of infringing articles by postal express, the Guangdong side examined over 550 000 outbound EMS mails and nearly 40 000 outbound express mails, and detected 14 suspected infringement cases valued at about RMB 0.89 million.

3. Promoting IP trading

The two sides continued to update information on IP trading on the “IP Database for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao” and on the websites of members of the Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on the Protection of IPRs, organise seminars on IP trading, and support exchange activities on IP trading organised by social organisations and associations of the IP industry in the two places so as to help enterprises exploit IP more effectively and enhance their standards in IP exploitation.

4. Organising the “Business of IP Asia Forum” (BIP Asia Forum)

In December 2014, the Intellectual Property Department of Hong Kong (HKIPD) promoted the concept of IP trading to enterprises at the BIP Asia Forum jointly organised by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Design Centre, and arranged members and enterprises of the Guangdong side to register for the forum in order to foster the development of IP trading in Guangdong and Hong Kong.

5. Organising copyright exchange programmes

In May 2015, a delegation led by the Copyright Bureau of Guangdong Province (GDCB) visited Hong Kong for a copyright exchange programme entitled “Copyright Management and IP Trading”. Activities under the programme included seminars and exchanges with representatives from the copyright industry of Hong Kong. They also visited Comix Home Base, the Hong Kong Customs and Cyberport to deepen their understanding of copyright management and trading development trends in the two places.

6. Undertaking the “ Mainland, Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR Intellectual Property Symposium 2015”

The “ Mainland, Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR Intellectual Property Symposium 2015” jointly organised by the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO), the HKIPD and the Economic Services of the Government of the Macao SAR (MES) and undertaken by the Intellectual Property Office of Guangdong Province (GDIPO) and Zhongshan Municipal People's Government was held in Zhongshan in April 2015. Government officials from the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao had discussions on the themes of the Symposium, including the latest development of IP in the three places, IP protection in e-commerce, and IP protection in international exhibitions.

7. Conducting Guangdong/Hong Kong IP studies in a free trade environment

In June 2014, the HKIPD commissioned a consultancy to conduct the “Survey on IP Trading” (Survey) to understand the current situation of IP trading activities in Hong Kong. The HKIPD shared the Survey report as well as the experience gained in the course of the Survey with the Guangdong side for the reference of the Guangdong expert group in their research studies.

8. Organising the “Guangdong/Hong Kong Seminar on IP and the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)”

The “Guangdong/Hong Kong Seminar on IP and the Development of SMEs (Guangzhou)” entitled “Exploitation and Development Strategies of Intellectual Property” was jointly organised by the two sides in Guangzhou in June 2015. Government officials and IP experts from Guangdong and Hong Kong introduced the latest development of IP systems in the two places and discussed issues on IP protection, management and commercialisation strategies at the seminar. About 180 participants attended the seminar.

9. Organising a seminar on the newly amended Trademark Law

In January 2015, the GDAIC and the HKIPD jointly organised the “Seminar on New Trademark Law in Mainland China” in Hong Kong, and invited representatives from the State Administration for Industry and Commerce and the GDAIC to be keynote speakers at the seminar to introduce the details of the new trademark law and explore the impact of the implementation of legislation on enterprises, with a view to enhancing the awareness of enterprises in the protection and management of trademarks in the Mainland. About 300 participants attended the seminar.

10. Enhancing the internationalisation of brands

In May 2015, the Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province (GDCC), the GDAIC and the HKIPD jointly organised the “2015 Trademark and Brand Protection Training Programme”. Professionals of the HKIPD, the GDIPO, the GDAIC, the GDCB and the Customs administrations of Hong Kong and Guangdong had dedicated training in and exchanged views on the internationalisation of brands and IPR protection, with a view to enhancing the competitiveness of Guangdong enterprises in the global market through IP exploitation.

11. Organising exchange programmes on copyright knowledge and protection for the youth in Guangdong and Hong Kong

The GDCB, the Hong Kong Customs and the HKIPD jointly organised an “Exchange Programme on Copyright Knowledge and Copyright Protection for the Guangdong/Hong Kong Secondary School Students”. In February 2015, representatives from the GDCB together with secondary school teachers and students from Guangzhou joined the exchange activities held in Hong Kong. The delegation visited the facilities of the Hong Kong Customs and learned about the enforcement actions of the Hong Kong Customs and its efforts in combating IP infringements. Moreover, the representatives of the HKIPD briefed the delegation on Hong Kong’s IP protection regime. In April 2015, a Hong Kong youth delegation visited Guangzhou for an exchange programme. They visited the Guangzhou Copyright Bureau and organisations in the IP sector to gain a comprehensive understanding of IPR protection in the Mainland.

12. Continuing the promotion of exchange activities on IPRs between Hong Kong and Guangdong

In March 2015, the Hong Kong Customs and the IPRPA of Hong Kong co-organised the Seminar on IP Protection and Enforcement in the Mainland. Professionals from the Guangdong Customs, the ECIB/GDPSD and the GDCB briefed members of the IPRPA on the IP protection measures and enforcement work of Guangdong Province. The seminar promoted Hong Kong industry's understanding of Mainland enforcement agencies and strengthened the protection of brands and copyright works in the Mainland.

13. Assisting Hong Kong residents in sitting for the National Qualification Examination for Patent Agents

The National Qualification Examination for Patent Agents 2014 was held at 23 examination cities across the country in November 2014. The two sides actively assisted Hong Kong residents in sitting for the examination and provided information on examination registration, requirement, pre-examination training, etc. In 2014, a total of 42 Hong Kong residents registered for the examination in Guangdong and 7 of them passed. Since 2004, a total of 45 Hong Kong residents have passed the examination and 18 of them are practising in the Mainland.

14. Enhancing follow-up services for Hong Kong residents practising in Guangdong as patent agents

In July 2015, with arrangements made by the HKIPD, representatives of the Patent Attorneys Association Hong Kong Group visited Guangdong and met with the representatives of the GDIPO and the Guangdong Patent Agency Association. Representatives from both sides exchanged views on the state of Hong Kong residents practising in the Mainland after passing the National Qualification Examination for Patent Agents.

15. Promoting Guangdong Provincial Famous Trademarks

The HKIPD continued to encourage HK-invested enterprises in Guangdong to apply for Guangdong Provincial Famous Trademarks by informing them of the arrangements and publicising relevant information on different occasions. In 2014, HK-invested enterprises in Guangdong were granted 46 new and 106 renewal

Guangdong Provincial Famous Trademarks, totaling 152. As at January 2015, HK-invested enterprises in Guangdong owned 455 Guangdong Provincial Famous Trademarks, accounting for 14.56% of all such trademarks.

16. Promoting the “No Fakes Pledge” Scheme

In July 2015, the GDIPO, together with the GDCB and the GDAIC, made arrangements for representatives of the industry associations in Guangdong Province to attend a briefing session co-organised by the HKIPD and the Hong Kong Customs in Guangzhou Municipality. The representatives from the HKIPD and the Hong Kong Customs shared their experience in implementing the “No Fakes Pledge” Scheme in Hong Kong.

17. Facilitating the participation of the Hong Kong side in training course for patent examiners

The GDIPO informed the HKIPD of the details of the 13th training course for newly appointed patent examiners. In August 2014, staff of the HKIPD attended the training course for newly appointed patent examiners.

18. Supporting NGOs in Hong Kong to participate in the “Guangdong Youth and Children Invention Award”

The HKIPD continued to encourage and provide financial support for the Hong Kong Invention Association to nominate Hong Kong students to participate in the 12th Guangdong Youth and Children Invention Award. In December 2014, seven teachers and students from Hong Kong presented nine inventions at the open exhibition and final assessment held at the Guangdong Science Center, obtaining nine Special Awards.

19. Continuing to update the “IP Database for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao” and “Guangdong/Hong Kong IP Co-operation Corner”

In collaboration with other members of the Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on the Protection of IPRs, the HKIPD and GDIPO continued to regularly update the “IP Database for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao” and “Guangdong/Hong Kong IP

Co-operation Corner”, incorporating the latest information on laws and regulations of patent, trademark, copyright and IP border and criminal protection, IP administration and management, the contacts of law enforcement bodies in the three places, etc.