

# RAIDS/SEIZURES

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## A New Trend in the Importation of Counterfeit Products into the Kingdom of Thailand

In August 2007, the Customs Department made its largest ever seizure of counterfeit Casio and Citizen calculators, detaining a total of more than 100,000 items from two separate shipments. T&G was contacted by Customs to verify the seized goods on behalf of Casio Computer Co., Ltd. and Citizen Holdings Co., Ltd., all of which proved to be counterfeit. In addition to the size of the seizure, these two shipments had something important in common: the importers attempted to evade Customs authorities by relying on what may be a new technique. To avoid detection, the infringers filed false shipping documents, listing the importer as a company obtaining special benefits under the Board of Investment called “Gold Card”. The “Gold Card” status grants to certain importers and exporters a number of privileges designed to allow them to clear Customs procedures in a more efficient manner.

This plan was foiled, however, when the listed importers were contacted by the shipping company and asked to obtain the goods.



Realizing that they had not actually imported these goods, the “Gold Card” company informed Customs of the error, which eventually led to the detention and inspection of the shipments.

Customs officials are now aware of this method of avoiding inspections, and they will be active and more vigilant in trying to ensure that no other infringers employ this technique. ♦