

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0097/08

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by Arlene McCarthy, on behalf of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
to the Commission

Subject: Consumer protection aspects of counterfeiting

Counterfeiting and piracy have developed at an increasing rate in recent years. In 2007, customs registered over 43 000 cases of fake goods seized at the EU's external border, compared to 37 000 in 2006, an increase of almost 17%. Counterfeiting is increasingly about fake medicines, fake food products, fake cosmetics, fake toys and fake electronic equipment. In addition to the serious economic damage to businesses in the internal market, these products can cause serious harm to consumers. Parliament therefore asks the Commission:

1. What action can the Commission take to improve the administrative structure of the Commission's work in this field? Will the Commission set up an internal coordination unit in order to bring together the relevant teams of the different DGs and develop a joint action programme?
2. Can the Commission produce statistics on how many people have been harmed as a result of the market in counterfeit goods (especially in relation to health and safety)? Does the Commission consider current data collection in relation to consumer detriment adequate? Can the RAPEX system be improved to provide essential information on consumer harm as a result of counterfeit products?
3. What steps will the Commission take to ensure consumers' trust and confidence in products on sale in the internal market? What further measures will the Commission take for stronger enforcement and (customs) controls inside and outside the EU?
4. What action will the Commission take to inform consumers of the threats to their health and safety presented by counterfeit goods? How will the Commission involve Member States in such action? Would the Commission support the idea of creating an EU observatory for counterfeiting goods and piracy?

Tabled: 29.09.2008

Forwarded: 01.10.2008

Deadline for reply: 08.10.2008