



## **ICE hosts motion picture industry summit on fighting film piracy** January 26, 2010

WASHINGTON - Representatives of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) and seven of the largest movie studios joined federal law enforcement leaders at the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) in Crystal City Jan. 26 to bring their creative energy to the piracy problem that is both threatening the future of their industry and funding organized criminal activity. The IPR Center, led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), hosted the meeting to share intelligence on the latest threats to creative products.

John Morton, assistant secretary of Homeland Security for ICE, told the gathering that the IPR Center is committed to fighting criminal activity that has costs American jobs, funded criminal activity of organized crime and exploited the creative work of artists. "ICE pledges a sustained law enforcement effort with our partners in the IPR Center to target the new threats enabled by the Internet in the same way that we have targeted 'hard goods' in the past," Morton said. "Industry knows where the vulnerabilities are and law enforcement should consult with industry to help identify those who exploit those vulnerabilities for their own gain and subject them to law enforcement investigation and subsequent arrest."

Also represented at the meeting were: Disney, Dreamworks, Fox, NBC-Universal, Paramount, Sony and Warner Brothers.

A study published by the Institute for Policy Innovation estimates that movie piracy costs the U.S. economy \$20.5 billion in output annually and more than 140,000 jobs across multiple industries. Movie piracy costs government more than \$800 million in lost tax revenue.

While imports of pirated discs have plagued creative industries for years, the Internet has presented new opportunities for counterfeiters to locate and distribute to customers. At the same time, the traditional sale of knock-off DVDs has become more sophisticated, imitating packaging, marketing and even the product codes that would distinguish them from the real thing.

For ICE, the lead U.S. law enforcement agency in attacking the global problem, the premier threat is that the piracy funds organized crime. According to a 2009 RAND Corporation study, many of the same groups that illegally trade in pirated copies of films are also involved in everything from human smuggling and document fraud to contract killing and the drug trade, all crime areas under ICE's jurisdiction.

In addition to agents at the IPR Center and around the country, ICE uses its 61 Attaché Offices located in 44 countries to combat counterfeiting and piracy. The IPR center partners include the Federal Bureau of Investigation and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which bring resources to the fight as well.

The ICE-led IPR Center is one of the U.S. Government's key weapons in the fight against counterfeiting. The IPR Center offers one-stop shopping for both law enforcement and the private sector to address the growing transnational threat of counterfeit merchandise. The IPR Center coordinates outreach to U.S. rights holders and conducts domestic and international law enforcement training to stem the growing counterfeiting threat as well as coordinating and directing anti-counterfeiting investigations. DHS seizure statistics of counterfeit merchandise paint a grim picture of the growing threat: To learn more about the IPR Center, read tips for holiday buying and see the Intellectual Property Rights Seizure Statistics for FY 2009, go to [www.ice.gov](http://www.ice.gov).