

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**22 April 2008**

### **AFP busts international music piracy ring**

The anti-piracy organisation for the Australian music industry, Music Industry Piracy Investigations (**MIPI**) today welcomed action undertaken by Australian Federal Police (**AFP**) to bust an international music piracy ring operating from Sydney which exported pirate music internationally.

An organised gang in Australia are alleged to have manufactured tens of thousands of re-mixed compilation albums and distributed them through a complex network throughout Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

The AFP advised today that it has arrested one man in a two (2) day operation that involved executing 11 search warrants across Sydney. It is understood that the AFP raided residential premises in Petersham and Canley Heights in Sydney, an optical disc manufacturing plant and a number of music retailers, supermarkets and other retail outlets that were selling pirate compilations featuring artists such as Justin Timberlake, UB40 and Gnarlz Barkley.

Enforcement action is also underway in New Zealand against an importer of the pirate product and a CD manufacturing plant with warning letters being sent to retailers that are stocking the pirate product.

MIPI was first alerted to the music piracy ring by its counterparts in New Zealand, the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (**RIANZ**) after copies of the pirate "Fresh of da Boat" re-mix compilations were found circulating in New Zealand markets and retail stores. Following extensive covert investigations, MIPI undercover operatives also located the pirate complications in Pacific Island territories.

Sabiene Heindl, General Manager of MIPI said "The actions of the Australian Federal Police reinforce their strong commitment to bringing intellectual property thieves to justice. These raids reinforce the undeniable links between piracy and criminal organizations in Australia. Attracted by the profitability of this illicit activity, criminal organizations based in Australia often control the actual manufacture and trade of pirated goods. This has ramifications not only for Australia, but also our neighbouring countries."

Mark McCall, Director of Anti-Piracy of RIANZ said "We welcome the efforts of the Australian Federal Police to target music pirates, particularly those whose illegal activities are occurring across national borders."

Criminal penalties for copyright infringement are up to \$60,500 and 5 years imprisonment per offence for individuals, and up to \$302,500 for corporations. MIPI operates a toll-free piracy hotline on **1800 06 16 16**.

#### **Interviews:**

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Photos available upon request.

#### **About MIPI**

Music Industry Piracy Investigations Pty Ltd ([www.mipi.com.au](http://www.mipi.com.au)) is the anti-piracy organisation for the Australian music industry. MIPI represents close to 125 music labels through their association, ARIA and over 1,700 music publishers and songwriters through their association, AMCOS.

MIPI operates a toll-free piracy hotline on **1800 06 16 16** and a report piracy form that can be accessed at [www.mipi.com/report.htm](http://www.mipi.com/report.htm).

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