

908 master boxes of fake “Benson & Hedges” cigarettes were destroyed today

Upon a decision of the Martial Regional Prosecution’s Office dated 5 April, 2005 571 master boxes of Assos International, confiscated on 3 August 2004, were also destroyed

908 masterboxes of cigarettes with the trade mark “Benson & Hedges” were destroyed by burning in “Devnya Cement” joint-stock company today. On 8 March 2005 on the basis of a decree, the Supreme Prosecutor’s Office of Cassation of the Republic of Bulgaria ordered the confiscation and destruction of the cigarettes. A month later, on 4 April 2005 the prosecutor supervising the case issued an order thereof and the cigarettes were destroyed. The overall value of the stock detained according to the invoice was 172 520 USD.

On 21 October 2002 at Varna East Port a 40-foot container full of 908 master boxes of “Benson & Hedges” cigarettes was unloaded from a vessel. In December the same year upon the instruction of the MoI Secretary General Lieut. Gen. Boyko Borissov a specialized police operation at the entry and exit customs checkpoints and careful customs inspection of all goods were performed. In the process of the inspection of the container by the customs and police authorities, the cigarettes were suspected to be fake. Three stacks were confiscated in order to be analysed. Pursuant to a sanction of a judge the container was detained and all the materials were submitted to Martial Regional Prosecution’s Office. Preliminary proceedings were initiated, namely an investigation case under Articles 227 and 242 of the Penal Code against an unidentified perpetrator. The conclusion of the expertise, used in the process of the investigation, was that in fact the cigarettes were not “Benson & Hedges” and they didn’t comply with the regulations concerning the content of harmful substances in tobacco smoke applicable in our country.

Pursuant to the decision of the Martial Regional Prosecution’s Office dated 5 April 2005 as a result of an investigation case initiated in 2004 for a crime under Article 227 of the Penal Code, 571 master boxes Assos International, confiscated on 3 August 2004, were also destroyed.