

Press Release

PRESS RELEASE: TIC Council Americas Virtual Panel 3: Efforts to Combat Fraud and Counterfeiting in the United States

Washington, 13 October 2020 – TIC Council Americas, the Americas branch of the TIC Council, held on 7 October the final panel of a 3-part virtual panel series exploring the scope of online fraud and sale of counterfeit products and the impact of these activities on industry, government, and consumers.

Presenters during the final panel included:

- Shira Perlmutter, Chief Policy Officer and Director for International Affairs at the US Patent and Trademark Office,
- Alaina van Horn, Intellectual Property Rights Branch Chief at the Customs and Border Protection,
- Jeff Hardy, Director General at TRACIT, and
- Brian Weinhaus, Unit Chief of the Homeland Security Investigations Intellectual Property Rights Unit

The topic of our final discussion was “Efforts to Combat Fraud and Counterfeiting in the United States” and panelists provided attendees with an overview of work being done at their agencies and organization and held a discussion exploring the actions underway to address this growing issue.

Of note, Shira Perlmutter, identified two opportunities for the public to comment on initiatives they will soon publish to the federal register. Ms. Perlmutter also mentioned the “Go for Real” program launched by the National Crime Prevention Council which debuted in June 2020, and a “Trademark counterfeiting and consumer fraud related to the COVID-19 outbreak” initiative which was launched on the USPTO website this year and stressed the four Ps – Place, Price, Packaging, and Product.

Alaina van Horn provided a thorough review of IP Enforcement and provided attendees with reference and links for their use after the presentation, and Brian Weinhaus closed the panel with a thoughtful review of the Homeland Security Investigations activities working with 25 partner agencies, including 5 international partners to identify and investigate counterfeit products. These included such operations as Chain Reaction targeting counterfeits entering the defense agency supply chain and Surge Protector targeting those selling counterfeit cellphones, tablets, batteries, charging cables and more.

Jeff Hardy of TRACIT shared efforts to address the issue of online fraud and illicit trade and highlighted for attendees the vulnerabilities found in the supply chain including express carriers and internet platforms. Mr. Hardy also discussed a recent report co-authored by TRACIT and the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) on “Fraudulent Advertising online, emerging risks and consumer fraud” which explores fraudulent advertisements on social media platforms. TRACIT is a TIC Council partner on the Buy Safe America Coalition, and the TIC Council looks forward to our future collaborations with TRACIT and other fellow Buy Safe America Coalition members.

For additional summaries and links to recordings of each panel session, A recording of the Panel 3 presentations and related slidedeck have been made available on the TIC Council website and can be found, respectively, [here](#) and [here](#).

To get involved, please visit the TIC Council [website](#) or reach out to Karin Athanas at kathanas@tic-council.org. In addition, share your thoughts online using the #FightingOnlineFakes hashtag and lend your voice and thoughts to this important issue.

TIC Council is the global trade federation representing the independent third-party Testing, Inspection and Certification (TIC) industry which brings together more than 90-member companies and organizations from around the world to speak with one voice. Its members provide services across a wide range of sectors: consumer products, medical devices, petroleum, mining and metals, food, and agriculture among others. Through provision of these services, TIC Council members assure that not only regulatory requirements are met, but also that reliability, economic value, and sustainability are enhanced. TIC Council's members are present in more than 160 countries and employ more than 300,000 people across the globe.