

Michael Jackson music pirate sentenced

A Manurewa store owner who sold pirated Michael Jackson and Eminem CDs has been sentenced to four months home detention and to pay reparations of \$3,000.

The man was charged after police raided a Manurewa store on 30 September last year and arrested its proprietor for selling pirated copies of Michael Jackson CDs.

A member of the public reported the shop to Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ) in July 2009. During a joint operation with the police, RIANZ investigators visited the store and bought pirated copies of 'Thriller' and 'Bad' among others.

As well as about 20 Michael Jackson and Eminem CDs believed to contain pirated material, the police also seized a computer with optical disc burning capabilities.

A 30-year old man was arrested and pleaded guilty on April 14, 2010.

"Pirate CD sellers are thieves," says RIANZ CEO Campbell Smith. "Not only are they stealing from artists and songwriters, they are also taking sales from legitimate CD retailers and removing cash flow for reinvestment in NZ music."

Mr Smith says RIANZ believes by enforcing the law it is highlighting the scale of the problem.

"Piracy is an enormous problem for our industry. We prosecute in order to educate about copyright, to get the message out that it's wrong to make or sell pirated material."

Mr Smith says RIANZ is actively monitoring the sale of pirate CDs nation-wide.

"The police are right behind us on this and they really have done a great job in supporting our investigations and taking action against those infringing the law."

The penalty for offending is for a fine up to \$150,000 and / or up to five years imprisonment per offence.

RIANZ has recently launched a Report Music Piracy website where the public can submit music piracy concerns. It's at www.reportmusicpiracy.co.nz.

Ends

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