

With International Affiliations



**FIJI PERFORMING RIGHT ASSOCIATION LIMITED**  
(THE ASSOCIATION OF COMPOSERS, AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS OF MUSIC)

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### AFP busts international music piracy ring

The Fiji Performing Right Association Limited (**FPRA**) has welcomed the recent action undertaken by the Australian Federal Police (**AFP**) and Australia's Music Industry Piracy Investigations (**MIPI**) to bust an international music piracy ring operating from Sydney.

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

The AFP advised that it has already arrested 1 man in a two (2) day operation that involved executing eleven (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 Gnarl Barkley.

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" compilations were found circulating in New Zealand markets and retail stores. Following extensive covert investigations, MIPI undercover operatives also located the pirate complications in Fiji.

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 such as Fiji."

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."

Under Australian Law, the 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.

Mr Eremasi Tamanisau, Chairman of FPRA said "I hope that this sends a strong message to businesses that engage in commercial piracy here in Fiji. Piracy robs local creators from earning a living from their craft and provides a disincentive for them to develop their talent. FPRA encourages our local law enforcement officials to take similar measures to stamp out the abuse of copyright here in Fiji".

## **Notes for editors**

### **FPRA**

The Fiji Performing Right Associations is a non-profit organisation established in 1993 to administer the performing rights of its' local composer and songwriter members. Under a licence agreement with APRA (Australasian Performing Right Association), FPRA also represents the performing rights of owner 2 million foreign composers whenever their musical works are performed, broadcast or communicated to the public throughout the Fiji Islands.

### **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 with the Australian Record Industry Association (ARIA) and over 1,700 music publishers and songwriters through their association with the Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society (AMCOS).

For further information contact Maca Maiwaqa on 331 2494.

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