

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

Japanese Version

## **KOBE STEEL CRACKS DOWN ON COUNTERFEIT WELDING ELECTRODES**

**Bangkok, January 23, 2004**

In recent weeks, the Suppression Police Unit of the Economic Crime Investigations Division (ECID), acting on complaints made by customers of KOBE STEEL, LTD. (Kobe Steel), conducted successful raids on a company and warehouse involved in the sale of welding electrodes that infringed upon the trademark rights of Kobe Steel. Both the company and the warehouse are located in the Bangkok metropolitan area. The Raid teams were led by Pol. Col. Arwut Udomrat. Approximately 10 metric tons of illegal welding electrodes were seized and impounded, and the company was charged with offenses related to criminal trademark infringement under the Thai Trademark Act. The directors of the company are being summoned, and will be charged with the same offenses. The maximum penalty for such offences is two years imprisonment or a fine of Baht 200,000, or both.

The company was engaged in the sale of welding electrodes and packaged their products in a way to create confusion among customers in respect to the source or origin of the products. The package designs of the infringing products are substantially identical to the packaging of genuine Kobe Steel products, in respect to colors, markings, trademarks and the overall layout of distinctive characters and stripes on the packaging. Kobe Steel expressed concern that Thai consumers would be fooled into believing they were purchasing genuine products when in fact they purchased inferior counterfeit goods.

Tilleke & Gibbins International Ltd., lawyers for Kobe Steel, were pleased that police acted out of concern that consumers could be deceived regarding the origin and quality of these questionable products. The companies are hopeful that the suppression efforts of the ECID and other Thai Government campaigns against manufacturers and retailers of fake and imitative products will be sustained and pledged their continuing support for such enforcement efforts.

Kobe Steel stated that they will continue to make an aggressive effort to eliminate fake and imitative products from the Thai market to prevent consumers from being deceived in future.



## 「神戸製鋼の溶接棒」模倣品を販売した容疑者を逮捕

このほど、タイのバンコックにおいて、Pol. Col. Arwut Udomrat 率いる警察当局 (ECID:経済犯罪捜査課の侵害取締り課) は、市内で溶接棒を販売している某会社とその倉庫に、神戸製鋼の商標権侵害の疑いで取締りを実施し、模倣品 10 トンを押収した。

某会社は、溶接市場において、タイのみならず世界的に周知・著名になっている神戸製鋼の商標権「KOBEL STEEL」及び「溶接棒のパッケージ」の溶接棒の模倣品を販売していた。

今回の逮捕に先立ち、神戸製鋼の取引先(タイ現地法人)より、神戸製鋼に商標権侵害の実態について苦情及び報告があり、神戸製鋼は、タイ法律事務所 (Tilleke & Gibbins International Ltd.) を代理人として、徹底的な知的財産権犯罪の取締りを警察当局に要請していた。

警察当局とタイ法律事務所の協力のもと、某会社の取締役は逮捕され、需要者を欺瞞する商標権侵害行為として、現在、警察当局の取り調べを受けている。某会社は、最高 2 年以下の懲役又は 20 万バツ以下の罰金、又はその両方を科する処罰を受けるだろう。

タイ政府は模倣品摘発キャンペーンと題して模倣品阻止活動を遂行している。神戸製鋼も、需要者の信用を維持するため、商標権侵害に対して今後も適切な処置をとる所存である。

