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China Crackdowns On Counterfeit Goods

In early February, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce announced that, in the first quarter of 2012, a number of Chinese Agencies will focus on cracking down on those making and selling counterfeit goods in rural China. The crack-down will focus on "home-appliances, foodstuff, chemical products of everyday use, and material for agricultural production." Chinese officials are targeting the source of the counterfeit goods as well as stepping up enforcement at markets, bazaars and other sales outlets. The goals of the enhanced enforcement, among others, are to outlaw forgery mills, expose those who are creating batches of illegal products, and to step up the publicity and education of intellectual property rights for those living in rural China, highlighting the differentiation between real goods and counterfeits.

While this is a welcome change from business as usual in China, only time will tell how effective these efforts may be. Notwithstanding these measures, companies that rely in whole or in part upon a Chinese supply chain should still take the appropriate steps to protect its intellectual property.

One thing is for sure; even a successful campaign on behalf of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce will not eliminate, or arguably lessen the counterfeiting risk coming from the Far East. For more information regarding intellectual property protection, please contact Venable.

The full announcement from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce can be viewed here:

<http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/aarticle/newsrelease/significantnews/201202/20120207949198.html>.