



# Informational Release

Tax Recovery and Criminal Enforcement Task Force (TRaCE)

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## **Selling counterfeit sports apparel on social websites earns Sacramento man big bucks, but lands him behind bars**

It really was too good to be true: Sports jerseys from professional teams – San Francisco 49ers, Oakland Raiders, Golden State Warriors, etc. – for under \$40. Cash-strapped sports enthusiasts, seeing these unbelievable prices on Craigslist and other websites, eagerly forked over their hard-earned money.

But a six-month investigation by the California Department of Justice's Tax Recovery and Criminal Enforcement Task Force (TRaCE) and the (former) Sacramento Intellectual Property Rights Task Force led to the arrest and conviction of Ahmed Ashroff, 34, on one felony count of selling counterfeit goods.

A private investigation company, Investigative Consultants, contacted TRaCE in June 2014 regarding Ashroff, whom they believed was selling the counterfeit sports jerseys. Ashroff purportedly bought the jerseys from China and resold them on social media websites. On several occasions, undercover officers purchased the jerseys for less than \$40, whereas a genuine team jersey retails for \$200 or more.

After a 19-count criminal complaint was filed against Ashroff, he plead no contest to one count of PC 350(a)(2), Counterfeiting of a Registered Trademark, and was sentenced to five years of formal probation, one year of work release, and ordered to pay \$10,000 in restitution to the initial investigatory company, Investigative Consultants.

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The Tax Recovery and Criminal Enforcement Task Force (TRaCE) is comprised of officers with the Department of Justice, Board of Equalization, Franchise Tax Board, Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Employment Development Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations. The mission of the TRaCE Task Force is to combat organized elements of the underground economy engaged in the manufacture, importation, distribution, and sale of pirated intellectual property, and other economic crimes resulting in the evasion of business, payroll and/or income taxes. For more information about TRaCE or to report a crime, visit [www.cdtfa.ca.gov/trace](http://www.cdtfa.ca.gov/trace).

**NOTE:** As a result of the Taxpayer Transparency and Fairness Act of 2017, the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) replaced the Board of Equalization (BOE) as a participating member agency of TRaCE. Any reference to BOE herein or on the TRaCE website is deemed CDTFA.