



WARNING ON COUNTERFEIT CREDIT CARDS

The practice of importing counterfeit credit cards continues to attract jail sentences.

In unrelated cases, a 48-year-old Melbourne man was sentenced to two years in prison and a foreign national is still to face court on another matter.

The importation of counterfeit credit cards is a criminal offence, and is prohibited under the *Customs Act 1901*.

In the first case, the man was convicted after pleading guilty to importing 27 fake credit cards.

The sentence was reduced on the grounds the man had helped Customs with inquiries.

He had first come to the attention of Customs in March 2003 after officers examining air cargo at Melbourne Airport found 24 counterfeit credit cards in a parcel from Malaysia.

The cards, all issued under different names, were addressed to the man. A subsequent search of his home uncovered another three counterfeit credit cards.

The man has lodged an appeal against his sentence which will be heard in early 2005.

In the second case, officers at Sydney Airport stopped a man arriving in Australia on a flight from Kuala Lumpur.

The man claimed to be a marketing

manager for a security access company in Australia to attend a convention. He was allegedly carrying what he claimed to be 2000 blank visitors passes for a display at the convention.

A closer examination of the passes revealed they were covered with an adhesive which when peeled back revealed blank credit cards in the names of major banks. A card embossing machine and printer were also allegedly found in the man's luggage.

He was also alleged to be carrying almost \$200,000 in fraudulent travellers cheques. He was charged with offences under both the *Customs Act* and *Crimes Act*.