

Middle East Intellectual Property Newsletter Vol. 97 Enforcement Remedies in the Gulf: Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar

Introduction

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets of Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar play an important role in regional trade and attract international brands across industries, from luxury goods and electronics to pharmaceuticals and automotive parts. While these countries benefit from relatively modern intellectual property laws, enforcement remains a mixed picture, shaped by varying administrative capacities, market sizes, and enforcement priorities.

This third installment in the Special Newsletter Series focuses on these four Gulf markets, helping right holders understand enforcement processes and practical challenges across the region.

These countries represent important commercial gateways, especially for companies expanding within the GCC Common Market. While each country applies the GCC Trademarks Law, their actual enforcement procedures vary significantly based on local administrative structures and enforcement priorities.

Enforcement Remedies in Oman

Overview

As a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Oman applies the GCC Trademarks Law, offering a clear legal framework for intellectual property protection. However, practical enforcement remains relatively conservative, with most actions initiated by right holders themselves. Oman's Customs Directorate is the primary enforcement player, focusing on border controls, while in-market enforcement relies on the Consumer Protection Authority and police intervention following complaints.

Oman's small population and lower trade volume compared to larger Gulf countries mean that counterfeiting tends to be less widespread, but ports like Salalah and Sohar remain vulnerable to transit of infringing goods. Right holders with active market presence in Oman are advised to prioritize border measures and maintain strong relationships with local agents.

Key Enforcement Authorities

Authority	Role	URL
Intellectual Property Department - Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion (MOCIIP)	Oversees registration of trademarks, patents, and industrial designs.	https://moci.gov.om
Royal Oman Police - Customs Directorate	Handles border enforcement and seizure of counterfeit goods.	https://www.rop.gov.om
Consumer Protection Authority (CPA)	Handles market inspections, consumer complaints, and in-market enforcement.	https://www.cpa.gov.om
Omani Courts (Commercial and Criminal)	Handle civil and criminal intellectual property disputes.	Varies by governorate

Relevant Laws

- GCC Trademarks Law (applied via Royal Decree No. 33/2017)¹

¹ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/19900>

- Industrial Property Rights Law No. 67/2008 (covering patents and designs)²
- Copyright and Neighboring Rights Law No. 65/2008³
- Customs Law (GCC Unified Customs Law, applied locally)⁴

These laws apply across all regions of Oman and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- Royal Oman Police - Customs Directorate: Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods. Patents and industrial designs generally fall outside their enforcement scope, as they require technical evaluation.
- Intellectual Property Department - Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion (MOCIIP): Oversees trademark, patent, and industrial design registrations and manages administrative procedures for IP protection but does not conduct direct enforcement.
- Consumer Protection Authority (CPA): Focuses on market inspections, consumer complaints, and enforcement of counterfeit goods in the domestic market, mainly concerning trademarks and copyrights. Patent and industrial design enforcement is not under its jurisdiction.
- Omani Courts (Commercial and Criminal): Handle trademark, patent, industrial design, and copyright disputes, as these require legal and technical evaluation.

Each authority plays a specific role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent and industrial design disputes typically require judicial intervention.

Border Measures

Customs Recordation:

Oman offers voluntary trademark recordation with the Royal Oman Police - Customs Directorate.

- Fees: Approximately USD 100 per class.
- Validity: 1 year, renewable.

Ex Officio Enforcement:

Yes—Customs has the authority to intercept suspicious shipments on its own, provided the mark is recorded. In practice, ex officio action is limited, and right holders are expected to actively monitor shipments and respond quickly to any alerts.

Notification Process:

When Customs identifies suspicious goods:

- The right holder (or its local agent) is notified.
- Customs provides basic shipment details and product images.
- The right holder has 5 working days to confirm infringement and initiate further action.

If a trademark is not recorded with Oman Customs, ex officio enforcement is less likely but still possible in certain cases. While Customs has the authority to intercept suspicious shipments on its own, enforcement is more proactive when a mark is recorded.

² <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/11876>

³ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/5832>

⁴ <https://www.gcc-sg.org/en/MediaCenter/DigitalLibrary/Documents/1274258180.pdf>

Sanctions:

- Fines: Generally starting at OMR 1,000 (~USD 2,600) and scaling based on the value of the goods.
- Product Disposal: Counterfeit goods are usually destroyed under Customs supervision.
- Repeat Offenders: Subject to higher fines and may face criminal referral for repeated infringements.

Market Raids

Administrative Complaints:

Right holders can file complaints with the Consumer Protection Authority (CPA) for in-market enforcement targeting counterfeit goods found in retail outlets, warehouses, and distribution points.

Police-Initiated Raids:

The Royal Oman Police may also conduct raids based on direct complaints, particularly for large-scale counterfeiting operations.

Ex Officio Market Raids:

Limited-CPA focuses on consumer-driven complaints and tends to be reactive rather than proactively seeking out counterfeiters.

Raid Process:

- CPA or police inspect the targeted premises.
- Suspect goods are seized and documented.
- The right holder is invited to examine the goods and confirm authenticity.
- If infringement is confirmed, goods are held pending administrative or judicial action.

Sanctions (Market Raids):

- Fines: From OMR 500 to OMR 5,000 (~USD 1,300 to USD 13,000), depending on scale and intent.
- Product Disposal: Confirmed counterfeit goods are usually destroyed.
- Business Closure: In serious cases, temporary closure orders may apply.
- Criminal Referral: For organized or repeated violations, cases may be referred to the courts.

Judicial Remedies

Civil Litigation:

Right holders can initiate civil cases seeking:

- Injunctions to stop further infringement.
- Compensation for financial and reputational harm.
- Destruction orders for infringing goods.

Criminal Prosecution:

For large-scale or intentional counterfeiting, criminal action can be initiated, either directly or following police investigations.

- Penalties include:

- Fines based on the value of the goods and commercial harm caused.
- Imprisonment up to 2 years for serious violations.
- Business closure orders for repeat offenders.

Special Notes

- Customs recordation is essential for effective border enforcement.
- Right holders are advised to conduct training sessions for Customs and CPA inspectors, as product identification knowledge is limited for niche or technical goods.
- Judicial proceedings are relatively slow, with cases often taking 12 to 18 months to conclude.
- The CPA is more effective for smaller-scale retail enforcement, while the police focus more on warehouse-level cases.
- Right holders should actively monitor imports and the local market, as ex officio action is rare without right holder involvement.

Conclusion

Enforcement in Oman works best when right holders take proactive steps, combining:

- Customs recordation for border protection.
- Direct engagement with CPA and police for market enforcement.
- Training Customs and enforcement teams on product authentication.
- Close cooperation with reliable local agents to ensure swift response to infringements.

With proactive engagement and a layered approach, right holders can effectively protect their intellectual property in Oman's relatively stable but conservative enforcement environment.

Enforcement Remedies in Kuwait

Overview

Kuwait is a strategic trading hub within the Gulf region, with a consumer market driven by imports and high purchasing power. While Kuwait's legal framework for intellectual property protection is relatively mature, practical enforcement remains heavily dependent on right holder complaints. Proactive enforcement, particularly at the border and in the marketplace, is limited.

However, Kuwait's accession to the GCC Trademarks Law and its ongoing economic diversification have gradually improved awareness and capacity among enforcement agencies. Right holders must remain engaged, actively monitoring the market and following up on enforcement requests to ensure consistent protection.

Key Enforcement Authorities

Authority	Role	URL
Intellectual Property Department - Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Oversees trademark, patent, and design registration; manages administrative complaints.	https://www.moci.gov.kw
Kuwait General Administration of Customs	Handles border enforcement and seizures of counterfeit goods.	https://www.Customs.gov.kw
Consumer Protection Directorate (part of MOCI)	Handles in-market enforcement and consumer-driven IP complaints.	https://www.moci.gov.kw
Police (Economic Crimes Unit)	Conducts market raids and supports large-scale investigations.	No dedicated URL

Relevant Laws

- GCC Trademarks Law (applied via Law No. 13 of 2015)⁵
- Law No. 75 of 2019 on Copyright and Related Rights⁶
- Patents and Industrial Designs Law No. 71 of 2013⁷
- Customs Law No. 10 of 2003⁸

These laws apply across all regions of Kuwait and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- Kuwait General Administration of Customs: Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods. Patents and industrial designs generally fall outside its enforcement scope, as they require technical evaluation.
- Intellectual Property Department - Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI): Oversees trademark, patent, and industrial design registrations and handles administrative complaints related to IP infringements but does not conduct direct enforcement.
- Consumer Protection Directorate (part of MOCI): Focuses on market inspections, consumer complaints, and enforcement of counterfeit goods in the domestic market, mainly concerning trademarks and copyrights. Patent and industrial design enforcement is not within its jurisdiction.
- Police (Economic Crimes Unit): Conducts market raids and large-scale investigations related to IP violations, primarily for trademarks and copyright infringement.
- Kuwaiti Courts (Commercial and Criminal Courts): Handle trademark, patent, industrial design, and copyright disputes, as these require legal and technical evaluation.

Each authority has a specific role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent and industrial design disputes typically require judicial intervention.

Border Measures

Customs Recordation:

Kuwait offers voluntary trademark recordation with Kuwait Customs.

- Fees: Around USD 150 per class.
- Validity: 1 year, renewable.

Ex Officio Enforcement:

Yes—Customs officers are empowered to detain suspicious shipments. However, in practice, most Customs actions are complaint-driven, meaning right holders need to actively monitor incoming shipments and notify Customs of suspicious consignments.

Notification Process:

When Customs detects suspicious goods:

- The right holder (or local agent) is notified.
- The notification includes shipment details, product images, and import documents.

⁵ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/19921>

⁶ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/19908>

⁷ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/15423>

⁸ <https://www.gcc-sg.org/en/MediaCenter/DigitalLibrary/Documents/1274258180.pdf>

- The right holder has 5 working days to confirm infringement and submit supporting evidence.

If a trademark is not recorded with Kuwait Customs, there is no automatic notification process for suspected counterfeit goods. Customs officials are not required to alert right holders unless they have submitted a prior request for enforcement.

Sanctions:

- Fines: From KWD 1,000 to KWD 10,000 (~USD 3,200 to USD 32,000), depending on the case.
- Product Disposal: Seized counterfeit goods are typically destroyed under Customs supervision.
- Repeat Offenders: Face escalating fines and potential criminal referral.

Market Raids

Administrative Complaints:

Right holders can file complaints directly with the Consumer Protection Directorate at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, triggering administrative action against infringers.

Police-Initiated Raids:

The Economic Crimes Unit within the police handles criminal-level counterfeiting cases, especially if the goods pose a public health or safety risk, or involve large-scale distribution networks.

Ex Officio Market Raids:

Rare-market enforcement is almost entirely triggered by right holder complaints.

Raid Process:

- Inspectors (from MOCI's Consumer Protection Directorate) or police officers visit the suspected premises.
- Suspect goods are seized and catalogued.
- The right holder may be asked to confirm authenticity on-site or provide written analysis.
- Seized goods are stored pending further action.

Sanctions (Market Raids):

- Fines: Starting from KWD 500 (~USD 1,600), with higher penalties for repeated violations.
- Product Disposal: Confirmed counterfeits are usually destroyed at the infringer's expense.
- Business Closure: In extreme cases, authorities may order temporary closure of offending premises.
- Imprisonment: May apply for organized counterfeiting or public health violations, with terms up to 2 years.

Judicial Remedies

Civil Litigation:

Right holders may initiate civil lawsuits before the Commercial Court, seeking:

- Injunctions to stop further infringement.
- Compensation for financial loss and reputational damage.
- Product destruction orders.

Criminal Prosecution:

For serious cases, including repeat infringement or large-scale counterfeiting, right holders may push for criminal prosecution.

- Penalties include:
 - Significant fines that are imposed based on the severity of the offense, in line with the applicable trademark laws.
 - Imprisonment up to 2 years.
 - Business closure orders for repeat offenders.

Special Notes

- Customs recordation is essential to maximize border enforcement opportunities.
- Administrative enforcement is generally faster than court action, though fines imposed by the Consumer Protection Directorate are relatively low.
- Judicial proceedings tend to be slow, often taking 18 to 24 months.
- Police action is more likely when counterfeiting involves public safety risks, such as counterfeit pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, or automotive parts.
- Right holders are strongly encouraged to conduct training sessions for Customs and consumer protection officers, as product identification knowledge can vary widely.
- Online Enforcement: Kuwait has no dedicated online IP enforcement framework, so action against online counterfeit listings relies mainly on private takedown requests.

Conclusion

Enforcement in Kuwait works best when right holders adopt a hands-on approach, combining:

- Customs recordation for border protection.
- Routine market monitoring, supported by local agents.
- Direct engagement with the Consumer Protection Directorate for administrative action.
- Strong follow-up on enforcement requests, as passive expectations often lead to stalled cases.

For companies investing in Kuwait, persistent engagement and local presence are essential to ensuring effective and timely brand protection.

Enforcement Remedies in Bahrain

Overview

As a growing financial and commercial center, Bahrain has been strengthening its intellectual property enforcement system in recent years. Thanks to ongoing economic diversification efforts, the government has placed greater emphasis on protecting intellectual property rights, particularly to attract foreign investment. Bahrain's legal framework aligns closely with GCC standards, and enforcement mechanisms are increasingly responsive—especially for right holders who actively monitor and engage with local authorities.

While border enforcement and administrative actions have improved, market enforcement remains largely complaint-driven, meaning proactive right holder engagement is essential. Repeat offenders face harsher penalties, particularly after Bahrain introduced tougher consumer protection measures in parallel with intellectual property enforcement.

Key Enforcement Authorities

Authority	Role	URL
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Industrial Property Directorate - Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC)	Oversees trademark, patent, and design registration; manages administrative complaints.	https://www.moic.gov.bh
Bahrain Customs Affairs - Ministry of Interior	Manages border enforcement, seizure of counterfeit goods, and Customs recordation.	https://www.Customs.gov.bh
Consumer Protection Directorate - Ministry of Industry and Commerce	Handles in-market inspections and consumer-related counterfeit complaints.	https://www.moic.gov.bh
Public Prosecution and Courts	Handle civil and criminal intellectual property cases.	https://www.pp.gov.bh

Relevant Laws

- GCC Trademarks Law (applied via Law No. 6 of 2014)⁹
- Copyright and Neighboring Rights Law No. 22 of 2006¹⁰
- Patent and Utility Models Law No. 1 of 2004¹¹
- Customs Law (GCC Unified Customs Law, applied locally)¹²

These laws apply across all regions of Bahrain and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, utility models, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- Bahrain Customs Affairs - Ministry of Interior: Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods and managing Customs recordation. Patents, utility models, and industrial designs typically fall outside its enforcement scope, as they require technical evaluation.
- Industrial Property Directorate - Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC): Oversees trademark, patent, industrial design, and utility model registrations and manages administrative complaints but does not conduct direct enforcement.
- Consumer Protection Directorate - Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC): Handles in-market inspections and consumer-related counterfeit complaints, primarily for trademark and copyright violations. Patent and industrial design enforcement is not within its jurisdiction.
- Public Prosecution and Courts: Handle trademark, patent, industrial design, utility model, and copyright disputes, as these require legal and technical assessment.

Each authority has a specific role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent, industrial design, and utility model disputes typically require judicial intervention.

Border Measures

Customs Recordation:

Bahrain offers voluntary trademark recordation with Bahrain Customs Affairs.

- Fees: Approximately USD 150 per class.
- Validity: 1 year, renewable.

⁹ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/14730>

¹⁰ <https://wipolex-res.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/bh/bh030en.html>

¹¹ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/22065>

¹² <https://www.gcc-sg.org/en/MediaCenter/DigitalLibrary/Documents/1274258180.pdf>

Ex Officio Enforcement:

Yes—Customs officers are authorized to intercept suspicious shipments on their own initiative. However, recorded trademarks receive priority attention.

Notification Process:

When Customs identifies suspicious goods:

- The right holder (or its local agent) is notified.
- The notification includes shipment details, product images, and import/export documents.
- The right holder has 5 working days to respond and confirm infringement.

If a trademark is not recorded with Bahrain Customs, there is no automatic notification process for suspected counterfeit goods. Customs officials are not required to alert right holders unless a specific enforcement request has been submitted.

Sanctions:

- Fines: Up to BHD 10,000 (~USD 26,500) depending on the case's commercial value.
- Product Disposal: Confirmed counterfeit goods are usually destroyed.
- Repeat Offenders: Subject to higher fines and potential criminal referral.

Market Raids

Administrative Complaints:

Right holders can file complaints directly with the Consumer Protection Directorate at MOIC, which can trigger administrative inspections and seizures.

Police-Initiated Raids:

For larger-scale counterfeiting operations or cases linked to organized networks, the case may escalate to the Public Prosecution, which can authorize police raids in coordination with the Consumer Protection Directorate.

Ex Officio Market Raids:

Limited—market enforcement is primarily complaint-driven.

Raid Process:

- Inspectors (from Consumer Protection or police) visit the targeted premises.
- Suspect goods are seized and documented.
- The right holder may be asked to assist in product identification.
- Goods are held until the case is resolved administratively or judicially.

Sanctions (Market Raids):

- Fines: Starting from BHD 2,000 (~USD 5,300) and scaling up for repeat offenders.
- Product Disposal: Confirmed counterfeits are destroyed.
- Business Closure: Repeated violations may result in temporary or permanent closure.
- Imprisonment: For large-scale or organized counterfeiting, up to 2 years in prison.

Judicial Remedies

Civil Litigation:

Right holders may file civil lawsuits seeking:

- Injunctions to stop further sales.
- Compensation for financial and reputational harm.
- Product destruction orders.

Criminal Prosecution:

For serious cases, especially involving organized counterfeit networks, the Public Prosecution can initiate criminal proceedings.

- Penalties include:
 - Significant fines that are imposed based on the severity of the offense, in line with the applicable trademark laws.
 - Imprisonment up to 2 years.
 - Business closure orders.

Special Notes

- Customs recordation is strongly recommended, as border enforcement is more predictable than in-market action.
- Administrative action through MOIC's Consumer Protection Directorate tends to be faster than court action.
- Judicial proceedings can take 12 to 18 months, especially if foreign companies are involved.
- Training Customs and enforcement officers on product authentication significantly improves detection rates.
- Online enforcement is still developing—complaints about counterfeit goods sold online are handled case-by-case through Consumer Protection.

Conclusion

Successful enforcement in Bahrain requires:

- Proactive Customs recordation for border control.
- Regular market monitoring to detect in-market counterfeits.
- Direct engagement with the Consumer Protection Directorate for fast administrative remedies.
- Well-prepared litigation strategies in case escalation is needed.

With timely action and close cooperation with local authorities, right holders can effectively safeguard their rights in Bahrain's evolving enforcement environment.

Enforcement Remedies in Qatar

Overview

Qatar has emerged as a regional business hub, particularly following major global events like the 2022 FIFA World Cup, which triggered significant upgrades to the country's intellectual property (IP) enforcement system. With increasing international scrutiny, Qatar has taken steps to strengthen its IP enforcement framework, particularly at borders and through administrative action.

Enforcement in Qatar is generally more structured than in some neighboring jurisdictions, but it remains heavily right holder-driven. Authorities respond well to formal complaints, but ex officio action remains limited. Right holders with a physical presence in Qatar or active monitoring processes tend to achieve the best results.

Key Enforcement Authorities

Authority	Role	URL
Intellectual Property Rights Protection Department - Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI)	Oversees registration of trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. Manages administrative complaints and market inspections.	https://www.moci.gov.qa
General Authority of Customs	Handles border enforcement, Customs recordation, and seizure of counterfeit goods.	https://www.Customs.gov.qa
Consumer Protection Department - MOCI	Conducts in-market inspections and handles consumer-driven counterfeit complaints.	https://www.moci.gov.qa
Public Prosecution and Courts	Handle civil and criminal intellectual property cases.	Varies by court

Relevant Laws

- GCC Trademarks Law (applied via Law No. 7 of 2014)¹³
- Copyright and Neighboring Rights Law No. 7 of 2002¹⁴
- Patent Law No. 30 of 2006¹⁵
- Customs Law (GCC Unified Customs Law, applied locally)¹⁶

These laws apply across all regions of Qatar and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- General Authority of Customs: Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods and managing Customs recordation. Patents and industrial designs generally fall outside its enforcement scope, as they require technical assessments.
- Intellectual Property Rights Protection Department - Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI): Oversees trademark, patent, industrial design, and copyright registrations, manages administrative complaints, and conducts market inspections. However, it does not conduct direct enforcement in legal disputes.
- Consumer Protection Department - MOCI: Focuses on in-market inspections, consumer complaints, and counterfeit enforcement, mainly for trademarks and copyrights. Patent and industrial design enforcement is not within its jurisdiction.
- Public Prosecution and Courts: Handle trademark, patent, industrial design, and copyright disputes, as these require legal and technical evaluation.

Each authority has a specific role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent and industrial design disputes typically require judicial intervention.

Border Measures

Customs Recordation:

¹³ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/19725>

¹⁴ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/3567>

¹⁵ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/18358>

¹⁶ <https://www.gcc-sg.org/en/MediaCenter/DigitalLibrary/Documents/1274258180.pdf>

Qatar offers voluntary trademark recordation with the General Authority of Customs.

- Fees: Approximately USD 150 per class.
- Validity: 1 year, renewable.

Ex Officio Enforcement:

Yes—Customs officers have the authority to detain shipments they suspect contain counterfeit goods, even without prior right holder involvement. However, recorded trademarks receive priority attention.

Notification Process:

When Customs identifies a suspicious shipment:

- Customs notifies the right holder (or local agent).
- Notification includes shipment details, product images, and supporting documents.
- The right holder has 5 working days to respond and confirm infringement.

Qatar Customs has the authority to detain shipments suspected of containing counterfeit goods, even if the trademark is not recorded. However, enforcement is more proactive for recorded trademarks.

Sanctions:

- Fines: Starting at QAR 50,000 (~USD 13,700), escalating for repeat offenders or high-value cases.
- Product Disposal: Confirmed counterfeit goods are usually destroyed at the infringer's expense.
- Repeat Offenders: Face higher fines and possible referral for criminal prosecution.

Market Raids

Administrative Complaints:

Right holders can file complaints directly with the Intellectual Property Rights Protection Department at MOCI, requesting in-market inspections against infringers.

Police-Initiated Raids:

For cases involving organized counterfeiting networks or counterfeit goods posing health and safety risks, the case may escalate to Public Prosecution, triggering police-led raids.

Ex Officio Market Raids:

Rare—most market enforcement actions are initiated by right holder complaints.

Raid Process:

- MOCI inspectors visit the premises, often accompanied by police officers if needed.
- Suspect goods are seized and documented.
- The right holder may be asked to assist with product identification.
- Goods are held until the case is resolved administratively or judicially.

Sanctions (Market Raids):

- Fines: From QAR 50,000 to QAR 200,000 (~USD 13,700 to USD 54,800), depending on the severity of the case.
- Product Disposal: Confirmed counterfeits are destroyed.
- Business Closure: Premises found to be repeat offenders may face temporary or permanent closure.

- Imprisonment: For large-scale organized counterfeiting, prison sentences of up to 2 years may apply.

Judicial Remedies

Civil Litigation:

Right holders can file civil lawsuits seeking:

- Injunctions to stop further infringement.
- Compensation for financial and reputational harm.
- Product destruction orders.

Criminal Prosecution:

For large-scale or intentional counterfeiting, especially where consumer safety is at risk, the case can escalate to criminal prosecution.

- Penalties include:
 - Fines.
 - Imprisonment up to 2 years.
 - Business closure orders.

Special Notes

- Customs recordation is highly recommended, especially for import-heavy sectors like fashion, luxury goods, and pharmaceuticals.
- Administrative enforcement through MOCI is faster than court action, though fines imposed by MOCI tend to be lower than court-awarded damages.
- Judicial proceedings can take over a year, especially when foreign companies are involved.
- Right holders should actively monitor online and offline markets, since ex officio market action is rare.
- Training Customs officers and MOCI inspectors is strongly encouraged, as brand knowledge enhances enforcement accuracy.

Conclusion

Enforcement in Qatar works best when right holders stay actively involved, combining:

- Proactive Customs recordation for strong border protection.
- Direct engagement with MOCI for swift administrative action.
- Strong follow-up on enforcement requests, ensuring cases do not stall.
- Collaboration with local counsel to handle judicial processes if escalation is needed.

With timely intervention and ongoing brand protection efforts, companies can effectively enforce their rights in Qatar's rapidly evolving enforcement environment.

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