

# Police to blitz DVD pirates

ALEX WILSON

POLICE sent a message to the organised crime syndicates trading in pirated DVDs yesterday when they destroyed \$1.3 million worth of illegally copied discs in Melbourne.

But authorities admit stamping out the lucrative trade in pirated DVDs is a near impossible task, with millions of dollars to be made by those willing to take the risk.

Adrienne Pecotic of the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft said the trade in illegal DVDs cost the Australian industry more than

\$150 million a year and the size of the problem was increasing.

Ms Pecotic said DVD makers were constantly working to find new technologies to prevent the copying of their films but, because of the large amount of money to be made, criminals were working just as hard to find ways around them.

"It's an arms race," she said.

"The minute that someone comes up with a new way of protecting the product someone has a financial interest in trying to crack the code."

Ms Pecotic said the

Australian Federal Police and state police were launching a crackdown on the illegal trade and the federation was working to get the message to the public that buying pirated DVDs was illegal and hurt Australian businesses.

Melbourne video store operator Phil Ferraro said his small business had been hit hard by the growing numbers of pirated DVDs.

He said he had been forced to cut back on shifts for staff at his Network Video store in West Footscray and across the industry jobs were being lost.

—AAP