

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs seized a total of about 2.2 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$2.5 million at Hong Kong International Airport on December 10 and today (December 14).

Customs officers inspected an air mail parcel from Brazil on December 10 and found about 1.2 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$1.4 million concealed inside four cans of powdered formula and coffee powder in the parcel.

After follow-up investigation, Customs officers yesterday (December 13) arrested a 20-year-old man suspected to be in connection with the case in Tsz Wan Shan. He has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug and will appear at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (December 15).

Also, a 64-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Brussels, Belgium, this morning. During Customs clearance, about 1 kilogram of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$1.1 million was found concealed inside a false compartment of his tablet case. The man was then arrested. Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[SCS visits Land Registry \(with photo\)](#)

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, visited the Land Registry today (December 14) to learn more about the work of the department and meet with staff of various grades to exchange views on matters of concern.

Accompanied by the Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Thomas Chow, Mr Law met with the Land Registrar, Ms Doris Cheung, and the directorate staff, to get an update on the department's various areas of work including the provision of land registration and search services, the e-Alert service for property owners and mortgagee banks, and the future development of the department.

Mr Law then visited the Customer Centre where he learnt about the enquiry, deeds lodgement and search services delivered to the public by front-line colleagues. He said he was pleased to learn that the Customer Centre handled more than 528 000 land documents delivered for registration in 2017/18.

Mr Law talked to colleagues to better understand the e-services proactively implemented by the department. He learnt that continuous functional enhancements to the online services of the Integrated Registration Information System have been implemented so as to provide more convenient search services to members of the public. He also visited colleagues of the Reports-on-Title and Owners Incorporation Section and the Search Services Help Desk to learn more about their work.

Before concluding his visit, Mr Law met with staff representatives of various grades at a tea gathering to exchange views on matters that concern them. He encouraged colleagues to continue to make dedicated efforts in providing quality services to the public.



Second stage of holistic assessment strategy for Hung Hom Station Extension under Shatin to Central Link Project in progress

The holistic assessment strategy for the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) Project has been progressing smoothly, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) said today (December 14). In response to the Government's request, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) commenced the second stage of the strategy to open up the concrete of the East West Line (EWL) and North South Line (NSL) platforms on Monday (December 10). The opening up of eight locations at the EWL is under way. Relevant tests will be conducted when the steel bars are exposed.

The second stage of the strategy mainly serves two purposes. The first purpose is to verify the as-constructed details through opening up the concrete for physical investigation at locations where the MTRCL has found gaps in the documentation about the steel reinforcement. In view of the allegations on the cutting-short of steel bars, the second purpose is to verify the as-constructed coupler connections through opening up certain connections between the slabs and diaphragm walls for detailed inspection and non-destructive tests on coupler connections.

A spokesman for THB said, "The first purpose involves at least 24 locations at the EWL slab. The MTRCL has opened up five locations where inspection will be conducted after the steel bars are exposed. For the second purpose, the MTRCL will open up 28 locations at the EWL and the NSL respectively, i.e. 56 locations in total, that were selected from random sampling carried out by the expert team from the University of Hong Kong (HKU). At least 168 steel bars or couplers will be exposed for inspection. Up till now, three randomly selected locations have been opened up. Non-destructive tests will be conducted when the coupler connection is reached.

"The Government attaches great importance to the opening up and examination of the concrete, and considers that it has to be conducted in a stringent, fair, scientific and safe manner to ensure the reliability of the results. To this end, the Government has consulted the expert team from the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of HKU on the selection method of opening-up locations and entrusted them to conduct random sampling. The sampling process, witnessed by representatives of the Expert Adviser Team for the SCL Project under the THB, the Highways Department, the Buildings Department and the MTRCL, was completed on December 10."

The process first involved the random selection of 56 locations at platform slabs. Next, based on the latest drawings provided by the MTRCL and given the number of layers of steel bars inside the slab, the slab is opened

up to the depth of a certain layer randomly selected. As the width of each opening-up location is about 400 millimetres, a set of three steel bars will be exposed for examination. This method is known as cluster sampling and is commonly used in statistics.

Prior to the opening up, the MTRCL had appointed a registered contractor in accordance with the Buildings Ordinance to carry out the opening-up works, submitted a detailed method statement to the Building Authority and obtained its consent.

As for the non-destructive test on coupler connections, the MTRCL proposed the use of phased array ultrasonic examination. The Expert Adviser Team for the SCL Project, experts from the Department of Civil Engineering of HKU and relevant government departments agreed that the examination method is viable.

Throughout the opening-up process, representatives from the Buildings Department, the Highways Department and its monitoring and verification consultant will monitor the situation, keep records, and, in particular, review the critical steps to ensure the process complies with the agreed method statement. The MTRCL has assigned technically competent persons as required by the Buildings Ordinance to supervise the opening-up and examination process. Police officers will also be present at the scene.

The MTRCL has stepped up security measures to secure the integrity and reliability of the works and evidence collection. Measures implemented include round-the-clock deployment of security guards at the site, installation of a closed-circuit television system at all entrances to the platform slabs for real-time monitoring of entry and exit, and compulsory registration of workers' entry into and exit from the site.

The Government has requested the MTRCL to shorten the process of opening up and examination from the originally planned 16 weeks to 12 weeks to dovetail with the work plan of the Commission of Inquiry. The MTRCL has agreed to try its utmost to speed up but the completion date cannot be ascertained at this stage given the unforeseeable risks and difficulties. The Government will continue to monitor the progress of the opening up and examination, and will urge the MTRCL to take measures to expedite if it fails to meet the programme. The Government will also announce relevant work progress on a regular basis.

Special traffic arrangements on Hong Kong Island

Police will implement the following special traffic arrangements on

Sunday (December 16) to facilitate two public processions to be held on Hong Kong Island.

The following roads will be intermittently closed from 12.30pm until the crowd is dispersed and traffic resumes normal:

- Eastbound Yee Wo Street;
- Causeway Road;
- Westbound Leighton Road; and
- Keswick Street.

The following roads will be intermittently closed from 1.30pm until the crowd is dispersed and traffic resumes normal:

- Westbound Causeway Road;
- Westbound Leighton Road;
- Westbound Irving Street;
- Northbound Pennington Street;
- Jardine's Bazaar;
- Westbound Yee Wo Street;
- Westbound Hennessy Road;
- Westbound Queensway;
- Westbound Queen's Road Central;
- Bank Street; and
- Des Voeux Road Central.

Vehicles may not be permitted to leave car parks along the procession routes during the road closure period.

Actual implementation of the traffic arrangements will be made depending on traffic and crowd conditions in the area. Motorists are advised to exercise tolerance and patience and take heed of instructions of the Police on site.

[Provisional statistics on index of industrial production and producer price index for the industrial sector for the third quarter of 2018](#)

According to the provisional results of a survey released today (December 14) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the index of industrial production for manufacturing industries as a whole increased by

1.2% in the third quarter of 2018 compared with a year earlier, following a year-on-year increase of 1.6% in the second quarter of 2018. The corresponding producer price index increased slightly by 0.1% in the third quarter of 2018 compared with a year earlier, after recording a 3.7% year-on-year increase in the second quarter of 2018.

The index of industrial production for sewerage, waste management and remediation activities increased by 3.4% in the third quarter of 2018 compared with a year earlier, following a year-on-year increase of 3.1% in the second quarter of 2018. The corresponding producer price index also increased by 3.8% in the third quarter of 2018 compared with a year earlier, following a year-on-year increase of 4.3% in the second quarter of 2018.

Indices of industrial production reflect changes in the volume of local industrial output after discounting the effect of price changes. The price changes are measured by the producer price indices compiled from data on producer prices of selected industrial goods/services collected in the same survey.

Comparing the industrial production in respect of major manufacturing industries in the third quarter of 2018 with that a year earlier, an increase in output volume was recorded mainly in the food, beverages and tobacco industry (+3.5%). On the other hand, decreases in output volume were recorded in the textiles and wearing apparel industry (-3.3%); the metal, computer, electronic and optical products, machinery and equipment industry (-2.1%); and the paper products, printing and reproduction of recorded media industry (-2.1%).

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the index of industrial production for manufacturing industries as a whole decreased by 0.4% in the third quarter of 2018 compared with the second quarter of 2018.

Producer price indices reflect changes in the prices of local output. They measure changes in the actual prices (net of any discounts or rebates allowed to buyers, plus any surcharges) received by producers for their output. Transportation and other incidental charges are not included.

Comparing the third quarter of 2018 with a year earlier, increases in producer prices were recorded mainly in the paper products, printing and reproduction of recorded media industry (+3.0%); the food, beverages and tobacco industry (+1.5%); and the textiles and wearing apparel industry (+0.9%). On the other hand, a decrease in producer prices was recorded in the metal, computer, electronic and optical products, machinery and equipment industry (-0.9%).

Table 1 shows the year-on-year percentage changes in the indices of industrial production by selected industry grouping. Table 2 shows the year-on-year percentage changes in the producer price indices for the industrial sector by selected industry grouping.

The revised figures on indices of industrial production and producer price indices for the industrial sector for the third quarter of 2018 will be

released at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/bbs.jsp) and relevant publications of the department starting from January 18, 2019.

Users can download the reports "Quarterly Index of Industrial Production, 3rd Quarter 2018" (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp310.jsp?productCode=B1070002) and "Quarterly Producer Price Index for Industrial Sector, 3rd Quarter 2018" (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp280.jsp?productCode=B1070003) free of charge at the website of the C&SD.

Readers who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Industrial Production Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7247; fax: 2123 1048; email: ind-production@censtatd.gov.hk).