

# [Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine worth about \\$4.6 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (May 23) seized about 4.2 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$4.6 million at Hong Kong International Airport.

A 63-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from São Paulo, Brazil, via Doha, Qatar, yesterday. During customs clearance, the batch of suspected cocaine was found concealed inside the false compartments of his hand-carried suitcase and briefcase. The man was then arrested.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities effectively.

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 its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).



## Missing girl in Central located

A girl who went missing in Central has been located.

Chan Nga-fei, aged 14, went missing after she was last seen at Admiralty MTR Station on May 14. Her family made a report to Police on the same day.

The girl returned to her residence yesterday (May 23). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

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## TAC discusses application for tram fare increases and briefed on progress of discussions on new bus franchises

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) today (May 24) discussed a fare increase application from Hong Kong Tramways Limited (HKT), and was briefed on the latest progress of the Government's discussions with bus companies on new franchises.

The TAC Chairman, Professor Stephen Cheung, said, "Members were pleased to note that HKT has implemented various improvement projects as well as introduced innovative measures to enhance tram service while preserving its historical value, with a view to providing safer and more comfortable journeys for passengers.

"Members noted that, under the intense competition from other public transport modes, coupled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the relevant social distancing measures, HKT has experienced a substantial reduction in patronage and revenue amidst a challenging operating environment. In deliberating on the fare increase application, members have considered and balanced all relevant factors, including HKT's latest operation and financial situation, improvement projects being implemented and public acceptability.

"Similar to other fare increase applications, the TAC will submit its advice to the Government on the HKT fare increase application for consideration by the Chief Executive in Council," Professor Cheung added.

In addition, members were briefed by the Government on the way forward upon the expiry of the current franchises of Long Win Bus Company Limited, Citybus Limited (franchise for the Airport and North Lantau bus network) and

New World First Bus Services Limited in 2023, and the latest progress of the Government's discussions with the relevant bus companies.

Professor Cheung said, "The TAC noted that the Government's discussions with relevant bus companies have been progressing well to pursue the objectives of providing quality public bus services to citizens and developing sustainable bus networks under the new 10-year franchises. Members welcomed that relevant bus companies have taken on board new franchise conditions and commitments to further enhance service quality and bus safety despite the challenging operating environment. The TAC will make its recommendation to the Chief Executive in Council on the granting of the new franchises at an appropriate juncture."

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## [Hong Kong Customs conducts special operation to combat smuggling of alternative smoking products \(with photos\)](#)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs has conducted a special enforcement operation to combat smuggling of alternative smoking products (ASPs) at source since the Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 came into operation on April 30 this year. A total of 46 relevant cases have been successfully detected.

During the operation, Customs officers cracked down on 46 cases involving suspected ASPs at Hong Kong International Airport, Shenzhen Bay Control Point and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Point. The cases mainly involved bringing in ASPs through the passenger channel while the others involved smuggling relevant products into the territory through parcel and cargo channels. About 360 000 suspected ASPs with an estimated market value of more than \$10 million were seized by Customs officers.

Customs reminds members of the public that according to the Ordinance, any person who imports, promotes, manufactures, sells or possesses for commercial purposes ASPs, including electronic cigarette products, heated tobacco products, herbal cigarettes and any related devices, parts and accessories, commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Customs will work closely with the Department of Health (DH) and will also continue to closely monitor the smuggling situation involving ASPs and take appropriate enforcement action. At the same time, Customs will co-operate with the DH to strengthen the publicity efforts to remind members of

the public to comply with the new legislation on ASPs.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities involving ASPs to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)). They may call the DH at 2961 8823 for further enquiries and complaints relating to ASPs.



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## [Government makes “restriction-testing declaration” and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Oi Chiu House, Tin Oi Court, Tin Shui Wai](#)

The Government today (May 24) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation

(Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 5pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tin Shui Wai (i.e. Oi Chiu House, Tin Oi Court, Tin Shui Wai, excluding Tin Oi Court Management Office on G/F, see Annex) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at around 11am tomorrow (May 25). The operation may be extended depending on test results.

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. Having reviewed a basket of factors, including the viral load in sewage, the information of relevant positive cases, and other circumstantial factors, and conducted a risk assessment, the Government decided to make a 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 11.30pm today. Arrangements will be made for persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will make arrangement to facilitate specimen collection for people with impaired mobility. All persons in the "restricted area" who have tested positive in the past 14 days, including positive cases identified either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests that have been self-declared to the DH, are not required to undergo testing in this compulsory testing exercise.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around 11am tomorrow. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

According to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any

persons other than those specified above who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from May 18 to May 24, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before May 26, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.