

Grocery store owner convicted of operating money service without licence

â€‹The female owner of a grocery store was fined \$5,000 today (April 13) at Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts after being convicted of operating a money service without a valid licence.

Acting on information, Customs officers conducted an investigation in March last year and discovered the female owner had been operating remittance business at a grocery store in Tsz Wan Shan after her application for a Money Service Operator licence was refused. Therefore, she was suspected of operating a money service without a licence.

Under the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance, a person who wishes to operate a remittance and/or money changing service is required to apply for a licence from the Customs and Excise Department. Any person who operates a money service without a valid licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Customs reminds consumers to procure services from licensed money service operators. The register of licensees is accessible from the website of Customs' Money Service Operators Licensing System at eservices.customs.gov.hk/MSOS/wsrh/001s1?request_locale=en.

Members of the public may report any suspected unlicensed money service operation to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).