

Hong Kong Customs combats illicit cigarette activities (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs stepped up enforcement action against illicit cigarette activities between June and July and seized about 900 000 suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$2.5 million and a duty potential of about \$1.7 million across the territory.

During the operation, Customs officers detected 98 illicit cigarette cases including 32 cases of storage and distribution and 66 cases of peddling. Sixty four men and 28 women, aged between 20 and 85, were arrested and a private car suspected to be in connection with the case was detained.

Customs will continue to combat illicit cigarette activities at all fronts through a multi-pronged approach.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

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

