

Hong Kong Customs combats illicit cigarette activities (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (October 22) and today (October 23) seized a total of about 1 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$2.8 million and a duty potential of about \$1.9 million in Aberdeen and Man Kam To Control point respectively.

Customs officers yesterday detected a case of illicit cigarettes storage and distribution in Aberdeen and seized about 400 000 suspected illicit cigarettes in a sub-divided unit in the district. A 39-year-old man suspected to be in connection with the case was arrested.

Also, Customs officers today inspected an incoming truck declared as carrying assorted goods at Man Kam To Control Point. After inspection, Customs officers found about 600 000 suspected illicit cigarettes inside 72 carton boxes mix-loaded with other goods on the truck. The 57-year-old male driver was arrested and the truck was detained.

Investigation is ongoing.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

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).

