

Hong Kong Customs combats illicit cigarette activities (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs mounted a territory-wide anti-illicit cigarette operation codenamed "Net" from October 2 to October 10 and seized about 770 000 suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$2.1 million and a duty potential of about \$1.5 million in total.

During the operation, Customs detected a total of 50 illicit cigarettes cases and arrested 45 men and seven women, aged between 21 and 82.

The cases have been duly followed up.

Also, Customs officers today (October 12) intercepted a 51-year-old man in Chai Wan and found about 8 000 suspected illicit cigarettes in his possession. Later, Customs officers further seized about 53 000 suspected illicit cigarettes at a factory unit in the district. The estimated market value of the suspected illicit cigarettes seized is about \$160,000 with a duty potential of about \$120,000.

The 51-year-old man was arrested. Investigation is ongoing.

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 the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182, or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

