

Hong Kong Customs detects smuggling case involving a speedboat with goods valued at about \$18 million (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs on August 8 mounted an anti-smuggling operation in the vicinity of Tai O, Lantau Island, and detected a suspected smuggling case using a speedboat. A batch of suspected smuggled goods, with an estimated market value of about \$18 million, was seized.

Late that night, Customs officers conducted an anti-smuggling operation in the vicinity of Tai O and found several persons moving a batch of goods from a lorry onto four seven-seater cars. Also, some men were seen gathered at the seashore. Later, a suspicious speedboat was seen heading towards the seashore with its navigation lights off, and one of the seven-seater cars approached the seashore immediately. The driver of the seven-seater car and the above-mentioned persons quickly transferred the goods onto the speedboat using a slide, and were suspected of engaging in smuggling activities.

Customs officers immediately took action, and the above-mentioned persons and the seven-seater car driver swiftly jumped onto the speedboat and fled to Mainland waters.

During the operation, Customs officers seized about 97 cartons of suspected smuggled goods, including frozen Wagyu beef, dried shark fins and used tablet computers. A lorry and four seven-seater cars, all suspected to be involved in the case, were also detained.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs is the primary agency responsible for the suppression of smuggling activities and has all along been combating various smuggling activities proactively at the forefront. Customs will keep up its enforcement action and continue to fiercely combat sea smuggling activities through proactive risk management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, along with mounting targeted anti-smuggling operations at suitable times to land a solid blow against relevant activities.

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.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).

