

Hong Kong Customs detects two incoming passenger drug trafficking cases at airport (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs detected two incoming passenger drug trafficking cases at Hong Kong International Airport and seized a total of about 2.5 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$2.7 million over the past two days (May 22 and 23).

In the first case, Customs officers on May 22 intercepted at the airport a 42-year-old female passenger, who arrived in Hong Kong from Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, via Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Doha, Qatar. During Customs clearance, Customs officers found her to be suspicious, and suspected that she had dangerous drugs concealed inside her body cavity. The woman was then escorted to the hospital for examination.

Upon examination, Customs officers confirmed that foreign objects were concealed inside her body cavity on the same day. The woman was arrested immediately. As at 6pm today (May 24), the arrested woman has excreted 127 pellets of suspected cocaine weighing about 1kg in total. The estimated market value was about \$1.1 million.

In the second case, Customs officers yesterday intercepted at the airport a 68-year-old female passenger arriving in Hong Kong from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, via Doha, Qatar. During Customs clearance on her, Customs officers found about 1.5kg of suspected cocaine, with an estimated market value of about \$1.6 million, concealed inside the false compartments of her hand-carry baggage. The woman was subsequently arrested.

The arrested woman of the first case has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. The case will be brought up at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (May 25). For the second case, an investigation is ongoing.

Following the resumption of normal travel and exchanges with the Mainland and other parts of the world, the number of visitors to Hong Kong has also been increasing steadily. Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

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

