

Hong Kong Customs detects two smuggling cases involving ocean-going vessels (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs detected two suspected smuggling cases involving ocean-going vessels in July. A large batch of suspected smuggled goods with a total estimated market value of about \$80 million was seized.

Through intelligence analysis and risk assessment, Customs discovered that criminals intended to use ocean-going vessels to smuggle goods. Strategies were thus formulated, with two suspicious containers scheduled to depart from Hong Kong to the United States and one suspicious container scheduled to depart from Hong Kong to Korea selected for inspection on July 9 and 11 respectively.

Upon examination, Customs officers found a large batch of suspected smuggled goods, including refrigerants, perfumes and lighters, in the two containers destined for the United States. The two containers were declared as carrying "mat, bottle" and "storage bag, bottle" respectively. Also, a large batch of suspected smuggled electronic products, including touch screens, oximeters and electronic parts, was seized in the container departing for Korea declared as carrying "plastic gloves and other rubbers".

Investigations are ongoing. The likelihood of arrests is not ruled out.

Being a government department primarily responsible for tackling smuggling activities, Customs has long been combating various smuggling activities at the front line. Customs will keep up its enforcement action and continue to fiercely combat sea smuggling activities through proactive risk management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, with targeted anti-smuggling operations carried out at suitable times to disrupt these 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 upon conviction.

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).

