

Hong Kong Customs mounts operation against illicit heat-not-burn products (with photos)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs mounted an operation codenamed "Glacier" last week, aiming to combat smuggling of illicit heat-not-burn (HNB) products. Until yesterday (August 27), Customs arrested nine men aged between 27 and 60. About 440 000 suspected illicit HNB products with an estimated market value of about \$1.3 million and a duty potential of about \$800,000 were seized.

Through risk assessment, Customs officers intercepted four incoming passengers arriving from Quanzhou in Fujian and Japan at Hong Kong International Airport and seized about 140 000 suspected illicit HNB products from their personal baggage.

Also, Customs officers smashed four storage and distribution centres of illicit HNB products in Chek Lap Kok, Yau Ma Tei, Mong Kok and Kwun Tong. About 300 000 suspected illicit HNB products were seized.

Customs believes that an HNB product smuggling syndicate was smashed.

The "Glacier" operation is ongoing.

Customs reminds members of the public that under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO), tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. All HNB products containing tobacco in content are also dutiable goods subject to the control of the DCO. Any person who imports, possesses, sells or buys dutiable commodities without a valid licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may call the Customs' hotline at 2815 7711 to enquire whether a specific tobacco or smoking product is under the regulation of the DCO. They may also report any suspected violation of the DCO to Customs' 24-hour hotline at 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

