

# [Hong Kong Customs mounts operation to combat illicit cigarettes and seizes suspected illicit cigarettes \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (March 13) seized about 750 000 suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$2 million and a duty potential of about \$1.4 million at Man Kam To Control Point.

Customs officers intercepted an incoming truck declared as carrying assorted goods at Man Kam To Control Point yesterday. After inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes in 41 carton boxes mix-loaded with other goods on board the truck.

The 55-year-old male driver was arrested and the truck was detained. Investigation is ongoing.

Hong Kong Customs is also mounting a territory-wide anti-illicit cigarette operation codenamed "Net" starting from March with a view to combating illicit cigarette activities at all fronts through a multi-pronged approach.

As at today (March 14), Customs officers had detected a total of 31 illicit cigarettes cases during the operation. About 1.3 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$3.5 million and a duty potential of about \$2.5 million were seized. Thirty men and two women, aged between 22 and 75, were arrested.

Operation "Net" is ongoing.

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.

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 Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).

