

# Hong Kong Customs raids two suspected illicit cigarette storage centres (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (February 28) conducted anti-illicit cigarette operations in Yuen Long and Kwai Chung, and successfully cracked down on two suspected illicit cigarette storage centres. A total of about 2.9 million suspected illicit cigarettes with a total estimated market value of about \$13 million and a duty potential of about \$9.7 million were seized.

In the first case, Customs officers raided a suspected illicit cigarette storage centre in Yuen Kong San Tsuen, Yuen Long, yesterday afternoon and seized about 1.6 million suspected illicit cigarettes inside a metal hut. A 51-year-old men who claimed to be a driver and was suspected to be connected with the case was arrested.

In the second case, Customs officers on the evening of the same day further seized about 1.3 million suspected illicit cigarettes inside a logistics warehouse on Container Port Road South, Kwai Chung, successfully shutting down another suspected illicit cigarette storage centre. An investigation is ongoing. Customs will continue to trace the source of the illicit cigarettes, and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

The arrested person in the first case has been charged with "possession of goods to which the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance applies", and the case will be brought up at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on April 11.

Customs will continue its risk assessment and intelligence analysis for interception at source as well as through its multipronged enforcement strategy targeting storage, distribution and peddling to spare no effort in combating illicit cigarette activities.

Customs reminds members of the public that it is an offence to buy or sell illicit cigarettes. 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)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/)).

