

Hong Kong Customs reminds members of the public that illicit import of cannabis is criminal offence

The Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) reminds members of the public that illicit import of cannabis is a criminal offence.

A department spokesperson said today (November 13) that the C&ED attaches great importance to combating trafficking in dangerous drugs, and takes rigorous enforcement action in accordance with Hong Kong's laws. Noting that the recreational use of cannabis has recently been legalised in individual overseas jurisdictions, the C&ED reminds members of the public that cannabis is a dangerous controlled drug in Hong Kong. Illicit import of cannabis or any products that contains controlled cannabinoids (such as tetrahydro-cannabinol, or "THC") constitutes a criminal offence.

Cannabis and THC (a major cannabinoid present in cannabis plants) are dangerous drugs controlled under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134). Any products (including any food products and drinks) that contain cannabis or THC are also controlled under Cap. 134.

Under Cap. 134, trafficking in dangerous drugs, or illicitly importing to and exporting from Hong Kong, procuring, supplying, manufacturing, or dealing in or with dangerous drugs, constitutes a criminal offence. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment and a fine of \$5 million. Illicitly possessing, or smoking, inhaling, ingesting or injecting dangerous drugs is subject to a maximum penalty of imprisonment for seven years and a fine of \$1 million.

"Cannabis is addictive and can cause serious health harms. In some overseas jurisdictions, products containing cannabis or THC (such as food products and drinks) may be available for sale. Members of the public should pay attention to the packaging labels of the products concerned while making purchases in those jurisdictions as well as the relevant domestic legislation in relation to cannabis, so as to avoid breaching the law inadvertently. Members of the public must also note that it is a criminal offence under Cap. 134 to bring such products into Hong Kong," the spokesman said.

The C&ED closely monitors the trends concerning dangerous drugs in other places and implements appropriate strategies. Stringent law enforcement is imposed on passenger and cargo clearance, including air postal packets and express cargo, to effectively combat drug trafficking activities and interdict the flow of dangerous drugs into Hong Kong.

Customs also appeals members of the public to report any suspected illicit drug-related activities through C&ED's 24-hour telephone hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).