

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected duty-not-paid water pipe tobacco (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (August 20) seized about 2 400 kilograms of suspected duty-not-paid water pipe tobacco with an estimated market value of about \$6.4 million and a duty potential of about \$5.5 million at Hong Kong International Airport.

Through risk assessment, Customs officers inspected an air consignment, declared to be carrying molasses, arriving in Hong Kong from the United Arab Emirates via Singapore. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected duty-not-paid water pipe tobacco in 100 carton boxes.

An investigation 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 duty-not-paid tobacco 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 tobacco activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

