

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs mounted an anti-illicit cigarette operation in To Kwa Wan and Mong Kok from November 12 to yesterday (November 13). A total of about 180 000 suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$470,000 and a duty potential of about \$340,000 were seized.

Customs officers yesterday intercepted two men in To Kwa Wan and seized about 60 000 suspected illicit cigarettes from a light goods vehicle next to them. The two men, aged 36 and 38, were arrested. Customs officers later escorted one of the arrested men to an industrial unit in Kwun Tong where about 80 000 further suspected illicit cigarettes were seized.

In addition, Customs officers seized about 40 000 suspected illicit cigarettes from a shop in Mong Kok on November 12. Three men and three women, aged between 26 and 61, were arrested.

Investigations are ongoing.

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

