

## [Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes worth about \\$74 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs on May 4 and 5 seized a total of about 27 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$74 million and a duty potential of about \$51 million in two cases in Yuen Long and the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound respectively.

In the first case, Customs officers on May 4 intercepted a container truck in Kung Um Road, Yuen Long, and seized about 12 million suspected illicit cigarettes inside a 40-foot container. A 40-year-old man was arrested.

After a follow-up investigation, Customs officers on the next day searched a 20-foot container at a metal hut near Kung Um Road, Yuen Long, and further seized about 4.6 million suspected illicit cigarettes.

In the second case, through risk assessment, Customs officers on May 5 selected for inspection a 40-foot seaborne container, declared as carrying knitted fabric, arriving from Cambodia en route to the Philippines via Hong Kong in the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound. Upon inspection, Customs officers seized about 10 million suspected illicit cigarettes inside the container.

Investigations of the two above-mentioned cases are ongoing. Customs will continue to trace the source and flow of the illicit cigarettes. The likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

Customs will continue to combat illicit cigarette activities on all fronts through intelligence analysis.

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)).

