

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes worth over \\$63 million in two days \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 23 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$63 million and a duty potential of about \$44 million in Yuen Long and Tuen Mun on September 4 and yesterday (September 5). This is the sixth illicit cigarette case effected by Customs so far this year with seizures exceeding 10 million.

Customs officers intercepted a truck in Yuen Long on September 4 and seized about 1.3 million suspected illicit cigarettes. A male driver and a male delivery worker were arrested.

After investigation, Customs officers raided a suspected illicit cigarette storehouse in Tuen Mun on the same day. About 11 million suspected illicit cigarettes were seized at the open space, two trucks and a 40-foot container inside a metal shed. A man and a woman in the site were arrested.

Upon follow-up investigation, Customs officers inspected a 40-foot container placed in a metal hut in Yuen Long yesterday and further seized about 11 million suspected illicit cigarettes inside the container.

During the operation, Customs officers arrested three men and a woman, aged between 31 and 54. Three trucks, two trailers and two containers, which are suspected to be in connection with the case, were detained.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to combat illicit cigarette activities at all fronts through a multi-pronged approach.

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](tel:25456182) or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

