

Hong Kong Customs special operation seizes suspected illicit cigarettes for export worth about \$10 million (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs in a special operation to combat the export of illicit cigarettes conducted between September 7 and 12 detected five cases in Yuen Long and Kwai Chung, and seized a total of about 2.7 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$10 million and a duty potential of about \$6.8 million.

In the first case, through intelligence analysis, Customs officers on September 7 inspected an outbound cargo consignment at a logistics site in Yuen Long and seized about 1.4 million suspected illicit cigarettes.

Customs on September 12 detected the remaining four cases at a logistics site in Kwai Chung. Customs officers on that day inspected four batches of outbound cargo consignments there and seized a total of about 1.3 million suspected illicit cigarettes.

After preliminary investigations, Customs believes that the suspected illicit cigarettes seized in the above five cases would be exported to Australia.

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 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) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

香港海關
稅收罪案調查科
Revenue Crimes Investigation Bureau
Customs and Excise Department

