[Hong Kong Customs steps up enforcement action at boundary control points against illicit heat-not-burn products (with photos)](#)

Hong Kong Customs has mounted a special operation code-named "Tidal Wave", focusing on illicit heat-not-burn (HNB) products smuggled into Hong Kong, at the airport, seaport, land boundary and railway control points since January 1 this year. Until yesterday (April 14), Customs detected a total of 225 cases, arrested 195 persons and seized about 1.26 million suspected illicit HNB products with an estimated market value of about $3.6 million and a duty potential of about $2.4 million.

The "Tidal Wave" operation is ongoing.

On February 15 this year, the Government published in the Gazette the Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019, which aims to ban the import, manufacture, sale, distribution and advertisement of alternative smoking products, including HNB products.

A Customs spokesman said that the department has been concerned about the smuggling trend of HNB products and will continue its risk assessment and intelligence analysis strategy to step up enforcement against smuggling activities of such products through passenger and cargo channels.

With the imminent arrival of festive holidays, Customs will step up deployment for stringent enforcement.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO), tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. All HNB products containing tobacco in content are also dutiable goods subject to the control of the DCO. Any person who imports, possesses, sells or buys dutiable commodities without a valid licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of $1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may call Customs' hotline 2815 7711 to enquire whether a specific tobacco or smoking product is regulated by the DCO. They may also report any suspected violation of the DCO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).