

Man sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

A 56-year-old man was sentenced to immediate imprisonment for 14 days by the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (September 23) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap 599E) (the Regulation).

The man was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine twice on March 26 without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. He was charged with two counts of contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for 14 days for each of the two charges, which are to run concurrently.

Pursuant to the Regulation, starting from March 19, save for exempted persons, all persons arriving from countries or territories outside China would be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap 599C), starting from February 8, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will also be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the Regulation. As of today, a total of 46 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to three months or a fine of \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.