

Two incoming passengers convicted and jailed for possession of duty-not-paid cigarettes (with photo)

Two incoming male passengers were each sentenced to four months' imprisonment and a fine of \$1,000 at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts yesterday (September 11) for possession of duty-not-paid cigarettes and failing to declare to Customs Officers, in contravention of the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO).

Customs officers intercepted the two incoming male passengers, aged 33 and 23 respectively, at Hong Kong International Airport on September 9 and seized about 22 800 duty-not-paid cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$91,000 and a duty potential of about \$75,000 from their personal baggage. They were subsequently arrested.

Customs welcomes the sentence. The custodial sentence has imposed a considerable deterrent effect and reflects the seriousness of the offences. Customs reminds members of the public that under the DCO, tobacco products are dutiable goods to which DCO applies. Any person who deals with, possesses, sells or buys 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 the 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).

