

Two persons sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

Two men were sentenced by the magistrates' courts today (December 10) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) (the Regulation).

The first case involved a man aged 47, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Investigations revealed that he did not enter the place of quarantine after his entry into Hong Kong, and was intercepted by the Police in Tsuen Wan on April 4 upon receipt of a report. He was charged with contravening sections 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for two weeks.

The second case involved a man aged 36, who was a cross-boundary goods vehicle driver. He had earlier lost his driving licence in the Mainland, therefore he entered Hong Kong to re-apply for it. He was issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. His mainland colleague subsequently located his driving licence and brought it back to him in Hong Kong. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, the man left the place of quarantine on May 16 without obtaining permission by an authorised officer and planned to drive his goods vehicle back to the Mainland. He was stopped by an Immigration Officer at Lok Ma Chau Immigration Control Point. He was charged with contravening sections 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was fined \$10,000 by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts.

Pursuant to the Regulation, starting from February 8, save for exempted persons, 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 be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), starting from March 19, all persons arriving from countries or territories outside China would 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 80 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.