

Hong Kong Customs seizes about 9 million suspected illicit cigarettes (with photo)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs today (August 14) seized about 9 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$25 million and a duty potential of about \$17 million at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound.

Through intelligence analysis, Customs officers today selected for inspection a seaborne transshipment container, declared as carrying shopping carts, arriving from Vietnam and heading for Chile via Hong Kong. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes inside the container.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue its intelligence analysis and risk assessment for interception at source to combat illicit cigarette activities.

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.

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).



Hong Kong Customs alerts public on unsafe children's swimwear (with

photos)

Hong Kong Customs today (August 14) alerted members of the public to two unsafe models of children's swimwear sets and one unsafe model of children's swim trunks. Test results indicated that the cords of the swimwear sets and the drawstring of the swim trunks could pose strangulation and injury hazards to children. The public is advised not to let children wear these swimsuits to ensure their safety.

Customs officers earlier conducted a spot check operation and test-bought children's swimwear for safety testing from retailers of sporting goods and children's clothing. An examination by the Government Laboratory revealed that the cords near the neck part of two children's swimwear sets were found to pose a risk of strangulation while the waist drawstring of a pair of children's swim trunks was too long and could cause injury by becoming tangled with other objects. All three models of swimwear have not complied with the relevant safety standard, in contravention of the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance.

During the operation, Customs seized 11 pieces of the suspected unsafe children's swim trunks from a sporting goods retailer and the office of its supplier. The other two models of children's swimwear sets have not been found.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs reminds parents that safety of children should be the paramount concern when purchasing swimwear and they should observe the following safety tips:

- Pay attention to the style and design as well as the structure of the swimwear to see if there is any potential hazard;
- Beware of whether the cords are too loose when purchasing swimsuits with neck cords;
- Beware of whether the drawstrings are too long when purchasing swim trunks with waist drawstrings; and
- Choose a suitable size. Children should not wear swimsuits that are too tight or too loose.

Customs attaches great concern to consumer interests and regularly conducts spot checks and safety tests on consumer goods to ensure that they are reasonably safe for use by consumers.

Under the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance, it is an offence to supply, manufacture or import consumer goods unless the goods comply with the general safety requirements for consumer goods. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent convictions.

Members of the public with information relating to unsafe consumer goods may make a report via Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Immigration Department service arrangements

In light of the extension of the special work arrangements for government departments, the Immigration Department (ImmD) announced today (August 14) the provision of emergency and essential services to members of the public from August 17 to 23 as follows:

Types of services	Sections/offices	Addresses	Service available
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Travel documents	Travel Documents and Nationality (Application) Section and Travel Documents (Issue) Section	4/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai	Urgent application and collection of Hong Kong travel documents only. (For enquiries regarding travel documents, please call 2852 3045 during working hours.)
	West Kowloon Branch Office	G/F, 28 Kimberley Street, Tsim Sha Tsui	
	Yuen Long Branch Office	1/F, Yuen Long Government Offices	
Identity cards	Hong Kong Registration of Persons Office	8/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai	Replacement of identity cards only. (For enquiries regarding identity cards, please call 3521 6565 during working hours.)
	Kowloon Registration of Persons Office	3/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices	
	Yuen Long Registration of Persons Office	1/F, Yuen Long Government Offices	

Visa and extension of stay	Foreign Domestic Helpers Section	3/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai	<p>Accept only the urgent applications of extension of stay by drop-in (including those with appointment bookings). Applicants must provide a local telephone number for contacts (preferably a mobile phone number). The respective offices will contact them for follow-up procedures afterwards.</p> <p>(For enquiries regarding visa and extension of stay applications, please call 3521 1840 during working hours.)</p>
	Extension Section	5/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai	
	Quality Migrants and Mainland Residents Section	6/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai	
	Other Visas and Permits Section	7/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai	
	West Kowloon Branch Office	G/F, 28 Kimberley Street, Tsim Sha Tsui	
	Yuen Long Branch Office	1/F, Yuen Long Government Offices	
Marriage registration	All Marriage Registries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admiralty • City Hall • Cotton Tree Drive • Tsim Sha Tsui • Sha Tin • Tuen Mun 	<p>Giving a Notice of Intended Marriage and conducting marriage ceremonies at Marriage Registries only.</p> <p>(Please also note the Government's latest requirement on the number of persons allowed in group gatherings.)</p>
Deaths registration	The Births and Deaths General Register Office	3/F, Low Block, Queensway Government Offices	Registration of death only.
	Hong Kong Island Deaths Registry	18/F, Wu Chung House, Wan Chai	
	Kowloon Deaths Registry	1/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices	

To avoid gathering of crowds, the ImmD appeals to applicants to submit applications through its homepage, mobile application, by post or drop-in. As the ImmD only provides emergency and essential services, applicants who are required to visit its offices for urgent applications should expect a longer waiting time. In accordance with the latest regulations implemented by the Government, persons entering the premises of the ImmD are required to wear masks.

The above-mentioned offices will provide services during normal opening hours. For detailed opening hours of individual offices, please refer to the ImmD's homepage or mobile application. The hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit on (852) 1868 will continue to operate as normal to provide practicable assistance for Hong Kong residents in distress outside Hong Kong. Meanwhile, other ImmD offices, including all Smart Identity Card Replacement Centres and other public services, will continue to remain closed and suspended. For enquiries regarding births registration, please call 2867 2785 during office hours.

In addition, according to the existing arrangements by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, except for the Hong Kong International Airport, Shenzhen Bay and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Points, passenger immigration clearance services in other immigration control points will remain suspended until further notice. Moreover, the operating hours of the passenger clearance services at the Shenzhen Bay and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Points have been adjusted as follows with effect from April 3 and 5 respectively until further notice:

Shenzhen Bay Control Point:

- Operating hours of all passenger clearance services have been adjusted to 10am to 8pm daily while the operating hours for cargo clearance will remain unchanged (i.e. from 6.30am to midnight daily).

Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Point:

- Operating hours of the Passenger Clearance Building (i.e. for passengers crossing the boundary by cross-boundary coaches and shuttle buses) have been adjusted to 10am to 8pm daily; and
- Operating hours of the clearance for private cars have been adjusted to 6am to 10pm daily while the operating hours for cargo clearance will remain in operation 24 hours daily.

Any changes to the above arrangements will be announced in due course. For enquiries, please contact the ImmD by calling the enquiry hotline from 8.45am to 5.15pm Monday to Friday on 2824 6111 or by email to enquiry@immd.gov.hk.

Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital announces passing away of COVID-19 patient

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) today (August 14) announced that a 69-year-old male patient confirmed with COVID-19 (case number: 3782) passed away today.

The patient with chronic disease was admitted to PYNEH on July 30 due to shortness of breath. His condition deteriorated on August 5 and he was transferred to the Intensive Care Unit. His condition continued to deteriorate and he eventually succumbed at 4.58pm today.

The Hospital was saddened about the passing away of the patient and would offer necessary assistance to his family members.

Including the above case, 67 COVID-19 patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

Housing Authority announces special arrangements for public services

The following press release is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

In response to the Government's announcement that special work arrangements for government employees will be extended until August 23, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) announced today (August 14) that the following arrangements will be implemented next week until August 23 (Sunday) to provide emergency and essential services to members of the public:

- All Estate Management Offices (EMOs) of public housing estates will be open from 10am to 1pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday over this period to provide essential management services for public housing estates and handle cases with prior appointments. For enquiries outside the opening hours or emergency services, residents may call the contact telephone numbers provided by the respective EMOs, and staff will render assistance as much as practicable. The EMOs' shroff offices will be

closed, and residents are advised to heed the notices placed at the EMOs. They can also pay rent at more than 1 000 locations, such as convenience stores and supermarkets. They may also make payments via the Payment by Phone Service (PPS). For details, please browse the following website:

www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/public-housing/rent-related-matters/rent-payment-methods/index.html;

- The Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) Sales Unit at the HA Customer Service Centre in Lok Fu, the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme Sales Unit in Kwun Tong and other offices of related services will be temporarily closed;
- The White Form Secondary Market Scheme Unit (WSM) at the HA Customer Service Centre in Lok Fu and the HOS Secondary Market Scheme Unit (SMS) in Lung Cheung Office Block, Wong Tai Sin, will be open from 10am to 1pm on Monday and Wednesday over this period to receive applications for the Letter of Nomination under the WSM and the SMS;
- The Home Assistance Loan Unit (HALU) in Lung Cheung Office Block, Wong Tai Sin, will provide drop-in boxes to receive submissions in relation to matters under the Home Purchase Loan Scheme and the Home Assistance Loan Scheme. Applicants can place their submissions in the drop-in box located at the HALU from 10am to 1pm on Monday and Wednesday over this period. The HALU will issue receipts/acknowledgements of the submissions and take follow-up action in due course;
- All public rental housing application offices including the Lok Fu Customer Service Centre Office and the Sham Shui Po Housing Information Centre will be closed. All detailed vetting interviews will also be suspended;
- The Clearance Housing office and Redevelopment Sub-section offices (Pak Tin and Mei Tung) as well as the Public Housing Resources Management Sub-section will also be closed;
- The Shroff Office on the Ground Floor of the HA Headquarters will be open from 2pm to 4.30pm from Monday to Friday over this period to provide limited services. All payment collection services (including premium payments by Subsidised Sale Flats Scheme owners to enable them to complete transactions of their flats), with the exception of rental

payment collection, will be in operation; and

- Promotion activities in shopping centres under the HA will be suspended.

In addition, due to the above work arrangements, the HA may not be able to reply to public enquiries, requests or complaints in a timely manner. For enquiries, please call the HA hotline on 2712 2712.