

Hong Kong Customs alerts public on unsafe stuffed toy (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (April 9) alerted members of the public to an unsafe model of a stuffed toy. The public is advised not to let children play with this toy to ensure their safety. Test results indicated that the elastic loop of the toy could pose suffocation risks to children.

Customs officers earlier conducted a test-buy operation on six models of Easter toys from retailers in different districts for safety testing. Test results revealed that one stuffed toy model would pose a risk of suffocation to children if their neck became entangled with the toy's elastic loop after elongation.

Customs officers later conducted an operation and seized a total of 280 pieces of this model of suspected unsafe stuffed toy from nine branches of a chain toy store.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs reminds members of the public to observe the following safety tips when purchasing toys:

- Pay attention to age recommendations shown on labels;
- Pay attention to and follow the instructions associated with the toys;
- Pay attention to whether the loops of the toys are too long to avoid suffocation caused by young children's neck becoming entangled with the loops;
- Beware of whether the small parts of toys (e.g. the eyes of stuffed toys) are easily detachable. Detached small parts may block a child's throat and lead to suffocation if swallowed;
- Check the structure of the toys to see, for example, whether they have a fragile structure, hidden sharp points, rough surfaces, sharp edges or gaps that may pinch children's fingers;
- Throw away plastic packages of toys and children's products to avoid children being suffocated; and
- Stop children from playing with the toys immediately if any damage is observed.

Customs is committed to the protection of consumer interests and regularly conducts spot checks and safety tests on toys and children's products to ensure that they are reasonably safe for use by consumers.

Under the Toys and Children's Products Safety Ordinance, it is an offence to import, manufacture or supply toys for local consumption unless the toys comply with prescribed safety standards. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent conviction.

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

