

# Hong Kong Customs combats suspected illicit cigarette distribution activities in Sham Shui Po (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs today (February 17) conducted an anti-illicit cigarette operation in Sham Shui Po to fight against criminals involved in illicit cigarettes distribution in the district. About 5 500 suspected illicit cigarettes, with an estimated market value of about \$24,000 and a duty potential of about \$18,000, were seized.

This afternoon, Customs intercepted a suspicious non-local man in Pei Ho Street, Sham Shui Po. About 4 500 suspected illicit cigarettes were found from two nylon bags carried by him. The 54-year-old man, who claimed to be unemployed, was immediately arrested.

Subsequently, Customs officers conducted further investigation in nearby illicit cigarettes black spots and further seized about 1 000 suspected illicit cigarettes, thereby disrupting relevant distribution activities.

The arrested man was charged with "dealing with goods to which the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance applies" and will appear at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (February 18).

Customs will continue its risk assessment and intelligence analysis for interception at source as well as through its multipronged enforcement strategy targeting storage, distribution and peddling to spare no effort in combating illicit cigarette activities.

Customs stresses that it is an offence to buy or sell illicit cigarettes. Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying 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 Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/)).

