

Hong Kong Customs conducts interdepartmental anti-illicit cigarette publicity activities in Wong Tai Sin District (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs conducted a joint anti-illicit cigarette publicity campaign with members of the Wong Tai Sin District Council, the Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) of the Department of Health (DH), the Police and the Housing Department (HD) at Lok Fu Estate in Wong Tai Sin today (June 5).

Customs officers conducted inspections and carried out publicity at the estate to promote anti-illicit cigarette messages and introduce the Government's proposal to amend the existing legislation to increase penalties for illicit cigarette-related offences to security personnel, residents and traders, as well as to encourage them to report suspected illicit cigarette trading activities to Customs.

If public rental housing units are found to be involved in illicit cigarette crimes, Customs will notify the HD for follow-up action after the conclusion of court proceedings. Customs reminds members of the public, especially young people, not to buy or sell illicit cigarettes or distribute illicit cigarette leaflets to avoid creating a criminal record that could affect their future.

Customs will continue to closely monitor the situation of illicit cigarette activities at control points and in the city, and flexibly deploy its resources to clamp down on the crime. Also, Customs will strengthen publicity and education to remind the public not to take part in unlawful acts related to 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) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

In accordance with the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance (Cap. 371), no person shall distribute any smoking product advertisement (including any promotional leaflets). Any person who contravenes the regulation is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000. Members of the public may report any suspected activities of illicit cigarette leaflet distribution to TACO of the DH's hotline 2961 8823.

