

Hong Kong Customs detects largest illicit cigarette case in past three years (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (November 21) seized about 11.4 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$31 million and a duty potential of about \$21 million in Tai Po. This is the largest illicit cigarette case detected by Customs in the past three years.

During an anti-illicit cigarette operation in Tai Po this morning, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes from a metal shed and arrested three men aged between 28 and 49.

Investigation is ongoing.

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.

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 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

