

## Hong Kong Customs raids two suspected illicit cigarette storage centres and detects one case involving illicit cigarette distribution vehicle (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs today (October 16) conducted anti-illicit cigarette operations in Hung Hom, Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin, shutting down two suspected illicit cigarette storage centres and detecting a case involving an illicit cigarette distribution vehicle. A total of about 183 000 suspected illicit cigarettes, with a total estimated market value of about \$820,000 and a duty potential of about \$600,000, were seized. Three persons suspected to be connected with the cases were arrested.

In the first case, Customs officers raided a residential unit on Wu Kwong Street, Hung Hom, this afternoon and seized about 120 000 suspected illicit cigarettes therein. A 50-year-old woman who claimed to be unemployed was arrested.

In the second case, Customs seized about 54 000 suspected illicit cigarettes from a residential unit on Hong Ning Road, Kwun Tong, this afternoon. A 47-year-old woman who claimed to be a construction worker was arrested.

In the third case, Customs officers intercepted a private car on the roadside in Choi Wan Estate, Wong Tai Sin, this evening. Upon inspection, about 9 000 suspected illicit cigarettes were seized inside the vehicle and a man, aged 30 and claiming to be a worker, was arrested.

Investigations of the three cases are ongoing.

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 reminds members of the public 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 1820 80 80 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/)).

