

Hong Kong Customs seizes smuggled electronic goods worth about \$500 million (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs mounted a special operation codenamed "Sea Guardian" in August and September, with three suspected smuggling cases involving ocean-going vessels detected. A large batch of suspected smuggled electronic goods with a total estimated market value of about \$500 million was seized.

Through intelligence analysis and risk assessment, Customs, suspecting that criminals were using ocean-going vessels to smuggle goods, planned an enforcement operation and identified three suspicious containers scheduled to depart from Hong Kong for Malaysia, as well as a container scheduled to be shipped to Tianjin, via ocean-going vessels for inspection.

Customs inspected the four containers that were declared as carrying aluminium materials, aluminium alloys and citric acid respectively on August 20, September 3 and September 9. Upon the examinations, Customs officers found large batches of suspected smuggled electronic goods, including central processing units, display cards, circuit boards and random-access memory in the containers.

An investigation is ongoing. The likelihood of arrests is not ruled out.

Being a government department primarily responsible for tackling smuggling activities, Customs has long been combating various smuggling activities at the forefront. Customs will keep up its enforcement action and continue to strategically combat sea smuggling activities through proactive risk management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, and carry out targeted anti-smuggling operations at suitable times to disrupt relevant crimes.

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 upon conviction.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

