

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected duty-not-paid water pipe tobacco (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (April 10) seized about 20 000 kilograms of suspected duty-not-paid water pipe tobacco with an estimated market value of about \$11 million and a duty potential of about \$45 million at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound.

Through risk assessment, Customs officers inspected a container arriving in Hong Kong from Bulgaria declared to be carrying daily necessities. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected duty-not-paid water pipe tobacco in the container.

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 duty-not-paid tobacco 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 tobacco activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

