

# Hong Kong Customs spares no effort to combat illegal import and sale for electronic cigarette oil containing nicotine or cannabidiol (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs has conducted a series of enforcement actions against the illegal import and sale of electronic cigarette oil containing Part 1 poisons since early this year. As of yesterday (July 2), Customs has detected 39 relevant cases in total and seized items suspected to be connected with the cases worth about \$2.5 million. Thirty-one persons have been arrested.

During the operation, Customs has detected 29 illegal import and 10 illegal sale cases of electronic cigarette oil containing nicotine or cannabidiol. Eighteen men and 13 women, aged between 20 and 52, including cross-boundary lorry drivers, shop proprietors and salespersons, have been arrested.

Customs has all along striven to combat the illegal import and sale of electronic cigarette oil containing nicotine or cannabidiol. The department will continue its action by actively pursuing risk-management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, along with mounting targeted enforcement operations at suitable times and maintaining close co-operation in its intelligence exchanges with local and overseas law enforcement agencies in order to step up intercepting the inflow of relevant smuggled electronic cigarette oil through air cargo, postal parcel and express courier channels to Hong Kong at source.

With a view to expanding enforcement efforts, Customs will also strengthen its deployments to conduct follow-up investigations and raid retail shops involved in the illegal sale of relevant products of electronic cigarette oil and land a solid blow against relevant activities.

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. As well, any person who imports pharmaceutical products without a valid import licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years.

According to the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance, nicotine and cannabidiol are Part 1 poisons which can only be sold at pharmacies under the supervision of a registered pharmacist. The illegal sale and possession of Part 1 poisons are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities or illegal sale of alternative smoking products to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545

6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account  
([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).

