

Incoming passenger convicted and jailed for dealing with duty-not-paid cigarettes (with photo)

An incoming male passenger was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and fined at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts yesterday (March 8) for dealing with duty-not-paid cigarettes and failing to declare to Customs Officers, in contravention of the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO).

Customs officers intercepted the 41-year-old incoming male passenger at Hong Kong International Airport on March 7 and seized about 41 400 duty-not-paid cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$186,000 and a duty potential of about \$136,000 from his personal baggage. He was subsequently arrested.

Customs welcomes the sentence. The custodial sentence has imposed a considerable deterrent effect and reflects the seriousness of the offences. Customs reminds members of the public that under the DCO, tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. Any person who deals with, possesses, sells or buys 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 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

