

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

An incoming female passenger was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with a fine at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (February 13) for possessing duty-not-paid cigarettes and for failing to declare to Customs Officers, in contravention of the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO).

Customs officers intercepted the incoming 42-year-old female passenger at the Lo Wu Control Point on January 23 and seized about 18 000 duty-not-paid cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$74,000 and a duty potential of about \$60,000 from her personal baggage. The passenger 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/en).

