

Mastermind and member of smuggling syndicate jailed for conspiracy to smuggle

One mastermind and one member of a smuggling syndicate were sentenced to 16 and 18 months' imprisonment at the District Court today (March 27) following conviction yesterday (March 26) for conspiracy to smuggle, in contravention of the Import and Export Ordinance (IEO).

Hong Kong Customs in June 2016 for the first time smashed a suspected carousel-smuggling syndicate that made use of false compartments in trailers of cross-boundary container trucks for two-way smuggling of precious metal and electronics products. During the operation, about 700 kilograms of silver and a large haul of electronic products, including computer central processing units, mobile phones and computer tablets with a total value of about \$6.6 million, were seized.

Customs welcomes the verdict. The sentences have a strong deterrent effect on smuggling activities and the case is significant in the context of Customs enforcement against smuggling syndicates.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the IEO, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

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).