

One man convicted and jailed for handling duty-not-paid cigarettes (with photo)

A man was sentenced to 84 days' imprisonment and fined \$4,000 at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (May 19) for handling duty-not-paid cigarettes, in contravention of the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO).

Customs officers intercepted a 63-year-old man who was pushing a bike for inspection at the Chung Ying Street Checkpoint in Sha Tau Kok on February 10. A total of 7 200 duty-not-paid cigarettes, with an estimated market value of about \$28,000 and a duty potential of about \$23,000, were seized from the nylon bag on the bike.

Customs welcomes the sentence. The custodial sentence has imposed a considerable deterrent effect and reflects the seriousness of the offences.

Under the DCO, tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. Any person who imports, 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/).

