

Regional workshop on anti-money laundering co-organised by Hong Kong Customs and University of Hong Kong concludes (with photos)

The four-day Regional Workshop on AML Frameworks: Tackling Traditional and Modern Challenges in the Digital Age (Workshop), co-organised by Hong Kong Customs and the University of Hong Kong (HKU), started on June 9 and concluded today (June 12). This Workshop brought together over 60 participants from customs administrations, government agencies, international organisations, law enforcement agencies and academia across Hong Kong and the Asia-Pacific (A/P) region.

Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with HKU at the International Forum on Combating Money Laundering and Transnational Organized Crimes in December last year, the Workshop was held to further strengthen Customs' capacity in anti-money laundering (AML) enforcement with particular focus on risks and trends of virtual assets.

In his closing remarks today, the Assistant Commissioner of Customs and Excise (Intelligence and Investigation), Mr Wong Ho-yan, highlighted the Workshop's success in enriching knowledge, fostering regional co-operation, and building critical connections among law enforcement agencies, academia, and industry. He reaffirmed that adaptability, international collaboration and capacity building were crucial to mitigating the risks of financial crimes. Participants should work on the groundwork laid for closer regional partnerships by the Workshop to promote intelligence sharing and support cross-boundary investigations and enforcement co-operation.

The Dean of Engineering of HKU, Professor David Srolovitz, emphasised the timeliness of this Workshop in the age of rapid digital transformation and the importance of uniting academia, technology developers, law enforcement authorities, government, and the financial industry to address the complexities of financial crimes today. HKU Engineering, he said, remains dedicated to driving innovation and education to empower professionals to create a secure and transparent financial future.

The Workshop featured a comprehensive programme with leading experts and practitioners delivering lectures on a wide range of topics including AML strategies and emerging typologies, regulation of virtual assets, crypto-related crime investigations, application of regtech in financial crime prevention, and international co-operation in AML/counter-terrorist financing.

As the World Customs Organization (WCO) Vice-Chair for the A/P region and the WCO Regional Training Centre in the A/P region, Hong Kong Customs

strives to connect with local and overseas law enforcement agencies to foster knowledge exchanges and capacity building in AML, contributing to a safer and more resilient financial environment across the A/P region.

