

First successful co-operation between Hong Kong Customs and FSD in working-dog breeding (with photos)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs and the Fire Services Department (FSD) have co-operated for the first time in a canine breeding programme, having successfully bred six Springer Spaniel puppies on February 12 this year (the first day of the Lunar New Year). This result is of great significance to not only assist the two departments in securing a stable source of working dogs, but also to facilitate the long-term development of both working-dog units.

Customs has always been committed to enhancing the quality of detector dogs and sustaining a stable supply. Apart from the successful self-breeding of six Labrador puppies last July, Customs has been exploring co-operation with local or overseas organisations in canine breeding. Customs joined hands with the Correctional Services Department and the Hong Kong Police Force in 2016 and 2019 respectively in working-dog breeding. This year the department co-operated with other disciplinary forces again and teamed up with the FSD to breed dogs for the first time.

The Deputy Head of Land Boundary Command (Customs Canine Force), Ms Gladys Ma, said at a press conference today (April 23) that the co-operative canine breeding programme with the theme "Together, we incubate the future" symbolises the injection of new blood into the dog teams of both departments, and the inheritance of professionalism in Customs detector dogs' law enforcement and FSD rescue dogs' commitment to serve the community. Senior Station Officer (Technical Rescue) of the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy Mr Eric Law said that Customs and the FSD also shared the experience in canine breeding and training to help enhance the working efficiency of dog handlers and working dogs, which was beneficial to the development of the two working dog units.

For this time, the English Springer Spaniel was chosen as the breed dog given its strong sniff sense and high obedience. An FSD rescue dog was chosen to become the father dog, while a Customs drug detector dog become the mother dog. Customs officers have taken full charge of duties, from taking care of the mother dog, to the birth, feeding and early training of the puppies. Representatives from the FSD were also sent to provide support and gain experience during the process.

Being the first batch of Springer Spaniels to be born at the Breeding Centre of Customs Canine Force at Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Base, the six puppies were born on the first day of the Lunar New Year. They are named in order of their age as Farris, Uma, Taco, Umi, Raisa and Effie, with "FUTURE" as the acronym, which has the implied meaning that they are the new generation of dog teams bred by Customs and the FSD. It is hoped that they will continue to inherit their mission and create a bright future.

The puppies will undergo regular training for 10 to 12 weeks when they reach 1 year old, and will officially perform duties after passing the examinations. Four of them will perform drug, explosive and cash detection for Customs while the other two will join the Search and Rescue Dog Team of the FSD to assist in mountain rescues as well as urban search and rescue missions.

The consecutive births of self-bred working dogs have proven the professionalism and determination of Customs in canine breeding and puppy nurturing. Customs will continue to explore different kinds of co-operation programmes to proactively develop detector dog management as a professional branch for the department in a bid to assist in upgrading its enforcement efficiency.





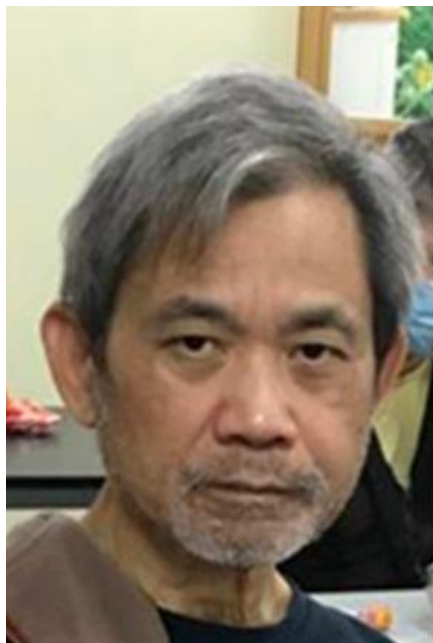
[Appeal for information on missing man in Mong Kok \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (April 23) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Mong Kok.

Chan Wing-hung, aged 65, went missing after he was last seen on Canton Road on April 21 night. His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.7 metres tall, 66 kilograms in weight and of medium build. He has a pointed face with yellow complexion and short grayish-white hair. He was last seen wearing a brown shirt, dark gray shorts and dark-coloured shoes.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Kowloon West on 3661 8038 or 9020 6542 or email to rmpu-kw@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes worth about \\$44 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (April 22) seized about 16 million suspected illicit cigarettes in Yuen Long with an estimated market value of about \$44 million and a duty potential of about \$30 million.

During an anti-illicit cigarette operation conducted in Pat Heung, Yuen Long, yesterday evening, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes inside a fenced area and a container. Seven men, aged between 23 and 45, suspected to be in connection with the case were arrested. Customs believes that a suspected illicit cigarette storehouse was raided during the operation.

An investigation is ongoing. Customs will continue to trace the source and the flow of the illicit cigarettes. The likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

Customs has so far seized about 150 million suspected illicit cigarettes this year, a figure that is about 75 per cent of last year's total seizure amount.

Customs will continue its multi-pronged enforcement approach to combat illicit cigarette activities on all fronts, including cross-boundary smuggling, storage and distribution, as well as peddling of illicit cigarettes.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying 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 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Employer sentenced to immediate imprisonment for default on award of Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board](#)

An employer was prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for contravening the Employment Ordinance (EO) by failing to pay an employee the awarded sum of the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board (MECAB). The employer was convicted earlier at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts and sentenced to two months' immediate imprisonment today (April 23). The employer was also ordered to pay an outstanding sum of \$2,600 via the court to the employee.

The employer failed to pay an employee the awarded sum of \$2,600 within 14 days after the date set by the MECAB in accordance with the requirement of the EO.

"The judgment will disseminate a strong message to all employers that they have to pay employees the awarded sums of the MECAB or the Labour Tribunal in accordance with the EO," a spokesman for the LD said.

"The LD will not tolerate these offences and will spare no effort in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the spokesman added.

Red tide sighted

A red tide was sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (April 23).

The red tide was spotted by a member of the public and a mariculturist at Tolo Harbour, including the Yim Tin Tsai Fish Culture Zone today. The red tide persists and no associated fish deaths have been reported as at today.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Noctiluca scintillans* and *Karenia longicanalis*. The former is common in Hong Kong waters while the latter is not. Both algae are non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at the fish culture zones of Yim Tin Tsai, Yim Tin Tsai (East), Yung Shue Au and Lo Fu Wat to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue monitoring red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.