

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes worth about \\$4.7 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs today (April 14) seized about 1.7 million suspected illicit cigarettes in Fanling, with an estimated market value of about \$4.7 million and a duty potential of about \$3.2 million.

During an anti-illicit cigarette operation conducted in Fanling during the small hours today, Customs officers intercepted a truck and seized the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes. Two men including the truck driver, aged 25 and 26, were arrested. The truck, which was suspected to be used for illicit cigarette distribution, has been detained.

An investigation is ongoing.

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

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).



[Red flag at Lido Beach and Casam Beach Lowered](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (April 14) that the Environmental Protection Department has classified the water quality at Lido Beach in Tsuen Wan District as Grade 2, which means the water quality has improved and the beach is suitable for swimming. The red flag at Lido Beach and Casam Beach has been lowered.

The red flag was hoisted at Lido Beach earlier due to the water quality being classified as Grade 4 and unsuitable for swimming.

[Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Hungary and Germany suspended](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (April 14) that in view of a notification from the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Hajdú-Bihar County in Hungary, and notifications from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N8 avian influenza in Mittelsachsen, Vogtlandkreis and Meißen of State of Sachsen; Schwandorf, Kulmbach, Würzburg, Erding and Ebersberg of State of Bayern; and Stormarn, Plön and Rendsburg-Eckernförde of State of Schleswig-Holstein in Germany, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that Hong Kong has currently established a protocol with Hungary for the import of poultry meat but not for poultry eggs. According to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 1 030 tonnes of frozen poultry meat from Hungary, and about 3 900 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 1.41 million poultry eggs from Germany last year.

"The CFS has contacted the Hungarian and German authorities over the issues and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

Analytical accounts of the Exchange Fund

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) released today (April 14) the key analytical accounts of the Exchange Fund at the end of March 2021.

Foreign assets, representing the external assets of the Exchange Fund, decreased during the month by HK\$26.9 billion to HK\$4,016.5 billion.

The Monetary Base, comprising Certificates of Indebtedness, Government-issued currency notes and coins in circulation, the balance of the banking system and Exchange Fund Bills and Notes issued, amounted to HK\$2,107.9 billion.

Claims on the private sector in Hong Kong amounted to HK\$224.7 billion.

The analytical accounts of the Exchange Fund are released in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) and are referred to as the Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank under SDDS (Annex).

At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of April 2021, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

April 9 (Issued)	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
April 14	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
April 30	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity

Labour Department investigates fatal work accident in Kai Tak

The Labour Department (LD) is investigating a fatal work accident that happened in Kai Tak this afternoon (April 14) in which a man died.

The LD immediately deployed staff to the scene upon receiving a report of the accident, and is now conducting an investigation to look into its cause.