

Two incoming passengers convicted and jailed for dealing with and possessing duty-not-paid cigarettes (with photo)

Two incoming male passengers were sentenced to four months' imprisonment, and three months' imprisonment with a fine, respectively, at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today (February 11) for dealing with and possessing duty-not-paid cigarettes, and for failing to declare to Customs Officers, in contravention of the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO).

Customs officers intercepted the two incoming male passengers, aged 29 and 26, at Hong Kong International Airport yesterday (February 10). About 11 400 duty-not-paid cigarettes, with an estimated market value of about \$47,000 and a duty potential of about \$38,000, and 8 600 duty-not-paid cigarettes, with an estimated market value of about \$35,000 and a duty potential of about \$28,000, were seized respectively from their personal baggage. They were subsequently arrested.

Customs welcomes the sentence. The custodial sentence has imposed a considerable deterrent effect and reflects the seriousness of the offences. Customs reminds members of the public that under the DCO, tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. Any person who 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/).

