



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS 新加坡关税局 KASTAM SINGAPURA சிங்கப்பூர் கங்கத்துறை

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **More vehicles involved in cross-border smuggling of contraband cigarettes seized in 2014**

Singapore Customs seized a total of 243 vehicles that were involved in the smuggling of contraband cigarettes at the Woodlands and Tuas checkpoints in 2014.

This is the largest number of vehicles seized since 2009.

A total of 1.1 million packets of contraband cigarettes, valued at over \$11 million, were recovered from these vehicles. They were concealed in various modified compartments of the vehicles such as the floorboards, rooftop compartments and fuel tanks.





Contraband cigarettes hidden in the modified floorboard (top) and fuel tank (bottom) of a seized vehicle.

In one of these cases, a Malaysian man, Koi Kah Wei, 21, was caught for attempting to smuggle 1,048 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes in his vehicle at the Tuas Checkpoint. Koi hid the cigarettes in the modified CNG and fuel tanks of the car. The duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to more than \$8,900. Investigations revealed that Koi would be paid RM500 if he succeeded in smuggling the cigarettes into Singapore. Koi was sentenced to three months' jail on 18 June 2014 by the State Courts. The car was also forfeited.



Packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes uncovered from a modified CNG tank of the car driven by Koi.

In another case, a Malaysian, Jayamohan Mohan, 29, was sentenced by the State Courts on 5 June 2014 to 18 months' jail for attempting to smuggle 11,900 packets of contraband cigarettes into Singapore via the Woodlands Checkpoint. The cigarettes were hidden in a modified roof-top compartment of the bus he was driving. Court proceedings are currently ongoing for the forfeiture of the bus.



Duty-unpaid cigarettes hidden in a modified rooftop compartment of the bus driven by Mohan.

“We would like to advise those who may be tempted to smuggle contraband cigarettes not to do it as it is not worth it,” said David Foo, Head of Special Investigation Branch (新加坡关税局缉私处处长符庆元). “All offenders will be dealt with severely. Vehicles used in the cross-border smuggling of contraband cigarettes are also liable to be forfeited by the court.”

“Singapore Customs will work closely with the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority, and continue to monitor the cross-border contraband cigarette smuggling situation,” said Mr Foo.

## **Singapore Customs advisory**

Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, having in possession or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act. Offenders will be severely dealt with. They can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty evaded, and/or jailed for up to six years.

The minimum court fine for first-time and repeat offenders of tobacco-related offences is \$2,000 and \$4,000 respectively. Repeat offenders who are caught with more than two kilogrammes of tobacco products will also face mandatory jail sentences. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

Members of the public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of Customs duty or GST can call the Singapore Customs hotline on 1800-2330000 or email [customs\\_intelligence@customs.gov.sg](mailto:customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg).

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