



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS MEDIA RELEASE

SECOND MOTORIST WITH TAMPERED FUEL GAUGE FINED AND JAILED TWO WEEKS

On 26 September 2008, Alfred Tan Chee Heng, a 27-year-old Singaporean pleaded guilty to two charges – for not having the minimum amount of motor spirit in his vehicle's fuel tank when attempting to leave Singapore on 18 August 2008, and for giving false information to the officer inspecting his fuel gauge of his vehicle. For the first charge, he was sentenced to \$500 fine or in default one week's jail. For the second charge, he was sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment.

2 On 18 August 2008, at about 4.00 am, Alfred Tan Chee Heng drove his car to Woodlands Checkpoint. He was stopped by an ICA officer for fuel gauge check. Before conducting the check, the officer asked Tan whether he had three-quarter tank of fuel in his car's fuel tank. Tan declared that his fuel tank was three-quarter full. The officer also asked if he had fixed any device in his car to tamper with the fuel gauge meter. Tan replied in the negative. However, a thorough check revealed a remote control. When being questioned, Tan admitted that the remote control was indeed used for the purpose of tampering his vehicle's fuel gauge reading, and that his car did not have the required amount of fuel. On activating the remote control, the fuel indicator dropped from the three-quarter mark to one-quarter mark. The case was then referred to Singapore Customs for follow-up. The car was inspected and it was confirmed that its fuel gauge had been tampered with and the amount of fuel in the fuel tank was less than three-quarter full. Investigations also revealed that Tan was aware of the three-quarter tank rule and that he had given false information to the ICA officer. Tan was arrested and charged in court on 19 August 2008.

3 On 26 September 2008, he pleaded guilty to the charges and was sentenced by the court. For the first charge of not having the minimum amount of motor spirit in his vehicle's fuel tank when attempting to leave Singapore, he was sentenced to a fine of \$500 or in default one week's jail. For the second charge of giving false information which is an offence under Section 129(1)(c) of the Customs Act, he was sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment.

4 Tampering with the fuel gauge of the vehicle so that it gives a false reading that the amount of fuel in the fuel tank is three-quarters full is a serious offence. It shows a deliberate intent to cheat the authorities. In the last two years, three persons had been charged in court for tampering with their car fuel gauges. All three were convicted and were sentenced to both fines and imprisonment. This year, Tan was the second person caught. Earlier, Abu Khalid Bin Md Jadi, a 52-year-old Singaporean was arrested on 31 July 2008 and sentenced to \$500 fine and two weeks' imprisonment for similar offences.

End of Release

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