



**SINGAPORE CUSTOMS** 新加坡关税局 **KASTAM SINGAPURA** சிங்கப்பூர் கங்கத்துறை

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

9 December 2016

### **Singapore Customs seizes 5,635 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes from self-storage facility**

Singapore Customs conducted operations in a self-storage facility located in the north-eastern part of Singapore on 7 December 2016, and seized a total of 5,635 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

On 7 December 2016 afternoon, Singapore Customs officers kept a close watch as a shipment imported from China – declared as decorative items – was delivered to the self-storage facility. Subsequently, the officers moved in to check the consignment and recovered 3,438 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes that were hidden in 79 boxes of picture frames.

Following further investigations, the officers raided a unit in the same self-storage facility and recovered another 2,197 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

The total amount of duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) involved amounted to about \$437,280, and \$44,020 respectively.

Investigations are ongoing.

“Singapore Customs has raided a number of self-storage facilities and found duty-unpaid cigarettes in some of the units. We are keeping a close watch on the use of self-storage facilities for such illegal activities,” said Mr Tok Choon Min, Head of Special Investigation Branch, Singapore Customs. “Anyone caught using these facilities to store duty-unpaid cigarettes will be prosecuted.”

“We advise operators of self-storage facilities to exercise proper due diligence in screening persons renting their facilities. They should also report any suspected illegal cigarette activities taking place on their premises to Singapore Customs.”

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

Repeat offenders who are caught with more than two kilogrammes of tobacco products will also face mandatory imprisonment. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

**# # #**

# ANNEX



A total of 3,438 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes that were hidden in picture frames were seized from the loading bay area of the self-storage facility.



A subsequent raid of a unit in the self-storage facility resulted in the seizure of another 2,197 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

###