



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

4 April 2018

Freight forwarder fined \$5,000 for causing untrue permit declaration to be made to Singapore Customs

A freight forwarder, Megaton Shipping Pte Ltd, was sentenced by the State Courts on 4 April 2018 to a fine of \$5,000 for causing an untrue permit declaration to be made to Singapore Customs.

Singapore Customs initiated investigation on Megaton Shipping after Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers detected anomalies in the scanned images of a 40-foot container, declared to contain "T-shirts Singlets & Other Vests Knitted or Crocheted of Other Textile Materials for Men or Boys" in the import permit, and uncovered 39,900 cartons of cigarettes in the container at the Tanjong Pagar Scanning Station on 2 June 2017.

Investigations revealed that on 8 May 2017, Megaton Shipping was engaged by an unknown person to ship the container from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, to the United Kingdom (UK), through Singapore. On 29 May 2017, Megaton Shipping instructed a logistics company to make an import permit declaration to Singapore Customs and to declare the goods in the container as "T-shirts Singlets & Other Vests Knitted or Crocheted of Other Textile Materials for Men or Boys". With the import permit, the container was then removed from the Keppel Free Trade Zone to a bonded warehouse for storage before re-export of the goods to the UK.

By providing untrue information to the logistics company, Megaton Shipping committed an offence under the Customs Act for causing an untrue import declaration to be made to Singapore Customs.

“We believe that the cigarettes were intended to be smuggled into another country,” said Assistant Director-General (Intelligence & Investigation) Yeo Sew Meng [新加坡关税局助理局长(情报与调查)杨秀明]. “Singapore Customs does not condone the use of our port and logistics facilities for transnational smuggling, and we will continue to work proactively with our local partner agencies and international counterparts to stamp out such illicit activities.”

“Companies should exercise customer due diligence to prevent themselves from being exploited by syndicates for illicit activities. They need to ensure that the information they provide for declaration to Singapore Customs is true and complete. Stern actions will be taken against errant traders to maintain Singapore’s reputation as a trusted global trade hub,” said Mr Yeo.

Under the Customs Act, anyone found guilty of making or causing to be made any declaration, certificate or other document which is untrue, incorrect or incomplete by omitting any material particular will be liable on the conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000, or the equivalent of the amount of the customs duty, excise duty or tax payable, whichever is the greater amount, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months, or both.

Our borders are our first line of defence in safeguarding Singapore's security. The security checks are critical to our nation’s security. The ICA will continue to conduct security checks on passengers and vehicles at the checkpoints to prevent attempts to smuggle in undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contrabands. The same methods of concealment used by contraband smugglers may be used by terrorists to smuggle arms and explosives to carry out attacks in Singapore.

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ANNEX



A total of 39,900 cartons of cigarettes were detected in a 40-foot container declared to contain “T-shirts Singlets & Other Vests Knitted or Crocheted of Other Textile Materials for Men or Boys” in the import permit. (Photo: Singapore Customs)



Singapore Customs’ investigation revealed that Megaton Shipping provided untrue information to a logistics company, causing an untrue import declaration to be made to Singapore Customs. (Photo: Singapore Customs)

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