



MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

4 August 2023

THREE MEN ARRESTED FOR EVADING MORE THAN \$690,000 IN DUTIES AND TAXES

Three male Singaporeans, aged between 20 and 27, were caught with 4,620 cartons and 4,200 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes at Choa Chu Kang and Woodlands.

Singapore, 4 August 2023 – In its ongoing efforts to detect and deter tax evasion, Singapore Customs conducted two operations in Choa Chu Kang Avenue 5 and Woodlands Rise on 1 August 2023. Three men were arrested, with 4,620 cartons and 4,200 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes seized. The total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$636,336 and \$55,394 respectively.

2 In an operation conducted at Choa Chu Kang Avenue 5, Singapore Customs officers spotted a 20-year-old man and a 25-year-old man arranging carton boxes inside a van. Officers conducted checks and uncovered 2,460 cartons and 1,800 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes packed in brown carton boxes in the van.

3 Following up from the first operation, officers conducted a second operation at a multi-storey carpark at Woodlands Rise, which led to the discovery of 2,160 cartons and 2,400 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes packed in brown carton boxes in another van. A 27-year-old male driver of the van was arrested.

4 Investigations revealed that the three men were allegedly engaged by unknown persons via a social messaging platform to deliver duty-unpaid cigarettes. The duty-

unpaid cigarettes and the two vehicles were seized, and court proceedings against the three men are ongoing.

5 Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, possessing or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the GST Act. Offenders can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

6 Members of public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of duty or GST can call the Singapore Customs hotline on 1800-2330000 or email customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg to report these illegal activities.

Annex A: Photos of the operations

-END-

About Singapore Customs

Singapore Customs, a lead agency under the Ministry of Finance, protects revenue and facilitates trade. We make trade easy, fair and secure. We ensure compliance with customs regulations and collect taxes and duties on dutiable and taxable goods. We promote trade competitiveness and ensure the security of the supply chain.

We work closely with other government agencies, industry partners, and international organisations as we safeguard Singapore's borders against potential risks and threats. With the use of data analytics and various advanced technologies, we continuously leverage digital initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customs processes.

By proactively balancing these intricate requirements of trade facilitation, security and regulatory compliance, Singapore Customs strengthens Singapore's position as a global trade hub trusted by businesses operating in Singapore and foreign trading partners.

To find out more, visit our website at www.customs.gov.sg
Follow us at www.facebook.com/SingaporeCustoms

ANNEX A



The duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the van at Choa Chu Kang Avenue 5



The duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the van at the multi-storey carpark at Woodlands Rise



The two men arrested at Choa Chu Kang Avenue 5 and the duty-unpaid cigarettes seized



The man arrested at the multi-storey carpark at Woodlands Rise and the duty-unpaid cigarettes seized