



MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

11 September 2023

DIRECTOR OF FREIGHT FORWARDING COMPANY FINED \$30,000 FOR CAUSING INCORRECT DECLARATIONS TO BE MADE IN PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Singapore, 11 September 2023 – A male Singaporean, Chong Wei Yoong (张伟荣) (“Chong”), 49, was fined \$30,000 by the State Courts on 8 September 2023 for causing incorrect declarations to be made by a declaring agent in permit applications. Chong had provided commercial documents¹ with an incorrect description of goods for the applications.

2 Chong, the director of ADC Shipping Pte Ltd (“ADC”), a freight forwarding company, pleaded guilty to two charges for causing incorrect declarations to be made in the permit applications. Another four similar charges were taken into consideration during the sentencing.

3 In July 2022, Singapore Customs commenced investigations into ADC after Immigration & Checkpoints Authority officers had found duty-unpaid cigarettes in two containers that the company imported from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and were declared to contain light-emitting diode (LED) lights. A total of 83,999 cartons of cigarettes found in the two containers were seized.

¹ The commercial documents refer to bill of lading, commercial invoice and packing list.

4 Investigations revealed that Chong was engaged by an unknown person to receive goods imported from the UAE, repack them from the original import containers into new containers, and then make arrangements to ship the goods to the United Kingdom. While Chong suspected that the unknown person might be involved in cigarette smuggling activities, he continued to provide his services to this customer in order to profit from the business deals.

5 Singapore Customs does not condone the use of our port and logistics facilities for transnational smuggling. We will continue to work proactively with our local partner agencies and international counterparts to stamp out such illicit activities.

6 Companies should exercise 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 as we maintain Singapore's reputation as a trusted global trade hub.

Offences and Penalties

7 Under the Customs Act, any person who makes any declaration which is untrue, incorrect or incomplete will be liable on 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.

8 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

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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.

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ANNEX A



Boxes of cigarettes found in the two containers.



83,999 cartons of cigarettes seized from the two containers.