

-XV-

# ASEAN CUSTOMS

**ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**



**VOLUME 15**



## FOREWORD FROM “THE COUNTRY COORDINATOR DESK”

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all ASEAN Member States for the commitment and full support in the successful publication of this bulletin. This bulletin signifies another continuous cooperation and collective efforts among all Member States in safeguarding our borders, ensuring compliance with good governance, streamlining of procedures in facilitating trade and promoting transparency across the region.

As we continue to face new pattern of threats and disruptions posed by advancement of trade globally, with the flow of illicit goods that weaken the economies of ASEAN Member States, we need to accelerate further in strengthening our enforcement capability and at

the same time ensuring trade movement remain swift.

Through our effective collaboration and continuous exchange of information among member states, we can achieve effective customs enforcement and resilient border security.

This bulletin indicates the strong commitments demonstrated by all Member States in interchanging of successful accounts of measures taken in combatting smuggling operations and illicit trade activities. It also aims to serve as impetus and help to steer all Member States towards realising strong enforcement and safer border.

In this bulletin, you will find insightful analyses, updates on regulatory changes, and success stories highlighting the dedication and professionalism of our officers.

Their unwavering commitment to duty, often in challenging circumstances, reflects the core values of integrity, diligence, and service to their respective countries.

My sincere appreciation and gratitude to all those involved in the contribution and development of this bulletin for your commitment and dedication.

Thank you.

Warm Regards,

Mr. Muhammad Azizil Hakim  
bin Haji Ibrahim,  
Acting Controller

Royal Customs and Excise  
Department, Brunei Darussalam



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## FOREWORD FROM “THE CHAIRMAN’S OF ASEAN CUSTOMS DIRECTOR GENERAL”

On behalf of the ASEAN Customs Directors General, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Malaysia as the chair and to all members of the Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group (CECWG). Your unwavering dedication, consistent collaboration, and concerted efforts have been instrumental in advancing our shared goal of establishing a stronger and more effective customs enforcement and compliance.

Enforcement and compliance play pivotal roles in ensuring the smooth flow of goods across borders while safeguarding our societies from illicit activities. We, as Customs, have been dedicating the determined spirit of collaboration and commitment to enhance customs enforcement capabilities; streamline procedures; and promote transparency across the region. By doing so, we not only facilitate legitimate trade but also strengthen our collective ability to combat illicit trade activities such as smuggling, counterfeiting, and fraud.

I would like to acknowledge the continuous progress that has been made by the CECWG, including the endorsement of the Joint Customs Control Operation, which fosters smoother collaboration. Additionally, the exchange of intelligence and information through the Alert Notice System enhances our ability to address emerging challenges effectively. Moreover, establishing communication with counterpart signifies a significant step towards fostering greater cooperation and understanding within the broader community.



In this opportunity, I encourage our ASEAN colleagues to intensify the exchange of ideas, intelligence, and relevant resources for mutual benefit. I firmly believe that the fifteenth volume of the ASEAN Customs Enforcement Bulletin would serve as a valuable reference for ASEAN Member States in addressing illicit trade activities collaboratively as well as enhancing our Customs administrations' efficiency.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to Brunei Darussalam for contributing to making this bulletin memorable and outstanding. This bulletin would not have been successful without the excellent publication team.

Sincerely,

Theeraj Athavanankh  
Director-General  
Thai Customs Department





## FOREWORD FROM “THE CHAIRMAN’S DESK”

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Brunei Darussalam, specifically Royal Customs and Excise Department of Brunei Darussalam, for the successful publication of Volume XV of the ASEAN Customs Enforcement Bulletin. Upholding ASEAN’s fundamental principles, namely, effective cooperation among ASEAN member states, CECWG continues to serve as a platform for ASEAN member states to foster closer cooperation and exercise regional protection of society.

ASEAN will experience increasing trade volumes, driven by growing interest in ASEAN in the form of new and renewed agreements with strategic partners. This presents both opportunities and challenges for ASEAN customs administrations.

Therefore, ASEAN must exercise effective border enforcement measures to ensure security and combat illicit activities, all the while maintaining facilitation of trade without compromise. To achieve effective border enforcement, it is imperative for ASEAN to encourage information sharing and structured collaboration among ourselves.

This bulletin serves as a valuable platform for sharing best practices and fostering dialogue among customs authorities. Through the articles featured in this publication, we aim to enhance customs enforcement efforts throughout ASEAN.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the contributors, editors, and all those involved in the production of this bulletin for their dedication and commitment to promoting excellence in customs enforcement. Together, we will continue to strengthen cooperation and build mutual trust within the ASEAN customs community.



Thank you for your unwavering support and participation in our collective efforts to safeguard the prosperity and security of the ASEAN region.

Warm Regards,

Mr. Mohammad Fuzman Hattar  
Royal Malaysia Customs Department









**34<sup>th</sup> ASEAN CECWG**  
(Excursion & Farewell Dinner)





# 35<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN CECWG







# 35<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN CECWG SITE VISIT K9 UNIT







# BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG





# CASE 1

## SEIZURE OF VAPE PRODUCTS

### Fact

On 17th of August 2023, an operation was conducted at two private residences and found over 5,500 vape products, along with some suspected illicit proceeds amounting to BND841.00, MYR364.00, and SGD50.00. In addition, RCED also seized three vehicles that were used for smuggling activities.

### Modus Operandi

- The smuggling activities utilized various vehicles to evade law enforcement officers.
- Upon investigation, the suspect was found to be a repetitive offender being previously involve with sales of vape products.



### Action Taken

The case is currently under investigation and will be brought to court.





BY BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 2

## SEIZURE OF CIGARETTES, LIQUORS AND BEERS

### Fact

On 24th of May 2023, Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED) intercepted three boats carrying contraband cigarettes, liquors and beers. Unfortunately, all suspect managed to flee the scene and left behind contraband consisting of 3,433 cartons of cigarettes, 228 bottles of liquor and 734 cans of beer which were accounted for. In addition, RCED also seized the three boats used for the smuggling activities.

### Modus Operandi

The suspects conducted their activities by using small boats which provides greater maneuverability within the narrow waterways.



### Action Taken

- All the seized contraband have been disposed accordingly.
- Increased surveillance and collaboration with other law enforcement agencies.
- Continuously engaging with the local communities to help gather information and encourage the reporting of suspicious activities.







BY BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 3

## SEIZURE OF VAPE PRODUCTS

### Fact

On 14th of January 2023, the Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED) received a tip-off regarding two individuals selling vape products to the public. The operation discovered over 9,500 vape products, along with suspected illicit proceeds amounting to BND25,498.00 and SGD3,228.00.



### Modus Operandi

- The suspects outsourced the distribution of the vape products to third-party individuals;
- This modus operandi complicated the tracking and tracing by the Law Enforcement Officers.



### Action Taken

The case is currently under investigation and will be brought to court.





BY BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 4

## SEIZURE OF VAPE ACCESSORIES AND PRODUCTS

### Fact

On 18th of September 2023, the Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED) officers at the Sungai Tujoh Control Post apprehended a male suspect for attempting to smuggle 562 vape products, along with suspected illicit proceeds amounting of BND2,397.00, MYR1,163.25, and SGD22.20.

### Modus Operandi

Based on routine inspection, it was discovered that the suspect had hidden the undeclared vape products inside the boot of his vehicle.



### Action Taken

The case was brought to court in which the offender was ordered to settle court fine amounting to BND76,900.00.





BY BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 5

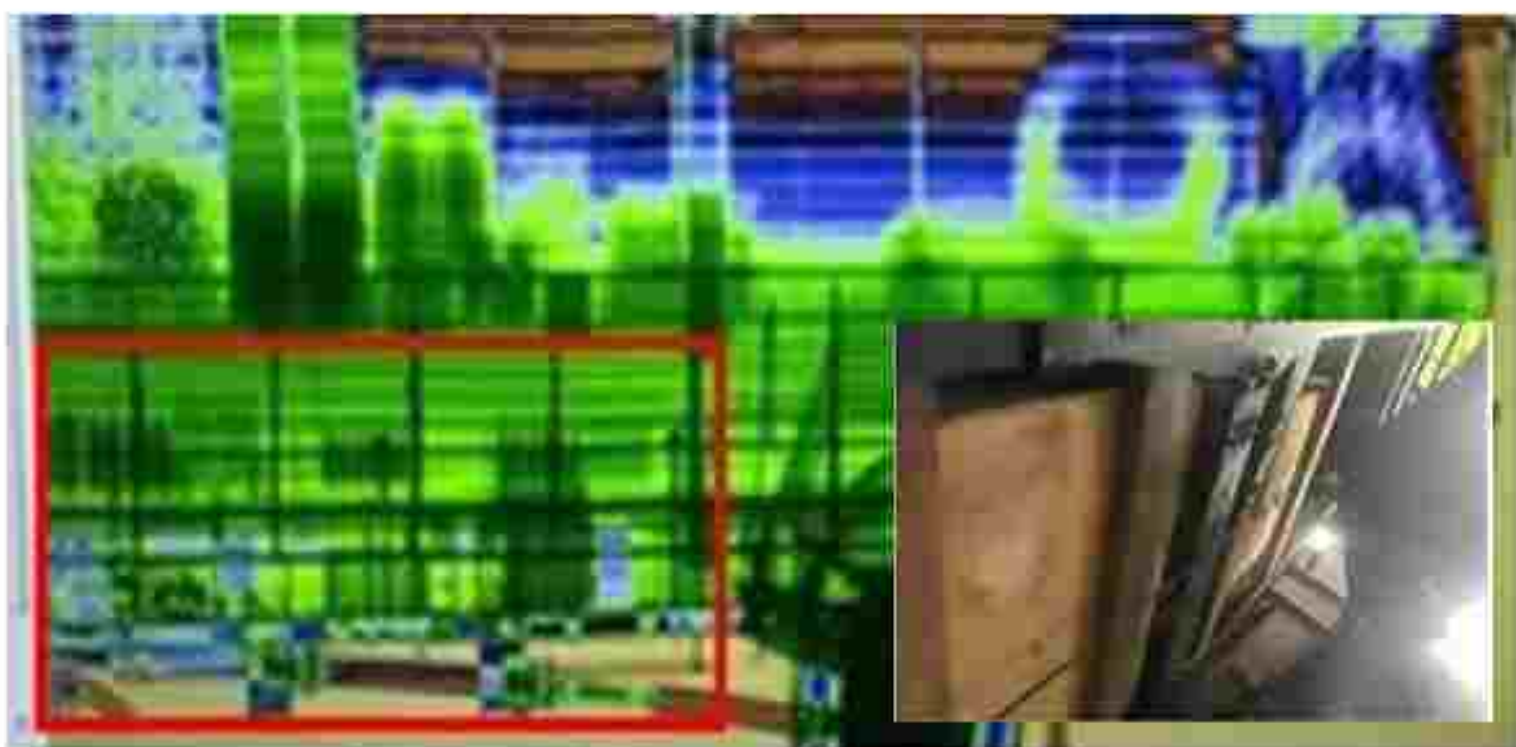
## SEIZURE OF CIGARETTE AND LIQUOR

### Fact

On 23rd November 2023, the Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED) officers at the Sungai Tujoh Control Post had apprehended a male suspect for attempting to smuggle 220 cartons of cigarettes, 84 bottles of liquor and 144 cans of beer.

### Modus Operandi

- Based on routine X-Ray inspection, it was detected that there were possible suspicious goods hidden underneath the trailer that appeared to evade physical inspection;
- RCED officers conducted a thorough inspection and found the contraband concealed as per the initial X-ray image.



### Action Taken

- The case was brought to court in which the offender was ordered to settle a court fine amounting to BND168,736.00;
- The offender failed to settle the court fine and was sentenced to 30 months of imprisonment.





BY BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 6

## SEIZURE OF CIGARETTES AND BEERS

### Fact

On 23rd of September 2023, the Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED) intercepted a boat carrying contraband cigarettes, liquors and beers. Unfortunately, the suspect managed to flee, leaving behind the contraband of over 365 cartons of cigarettes and 23 cans of beer seized by RCED. In addition, RCED also seized the boat that was used for these smuggling activities.

### Modus Operandi

The suspect conducted this activity by using a small boat that had the ability to maneuver and move within narrow waterways.



### Action Taken

- As per Section 121 of Excise Order 2006, all the seized contraband have been disposed accordingly;
- In addition, the RCED have increased frequent surveillance and collaboration with other law enforcement agencies;
- RCED will also continuously engage with the local communities to gather information and encourage reporting of suspicious activities.





# CAMBODIA

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG



BY CAMBODIA  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 1

## APPREHENSION OF ILLICIT DRUG – USING GTAS

### Fact

On 2nd July 2023, the International Airport Customs and Excise Department targeted a Thai passenger traveling from Guinea to Cambodia, citing a suspicious route from a high-risk region to Cambodia based on the GTAS data from Ethiopia and Malaysia.



### Modus Operandi

X-ray scanning images of passenger luggage revealed unusual coloration, leading to suspicion of smuggling cocaine into Cambodia. Customs officers conducted a detailed physical inspection revealing 2,790.37 grams of cocaine concealed in the false compartment of the luggage, indicating illicit drug trafficking.

### Action Taken

The case is now under investigation by Anti-Drug Police for legal action.







# CASE 2

## APPREHENSION OF ILLICIT DRUG – NEW TREND

### Fact

Phnom Penh International Airport has targeted high-risk express consignments using experienced observation, on-site risk analysis, and non-intrusive inspection images. On 12th July 2023, the airport targeted an express consignment from Cambodia to Australia, containing "Ladies bags, Ladies skirts, Ladies set clothes, Ladies shirts, Man shirts, Ladies hats, Khmer woven mat." The consignment's labelled as "clothes" to a foreign country was the risk indicator.



### Modus Operandi

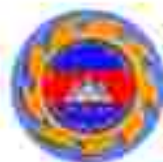
- Two express consignment boxes containing eight handbags and clothes were discovered by customs officers. Using an X-ray scanning machine and physical checks, they discovered unusual coloration inside the bags.
- Upon further inspection, they discovered 1,391.58 grams of heroin, indicating the smuggling of illicit drugs out of Cambodia. The drugs were concealed in the false compartment of handbags.



### Action Taken

The smuggled drugs were seized, and the case was handed over to the Anti-Drug Police for further investigation and legal action.





BY CAMBODIA  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 3

LUBRICATING GREASE (9,060 KG), LUBRICATING OIL (33,168 LITERS), AND HYDRAULIC BRAKE FLUID (1,560 LITRES)

## Fact

After receiving intelligent information, it was discovered that there are illicit goods concealed in a privately owned warehouse located in Battambang Province. On 17th July 2023, with the consent of the warehouse owner, the Customs Investigation and Anti-Smuggling Office of Zone 4, Department of Prevention and Suppression, conducted an inspection of the warehouse to verify documents and examine the suspected items.



## Modus Operandi

- While conducting the inspection, the customs officers discovered that 9,060 kilogrammes of lubricating grease, 33,168 litres of lubricating oil, and 1,560 litres of hydraulic brake fluid had been imported without paying the required duties and taxes.
- The modus operandi involved storing this undeclared goods with other goods in the warehouse.

## Action Taken

The case was submitted to the Department of Legal Affairs and Public Relations of the General Department of Customs and Excise for further actions.







# CASE 4

## SEIZURE OF HEROIN CONCEALED IN HANDBAGS

### Fact

Cambodia is a manufacturing and exporting country of bags to the US, Europe, and the UK including some to Australia by sea route. The Customs Department of International Airport have developed risk criteria based on previous seizure cases and route patterns. On 10th January 2024, the Customs Unit at Phnom Penh International Airport have identified an express consignment declared as "handbags, shoes, and underwear for women" bound to Australia as a "high risk target" due to the risk criteria.

### Modus Operandi

Customs officials found handbags, shoes, and women's clothes in a carton, which were the same as declared. An X-ray machine scanned the items, producing images indicating abnormalities. A detailed physical inspection revealed 1,370.90 grams of heroin confirming the items' authenticity. This was the smuggling and trafficking of an illicit drug (heroin) worth 1,370.90 grams out of Cambodia. The drug was concealed in the false compartment of handbags.



### Action Taken

The drug was seized, and the case was handed over to the Anti-Drug Police for further investigation and legal action.



BY CAMBODIA  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 5

## COMMERCIAL FRAUD OF UNDER QUANTITY LUBRICATING OIL AND TIRES

### Fact

Intelligence information obtained from customs informant explained there was suspicion of illicit goods transported into a private-owned warehouse in Phnom Penh. The regional anti-smuggling office of the Department of Prevention and Suppression assessed and analysed the information and concluded that it was reliable. After the conclusion, on 10th November 2023, the said customs office decided to conduct an inspection of the warehouse.



The customs office discovered 250 cartons of lubricating oil and 254 tires in black due to the absence of customs stamps.



### Modus Operandi

As a result of the inspection, the said customs office detected 250 cartons (6,000 litres) of lubricating oil and 254 pieces of tyre, which were illicit because there were no customs stamps affixed (i.e. the importer did not pay duty and taxes). It is noted that lubricating oil and tyres are special designated goods that are subjected to customs stamps when imported. This case was a commercial fraud of under-declared, concealing mixed with the imported licit goods in the warehouse.

### Action Taken

The case has been submitted to the Office of Dispute Settlement, Department of Legal Affairs, and Public Relations for settlement.





# INDONESIA

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG



BY INDONESIA  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 1

## 319 KG OF METHAMPHETAMINE IN INDIAN OCEAN, SOUTHERN COASTAL JAVA ISLAND

### Fact

The DGCE and the National Narcotics Board successfully prevented the smuggling of methamphetamine by the Middle East network into Indonesian territory. They formed a joint task force with the Vertical Customs Office and the National Narcotics Board, resulting in the seizure of 309 packs of methamphetamine in the Indian Ocean, Southern Coastal Java Island on 23 February 2023.



### Modus Operandi

- The contraband was transported to Java Island via an Iranian-flagged fishing boat without any declaration or documentation, indicating an attempt to bypass customs and narcotics restrictions that were concealed near the ship's engine.
- Illegal drug imports violate customs law number 17/2006 and criminal law 1/1946, and are subject to criminal proceedings under narcotics law number 35/2009.

### Action Taken

The case was handed over to the National Narcotics Board for further investigation.





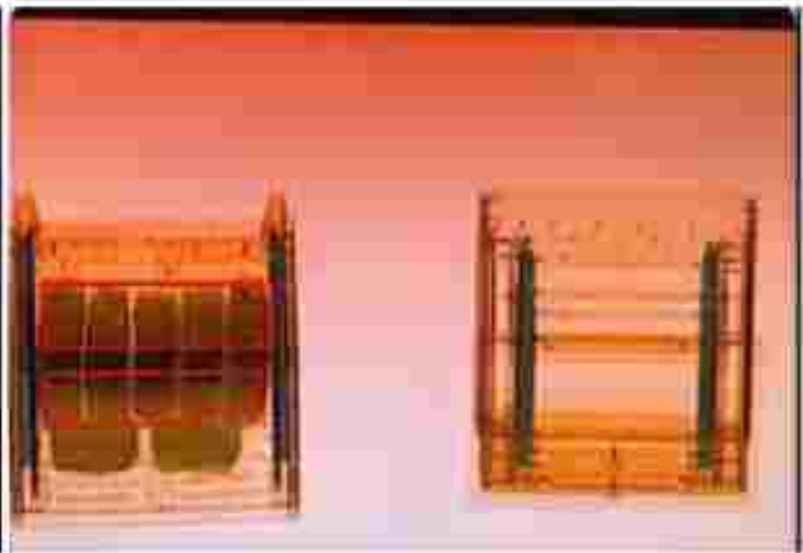
BY INDONESIA  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 2

## 100 PACKS OF METHAMPETHAMINE IN A CUPBOARD SHELF

### Fact

- There is information on the suspicion of drugs smuggling through sea cargo originating from Malaysia to East Java, Indonesia; Directorate of Narcotics Interdiction, Regional Customs Office of East Java I, Tanjung Perak Customs Office formed a Joint-Task Force with National Narcotics Board to conduct an in-depth examination of the importation.
- From the result of inspection, it was found that methamphetamine were hidden in the shelf of cabinet which was declared as personal effect.
- Based on the results of the physical examination, 100 packs with a total weight of 108,000 grams of Methamphetamine were sized as evidence.



### Modus Operandi

1. The exporter declared the goods to be exported as personal effects. Based on the inspection, there was methamphetamine hidden on the shelf of the cabinet that was covered with aluminum foil and plastic. It was expected to be an effort to manipulate the image of the X-ray machine.
2. The inspected goods did not match the declaration documents. The import of illegal drugs is subject to violation of customs law number 17/2006. Furthermore, the import of illegal drugs is subject to criminal proceedings based on criminal law number 1/1946 and narcotics law number 35/2009.



BY INDONESIA  
34TH ASEAN CEDWG



## ACTION TAKEN

The case was handed over to the National Narcotics Board for further investigation.





# CASE 3

## THE SMUGGLING OF "BABY LOBSTER"

### Fact

- On 20th September 2023, the Indonesian Customs Sea Patrol Task Force, as a part of the Integrated Sea Patrol "Jaring Sriwijaya" and the independent patrol of the Riau Islands Customs Office, received intelligence information regarding the export smuggling attempt of baby lobster using a speedboat.
- After conducting reconnaissance and surveillance at around 10 p.m. local time, in the waters of Sungai Kampar, Riau Province, the Sea Patrol Task Force identified the targeted speedboat and initiated a pursuit. At around 10:30 p.m. local time, the speedboat was found to be stranded and abandoned by all its crew members who had managed to flee.
- The Sea Patrol Task Force then detained the unnamed speedboat along with its cargo, which consisted of 20 boxes of lobster eggs.
- Through a joint counting effort with the officials from the Karimun BKIPM (Marine and Fisheries Quarantine and Quality Control Agency), it was determined that there were 20 boxes, each containing 30 packages of 200 lobster eggs, totaling 120,000 lobster eggs.



### Modus Operandi

- Attempting to export prohibited goods without submitting any export declaration.
- The goods consisted of 20 boxes of lobster eggs, for a total of 120,000 lobster eggs.
- Lobster eggs fall under restricted or prohibited items.
- The transportation was carried out using an unregistered speedboat during the night.
- The export smuggling violates Indonesian Customs Law Number 17 of 2006.



### Action Taken

The seized goods were declared as goods claimed by the state with estimated value of IDR 18,000,000,000, or approximately USD1,160,485. The lobster eggs were released into the wild in collaboration with BKIPM (Marine and Fisheries Quarantine and Quality Control Agency).





# CASE 4

## THE ATTEMPTED EXPORT SMUGGLING OF “PANGOLIN SCALES”

### Fact

- On 17th May 2023, the South Kalimantan Customs Regional Office Team encountered a targeted vehicle heading to a seaport that was carrying illegal goods expected to be exported.
- The team seized the minibus and inspected the boxes in the vehicle.
- There were eight boxes containing pangolin scales (Manis Javanica), weighing approximately 360 kg in total.
- Following the initial inspection, the team then examined “SR,” the driver of the vehicle, who admitted that the cargo belongs to “AF.”
- The team detained “AF” as the suspect, and the follow-up investigation was conducted by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.



### Modus Operandi

1. Attempting to export prohibited goods without submitting any export declaration.
2. The goods consisted of 8 boxes of pangolin scales, with a total weight of 360 kg.
3. Pangolin scales are considered restricted or prohibited items.
4. Transportation was carried out using a minibus or vehicle to a seaport.
5. The export smuggling violates Indonesian Customs Law Number 17 of 2006.

### Action Taken

1 kg of pangolin scales comes from at least 2–3 pangolins, so in this case, at least 720–1,080 pangolins have been slaughtered. The estimated value of the seized pangolin scales was IDR 1,440,000,000, or approximately USD 92,396. For his actions, AF was charged with a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a maximum fine of IDR 100 million.





BY INDONESIA  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 5

## 5.430 GRAMS OF METHAMPHETAMINE IN A DECORATIVE RESIN FRAME

### Fact

- Based on the results of analysis and targeting, on 5th December 2023, DGCE conducted a physical inspection of the packages sent through a courier service company from Mexico to Jakarta, Indonesia.
- The results of the inspection of the packages showed that a layer of white crystals was found inside a resin-based decoration frame. DGCE further conducted an identification test and found that the white crystals were methamphetamine with a gross weight of 5.450 grammes.



### Modus Operandi

- The exporter used a decorative resin frame as a false concealment of methamphetamine with a net weight of 5.430 grammes.
- The import of illicit drugs is subject to violation of customs law number 17/2006 and subject to criminal proceedings based on criminal law number 1/1946 and narcotics law number 35/2009.



### Action Taken

The case was handed over to the National Narcotics Board for further investigation.



# LAO PDR

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG





BY LAO PDR  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 1

## VEHICLE SEIZURE IN NORTHERN LAOS

### Fact

24 smuggled vehicles seized in Northern Lao, Bokeo Province on 02 September 2023.

### Modus Operandi

- ISD in cooperation with the Local Customs followed on a lead.
- With the support from the Immigration Police, ISD than made the seizure because boat did not dock the waterfront to declare its document.
- Found 24 right handed used luxury vehicles including sedans, SUVs, and mini vans.
- Person of involvement are 02 Laotian national as Driver of boat and worker and 03 Chinese national as worker. The boat is registered as a Burmese boat. All 24 vehicle were store within the boat with sheets covered.

### Action Taken

- Currently the case is still ongoing.
- Vehicle are being seized and confine with Bokeo local Customs Office.
- Smugglers are being detain by Police for further investigations.
- Update (2024) Case closed, Outcome: Each vehicle was fine and was all sent back to the original country or port of loading.





# CASE 2

## MONEY SMUGGLING CASE IN NORTHERN LAOS

### Fact

- Money/ Cash 1,102,000 Thai Baht seized at Samliamkham International Checkpoint, Bokeo Province, Northern Laos, on 06 September 2023;
- According the Customs Law, Article 51, 07 July 2022, No 15/NA on the importation of bulk cash or valuable within the country is exceeded the limit.

### Modus Operandi

- ISD in cooperation with the Local Customs followed on a lead.
- With the support from the Immigration Police, ISD than made the seizure of the smuggler
- Smuggler with hand held bag smuggling money out of the country through International Checkpoint.



### Action Taken

- Currently the case is still ongoing;
- The money is being held and stored with the Local Finance Department.





BY LAO PDR  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 3

## SMUGGLING OF 100 IPAD TABLETS FROM CHINA BORDER

### Fact

On 6th March 2023, 100 iPad tablets were taken into custody in Vientiane Capital.



### Modus Operandi

Following intelligence report, customs were able to trace a Chinese national's vehicle as it travelled from the northern borders to their storage facility in Vientiane, the country's capital. Eighty-eight-inch iPad tablets were found in the vehicle that contained unclaimed items. The involved party is a citizen of China.

### Action Taken

The item was seized and person involved was fine in the amount 90 million kip equivalent to 3,700 US Dollar.



BY LAO PDR  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 4

SAGOTA BEER SMUGGLING FINE 900 MILLION KIP  
(\$37,000)

## Fact

On 3rd October 2023, 5,000 boxes of SAGOTA beer that did not match the declared amount and alcohol content were found in Champasack Province, Southern Laos.



## Modus Operandi

Upon Intelligence report, a Vietnamese national truck heading to Champasack province missed the declared amount of SAGOTA beer. Actual amount: 5,069 boxes; declared amount: 4,069 boxes. Intentionally declaring alcohol level: Actual amount: 5%, Declared 4.3%. In the document, it was declared for 3 trucks, but only 1 truck was to be found. Vietnamese national truck smuggling beer into Laos.



## Action Taken

The individual was fined 900 million kip, or 37,000 US dollars.





# MALAYSIA

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG



BY MALAYSIA  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 1

## SEIZURE OF 88 KILOGRAMS OF COCAINE

### Fact

On 1st August 2023, at approximately 8:00 p.m., a team of raiding members from the Narcotics Branch of the RMCD Headquarters seized four (4) boxes at the KLIA Air Cargo Complex, Sepang, Selangor. As a result of the inspection, it was found that all the boxes contained glass bottles containing capsules of the suspected dangerous drug "cocaine," with a gross weight of 88 kilogrammes and an estimated seized value of RM17.6 million. The results of the inspection also found that there were vehicle spare parts, i.e., car brake discs, in each box.



### Modus Operandi

The modus operandi used to obscure the authorities was by declaring the shipment as "SUPPLEMENT" but it was found out there were glass bottles containing dangerous drugs and vehicle parts. The syndicate also used a fake company name as the receiving company in the "AIR WAYBILL".

### Action Taken

An investigation is being carried out under Section 39B(1)(a) Dangerous Drugs 1952 for trafficking dangerous drugs. If convicted, the traffickers shall be punished on conviction with death penalty or life imprisonment and will be sentenced to a minimum of 15 lashes if not sentenced to death.





BY MALAYSIA  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 2

## SEIZURE OF 436 KILOGRAMS OF MDMA DRUGS

### Fact

On 29th August 2023, at approximately 06.30 pm, a team of RMCD raiding team from the Narcotics Branch of the RMCD Headquarters seized thirty-six (36) boxes at the KLIA Air Cargo Complex, Sepang, Selangor. The results of the inspection found twelve (12) boxes containing transparent plastic packages suspected of containing dangerous drugs of various colours and shapes suspected to be Ecstasy pills, a type of 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) drug with a gross weight of 436.2 kilograms. The estimated value of the seizure is RM32 million. Inspection of the remaining twenty-four (24) boxes resulted in bricks.



### Modus Operandi

The modus operandi of this syndicate to obscure the authorities is by declaring items containing drugs as "tools," but it was found out that there were boxes containing dangerous drugs and also bricks.



Transparent plastic packages suspected of containing dangerous drugs



## ACTION TAKEN

A preliminary investigation found that the merchandise was imported from a country in Europe and landed at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) Cargo Complex as the final destination. Intelligence results found importers using false information in the importation documents, making it difficult to make an arrest on the importer of the trade. An investigation is being conducted for dangerous drug trafficking under Section 39B(1)(a) of the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1952. If convicted, the traffickers shall be punished on conviction with the death penalty or life imprisonment and will be sentenced to a minimum of 15 lashes if not sentenced to death.





BY MALAYSIA  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 3

## REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA POLICE APPRECIATE THE ROLE OF THE ROYAL MALAYSIAN CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT IN UNCOVERING THE BIGGEST DRUG CASE IN THE HISTORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

The Criminal Investigation Agency, Indonesian Police Force (Bareskrim POLRI), has expressed appreciation to the Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) for the cooperation provided until the arrest of an international drug trafficking syndicate operating in Indonesia. According to the Head of POLRI, Commissioner General Wahyu Wisada, this success is due to the close cooperation between the enforcement forces in Malaysia and Thailand, such as the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) and RMCD. According to him, in this operation, a total of 10.2 tonnes of syabu, 116,346 ecstasy pills, 13 vehicles, 4 buildings, and cash have been seized since 2020, and the total amount involved is 10.5 trillion rupiah (IDR). Multiple arrests of the syndicate's members have been achieved during the years of close cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia.

In order to recognise their merits, an appreciation ceremony has been held for the officers who joined the operations and contributed to the success of the arrest.







BY MALAYSIA  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 4

## SEIZURE OF 807 KILOGRAMS OF FENTANYL

### Fact

According to intelligence sharing information, on 9th December 2023, the Royal Malaysian Customs Department seized thirty-six (36) boxes containing 72 aluminium bottles with a liquid substance suspected to be the dangerous drug fentanyl, with a gross weight of 807.9 kilograms worth an estimated RM45 million, in an operation at the KL International Airport cargo complex.



### Modus Operandi

The modus operandi is that the syndicate tried to obscure the authorities by declaring the consignment as fragrance compounds.

### Action Taken

Investigation is being carried out under Section 39B(1)(a) Dangerous Drugs 1952 and Abolition of Mandatory Death Penalty Act 2023 for trafficking dangerous drugs. If convicted, the traffickers shall be punished on conviction with death or imprisonment for life and shall, if he is not sentenced to death, be punished with whipping of not less than twelve strokes.





BY MALAYSIA  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 5

## SEIZURE OF 9 MILLION STICKS OF WHITE CIGARETTES (UNDER 1ST JOINT CUSTOMS CONTROL OPERATION)

### Fact

From international Intelligence sharing information by Thai Customs, on December 22nd 2023, a team of Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) officers conducted an inspection on the container suspected to contain illicit cigarettes. As a result of the inspection of the container, RMCD found that the container was filled with boxes containing 9 million sticks of white cigarettes (Manchester brand). The estimated value of the cigarettes worth around RM6.7 million.

### Modus Operandi

The modus operandi of this syndicate to obscure the authorities is by misdeclaration in the manifest as storage box, hinges, hammers, stainless steel chafing dish and gift bag.

### Action Taken

An investigation is being conducted for cigarette smuggling under Sections 133(1)(a) and 135(1)(a) of the Customs Act 1967. If convicted, they can be fined not more than RM500,000, jailed for not more than seven years, or both.





BY MALAYSIA  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 6

## SEIZURE OF 3 MILLION STICKS OF WHITE CIGARETTES (UNDER 1ST JOINT CUSTOMS CONTROL OPERATION)

### Fact

According to international intelligence sharing information by Singapore Customs, on January 4, 2024, a team of Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) officers conducted an inspection on the container suspected to contain illicit cigarettes. As a result of the inspection of the container, RMCD found that the container was filled with boxes containing 3 million sticks of white cigarettes (Manchester brand). The estimated value of the cigarettes is around RM2.6 million.

### Modus Operandi

The modus operandi of this syndicate to obscure the authorities is misdeclaration in the manifest as new garments:



### Action Taken

An investigation is being conducted for cigarette smuggling under Section 133(1)(a) & 135(1)(a) of the Customs Act 1967. If convicted, can be fined not more than RM500,000 or jail not more than seven years or both.





# MYANMAR

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG



BY MYANMAR  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 1

## SEIZURE OF 6.37 KILOGRAMS OF BROWN POPPY POWDER

### Fact

Myanmar Customs Examination Team seized 6.37 kilograms of brown poppy powder in the passenger's baggage, estimated to be worth Kyats 95,550,000 at Yangon International Airport on 10th August 2023.



### Modus Operandi

With the cooperation of the Anti-Illegal Trade Special Inspection Team of Yangon International Airport and the airport duty Customs Inspection Team, a preliminary examination of the goods of the Indian passenger was made; only the clothes and accessories were found. Therefore, after the second examination with the X-ray machine, the suspected image of the powders (assumed to be drugs) was discovered inside the baggage. And then, the powders (assumed to be drugs) were detected by attaching the screws to the aluminium plates inside the baggage after a detailed examination of the baggage.



### Action Taken

The seizure of powders (assumed to be drugs) was 6.37 kg, and the passenger was transferred to the Myanmar Police Force.





BY MYANMAR  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 2

## SEIZURE OF MATERIALS CONSIDERED TO BE JADE

### Fact

Myanmar Customs Examination Team seized materials considered to be jade in the Mitsubishi Fuso Bus, totally estimated to be worth Kyats 17,950,000 at the Yay Pu Check Point in Shan State on 2nd February 2023.



### Modus Operandi

The examination team thoroughly checked the Express Bus, which was going to Muse Town (Border of China) from Mandalay Division, and sized the materials considered to be jade hidden inside the drawers.

### Action Taken

The seizures of the materials considered to be jade were transferred to Myanmar Gem Enterprise.



BY MYANMAR  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 3

## SEIZURE OF 9460 PIECES OF WHITE POWDERS (ASSUMED TO BE HEROIN)

### Fact

Myanmar Customs Examination Team seized 9460 pieces of white powder (assumed to be heroin), 300,000 tablets of methamphetamine, and 1 kilogram of opium oil in the vehicle, which were totally estimated to be worth Kyats 2,816,800,000 at the 16-mile Kyaut Chaw Check Point in Mandalay Division on 16th December 2023.



### Modus Operandi

The cooperation of the Anti-Illegal Trade Special Inspection Team has checked the vehicle (a Toyota Hiace) that was driving from Pyin Oo Lwin to Mandalay (the middle of Myanmar) and found three items, including heroin (assumed to be heroin). 9460 pieces were concealed with cups of soap in the vehicle.

### Action Taken

The seizure of powders (assumed to be heroin) 9460 pieces of white powder (assumed to be heroin), 300000 tablets of methamphetamine, and 1 kilogram of opium oil were transferred to the Myanmar Police Force.





BY MYANMAR  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 4

## SEIZURE OF 9438 PIECES OF WHITE POWDERS (ASSUMED TO BE HEROIN)

### Fact

Myanmar Customs Examination Team seized 9438 pieces of white powder (assumed to be heroin) in the vehicle, totally estimated to be worth Kyats 2,300,000,000 at the 16-mile Kyaut Chaw Check Point in Mandalay Division on 1st December 2023.

### Modus Operandi

The cooperation of the Anti-Illegal Trade Special Inspection Team has checked the vehicle (Toyota Alphard), which was driving from Pyin Oo Lwin to Mandalay (Middle of Myanmar), and found heroin (assumed to be heroin) 9438 pieces concealed with cups of soap in the vehicle.

### Action Taken

The seizure of powders (assumed to be heroin) totaled 9438 pieces, and the vehicle was transferred to the Myanmar Police Force.





# PHILIPPINES

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG



# CASE 1

## OPERATION AGAINST A 1X40 SHIPMENT DECLARED AS FEEDS CONSIGNED TO LOCAR CONSUMER

### Fact

A shipment of 1x40 TEMU7425213 from Laem Chabang, Thailand, to LOCAR CONSUMER was found at the Port of Subic, containing 530 kg of a white crystalline substance, identified as "METHAMPHETAMINE" or "SHABU," valued at Php3.8 billion pesos.

### Modus Operandi

Concealed in a heat-sealed plastic pouch are red and gold tea bags labelled or brand "DRAGON HEAD RAISING DAY" and "GUANYINWANG" hidden within fifty-nine (59) cartons and fifty-nine (59) large transparent plastic bags containing crackers.



### Action Taken

Turn-over to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, and National Bureau of Investigation.

# CASE 2

## GOLD JEWELRY SMUGGLING OF INBOUND AIR PASSENGER FROM HONGKONG

### Fact

The subject is RICA LISSE CARBALLO ROMANO, a female Filipino national, is inbound on Philippine Airlines Flight PR307 from Hong Kong. Findings from multiple pieces of gold jewellery:

### Modus Operandi

Concealed inside a shoe box like carton to make it look like a non-important hand carry item or to disguise it as an item bought from a local Duty Free shop.



### Action Taken

Imposed and collected duties and taxes in the amount of US\$183,960.55.



# CASE 3

## APPREHENSION OF PROHIBITED GOODS FROM SHIPMENT SUBJECT OF RILO INFORMATION

### Fact

Target is a shipment of furniture and plastic cups bound for the Manila International Container Port (MICP), Philippines, subject to derogatory information from the Regional Intelligence and Liaison Office (RILO). Discovery of various types of adult products

### Modus Operandi

Misdeclaration to avoid prohibition laws and controls.



### Action Taken

Seizure of goods.



BY PHILIPPINES  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 4

## APPREHENSION OF 1X40 CONTAINER NO. GESU6481910 CONTAINING HFC-227EA ALSO KNOWN AS HEPTAFLUOROPROPANE

### Fact

A shipment containing 10 packages: of Mosafe Fire Gas Extinguishing System, 9 pkgs. of Mosafe Fire Gas Extinguishing System Accessories, 3 pkgs. of Fire Accessories, 3 pkgs. of Yunou Fire Hydrant Box, 1 pkg. of Zinshongyuan Pipe Fittings (Coupling), 2 pkgs. of Zinshongyuan Pipe Fittings (Elbow), and 3 pkgs. of Xinzhongyuan Pipe Fittings (Tee) and Xinzhongyuan Pipe Fittings (Reducer) consigned to CHEMICAL COMPANY arrived at the Port of Manila on 18th April 2023 from China on board vessel VIVALDI 313E with Registry No. MSK0029-23.

Evaluation of the importer's safety data sheet led to the discovery that the true nature of the goods was heptafluoropropane, a replacement for ozone-depleting substances; thereafter, further verification on the DENR OPMS conducted by the EPCD revealed that no pre-shipment import clearance was issued for this particular shipment.

### Modus Operandi

Non-compliance with DENR laws, rules, and regulations.

### Action Taken

A request for the issuance of a Warrant of Seizure and Detention was forwarded to the Office of the District Collector for possible violation of Section 119 (Restricted Importation) of R.A. No. 10863 in relation to Customs Administrative Order No. 09-2020<sup>7</sup> and Section 1113 (f) (Property Subject to Seizure and Forfeiture) of R.A. No. 10863 Customs Modernization and Tariff Act<sup>8</sup> and R.A. No. 6969 "Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes", as implemented by DAO No. 1992-29 "Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 6969" and DAO No. 2021-31 "The Chemical Control Order (CCO) for Chemical Control Order for Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)".

Thereafter, a WSD was issued on 4th May 2023, resulting in the forfeiture of the shipment in favor of the government on the basis of the Importer's failure to secure the required pre-shipment import clearance.







BY PHILIPPINES  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 5

## APPREHENSION OF 4X20 CONTAINERS WAS DECLARED AS MOLYBDATE WHICH WAS LATER ON DISCOVERED TO BE SODIUM CYANIDE

### Fact

On 3rd August 2023, a shipment containing 652 drums of Molybdate arrived at the Port of Manila from the United Kingdom on board vessel WANHA1293V-024S with Registry No. WHL0069-23.

On 7th August 2023, actionable intelligence from the Customs Anti-illegal Drug Task Force (CAIDTF) was received by the Environmental Protection and Compliance Division (EPCD) against the above-cited shipment for probable violation of DENR laws and Section 1400 (Misdeclaration, Misclassification, and Undervaluation in Goods Declaration).

Thereafter, an examination was conducted by customs authorities at Warehouse 3 Antonio C. Delgado Corner St., Manila City, which yielded the following result: steel drums of sodium cyanide with a purity of  $\leq 98.0\%$ .



### Modus Operandi

Misdeclaration (declared as Molybdate)

### Action Taken

A request for issuance of a Warrant of Seizure and Detention was forwarded to the office of the District Collector for violation of Section 119 (Restricted Importation) in relation to Customs Administrative Order No. 9-2020; Section 1113 (f) and (i) (Property Subject to Seizure and Forfeiture); Section 1400 (Misdeclaration); and Section 1401 of RA 10863 "Customs Modernization and Tariff Act", and Republic Act 6969 "Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes", as implemented by DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 1992-28 and DENR Administrative Order 1997-39 "Chemical Control Order for Cyanide and Cyanide Compounds".

A hearing is being conducted by the Bureau for possible endorsement of the case by the DOJ for the institution of criminal proceedings.



# SINGAPORE

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG





BY SINGAPORE  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 1

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

### Fact

Immigration & Checkpoints Authority officers found duty-unpaid cigarettes in two containers imported from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that were declared to contain light-emitting diode (LED) lights during cargo clearance. A total of 83,999 cartons of cigarettes found in these two containers were seized.

Investigations by Singapore Customs revealed that the Singaporean director of the freight forwarding company was engaged by an unknown person to receive goods imported from the UAE, repack them from the original import containers into new containers, and make arrangements to ship the goods to the United Kingdom.

While the Singaporean director suspected that the unknown person might be involved in cigarette smuggling activities, he continued to provide his services to this customer to profit from the business deal.

### Modus Operandi

The freight forwarder would 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, including providing commercial documents with an incorrect description of goods which were also used to support the permit applications.

### Action Taken

The Singaporean director pleaded guilty to two charges for causing incorrect declarations to be made by a declaring agent in the permit applications and was fined \$30,000 by the State Courts on 8th September 2023. Another four similar charges were taken into consideration during the sentencing.



BY SINGAPORE  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 2

## TRIO CONVICTED OVER DUTY-UNPAID LIQUOR

### Fact

Singapore Customs officers mounted an operation at the lift lobby of a residential block and saw a male Chinese national and female Singapore Permanent Resident (who were later established to be siblings), carrying two red plastic bags and pushing two trolleys laden with boxes at the lift lobby. Officers carried out checks and uncovered 54 bottles of duty-unpaid liquor in the plastic bags and boxes, a follow-up search of their residence uncovered another 205 bottles of duty-unpaid liquor. The female Singapore Permanent Resident's husband, a male Singaporean, admitted that the bottles of duty-unpaid liquor belonged to him. All three were arrested.

The total duty and Goods and Services Tax evaded amounted to about S\$28,317.

### Modus Operandi

Investigations revealed that since 2021, the husband had been purchasing duty-unpaid liquor for his father's consumption from a supplier via social media. In 2023, he bought over his supplier's stock and started reselling the duty-unpaid liquor to others. He stored the duty-unpaid liquor in his house, engaged both his wife and her brother to liaise with buyers on the sale and delivery of the duty-unpaid liquor. His wife would deliver the duty-unpaid liquor to customers at the ground floor of her residence, while her brother would deliver the duty-unpaid liquor to customers at other locations.

### Action Taken

The husband was sentenced to a fine of S\$220,000 for dealing with duty-unpaid liquor. His wife and her brother were both sentenced to a fine of S\$203,000 each. The wife's brother failed to pay the fine and served 53 days' imprisonment in default.





# THAILAND

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG

# CASE 1

## SEIZURE 13.945 KILOGRAMS OF “HEROIN” CONCEALED IN WAIST BANDS

### Fact

The Customs Department of Thailand, together with the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), Royal Thai Police, and Thailand Post Officers, have seized 13.945 kilograms of heroin to be smuggled out of Thailand to Australia.

### Modus Operandi

The drug was intercepted at the Suvarnabhumi Airport Post Office by the Airport Interdiction Task Force (AITF) led by Thai Customs on 20th July 2023. Firstly, the Customs Enforcement Division targeted a parcel bound for Australia as the shipment matched certain risk criteria and placed it for a thorough x-ray, the x-ray images of the parcel showed the unusual appearance, density, and colour of the goods. The heroin weighed around 13.945 kilograms was concealed in waist bands from four boxes of parcels weighing 3,797 grams, 3,200 grams, 3,765 grams, 3,183 grams respectively.

This case began with the frontline officer suspecting the shipment by its origin and destination. Therefore, Thai customs scanned the packages and 13.945 kilograms were concealed in waist bands.

The risk indicators in this case are:

1. Destination country: New South Wales, Australia
  - High-risk city and country for drug trafficking
2. Sender address: Chiang Rai, Thailand
  - A high-risk province for drug trafficking, and this area is near the Golden Triangle.
3. Description of Goods: Waist Bands
  - Similar to the previous arrest that concealed clothing







### Action Taken

The offenders were charged with the Customs Act B.E. 2560 (2017) and the Narcotics Act B.E. 2522 (1979) for any produce, imports, or exports of narcotics in category 1.

# CASE 2

## SEIZURE 10.890 KILOGRAMS OF “HEROIN” CONCEALED IN INSTANT CEREAL AND BEVERAGE

### Fact

The Customs Department of Thailand, together with the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), Royal Thai Police, and Thailand Post Officers, have seized 10.890 kilograms of heroin to be smuggled out of Thailand to Australia.

### Modus Operandi

The drug was intercepted at the Suvarnabhumi Airport Post Office by the Airport Interdiction Task Force (AITF) led by Thai Customs on 31st May 2023. Firstly, the Customs Enforcement Division targeted a parcel bound for Australia as the shipment matched certain risk criteria and placed it for a thorough x-ray, the x-ray images of the parcel showed the unusual appearance, density, and colour of the goods. The heroin weighed around 10.890 kilograms was concealed in instant cereal and beverage from three boxes of parcels, weighing 3,450 grams, 4,070 grams, 3,370 grams respectively.

This case began with the frontline officer suspecting the shipment by its origin, and destination. Therefore, Thai customs scanned the packages and found 10.890 kilograms were concealed in instant cereal and beverages.

The risk indicators in this case are:

1. Destination country: Victoria, Australia
  - High-risk city and country for drug trafficking
2. Description of Goods: Instant cereal and beverage
  - Similar to the previous arrest that was concealed in instant cereal and beverages.







BY THAILAND  
34TH ASEAN CECWG



## Action Taken

The offenders were charged with the Customs Act B.E. 2560 (2017) and the Narcotics Act B.E. 2522 (1979) for any produces, imports, or exports of narcotics in category 1.



# CASE 3

## METH FOUND SOAKED IN FABRIC OF THE T-SHIRT

### Fact

Thai Customs Department, together with the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), Royal Thai Police, and Thailand Post officers, have seized 13,790 kilograms of methamphetamine to be smuggled out of Thailand to Australia.



### Modus Operandi

The drug was intercepted at the Suvarnabhumi Airport Post Office by the Airport Interdiction Task Force (AITF) led by Thai Customs on 7th December 2023. First, the Customs Enforcement Division targeted a parcel bound for Australia as the shipment matched certain risk criteria and placed it for a thorough x-ray; the x-ray images of the parcel showed the unusual appearance, density, and colour of the goods. As a result of the inspection, we found 13,790 kilograms of methamphetamine soaked in the T-shirts from two boxes of parcels, weighing 6,430 grams, and 7,350 grams respectively.



This case began with the frontline officer suspecting the shipment based on its origin and destination. The recent trend shows that the drug is often concealed inside T-shirts or clothing. Also, Australia is one of the most risky destinations for drug trafficking from Thailand. Therefore, Thai customs officers keep an eye on those parcels, and then the x-ray image shows the unusual appearance, density, and colour of the goods.





BY THAILAND  
35TH ASEAN CEDWG



### Action Taken

The drug was sent to Narcotics Police for proceedings and further investigation.

# CASE 4

## HIDDEN COCAINE AROUND 3.6 KGS INSIDE LUGGAGE

### Fact

Thai Customs Department, together with the Office of Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), Royal Thai Police, arrested a suspicious female who was involved in international drug trafficking and found five bags of 3,655 grams of Cocaine.



### Modus Operandi

A Thai customs officer discovered a suspicious South African female on 9th January 2024, who was on the watch list due to her travel dates and high risk of drug smuggling. The woman, who flew from Durban, South Africa via Doha, Qatar to Bangkok, Thailand, was suspected to have concealed illicit items in her luggage. Upon inspection, the officer found five bags of 3,655 gram of cocaine, wrapped in clear plastic bags, foil, and black adhesive tape, concealed in a secret compartment on the luggage's edge.

In this case, the routing (Durban, South Africa—Doha, Qatar—Bangkok, Thailand) did not include a high-risk Indicator. However, she booked the ticket close to the day of travel and booked it through an agency that had information about the high risk of drug smuggling. In her statement, MS. D claimed that she stopped in Doha to pick up the package there and took it to Thailand.





การตรวจค้นกระเป๋าเดินทาง  
ของผู้โดยสารที่เดินทาง 3



Enforcement Division  
Section 3



## Action Taken

The offenders were charged with the Customs Act B.E. 2560 (2017) and Narcotics Act B.E. 2522 (1979) for any produces, imports, or exports of narcotics of category 2.



# VIETNAM

## ENFORCEMENT CASES

34TH & 35TH CECWG





BY VIETNAM  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 1

## A SEIZURE OF 19 KG OF KETAMINE SENT FROM FRANCE BY AIR

### Fact

A shipment of suspected drugs was discovered during customs procedures in Vietnam. The Hanoi Customs Department and Vietnam Police inspected two boxes of goods, each containing 10 yellow boxes and a nylon bag containing white crystals of ketamine, totaling over 19 kg. The total weight of the goods was around 30 kg. The Hanoi Customs Department and Vietnam Police collaborated to ensure the safety of the shipment.



### Modus Operandi

- The modus operandi involved using cocoa boxes and cocoa powder to hide drugs and transport them into the country. They exploited tourism, airport warehouse and logistics companies to transport drugs.
- In the first three months of 2023, more drugs were seized than in the previous five years combined.
- Plenty of drugs were sent as gifts from European countries, with fake names and addresses and unregistered phone numbers.
- Customs and Police Forces arrested 10 cases and confiscated 592 kg of synthetic drugs at Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi.
- The synthetic drugs from Europe are cheap and higher purity and thus their prices in Vietnam increased by 5–10 times fold.
- This leads to illegal activities such as mixing, hiding, and transporting narcotics, exploiting import-export, immigration, customs procedures, and related management policies.

### Action Taken

N/A





BY VIETNAM  
34TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 2

7 TONNES OF IVORY WERE DISCOVERED AND SEIZED AT HAI PHONG PORT, VIETNAM.

## Fact

On 20th March 2023, at Nam Hai Dinh Vu port (Hai Phong), Hai Phong Customs Department coordinated with Hai Phong Police to search a 20-foot container containing more than 7.6 tonnes of Ivory and other products from Ivory smuggled from Africa. The amount of smuggled Ivory is considered to be the largest ever seized at Hai Phong port.

The above containers belong to a shipment declared as peanuts originating from Angola, transferred to Singapore, and then returned to Nam Hai Dinh Vu port.



## Modus Operandi

- Description of the goods in unfamiliar language and inaccurate consignee information to avoid control by authorities.
- Previously, in February 2023, the Hai Phong Customs Department arrested two cases of illegally transporting 490 kg of Ivory from Nigeria, declared as "raised cow horns," used to produce fine handicrafts, turmeric, pre-processed, cleaned, and dried, and other cases: 125 kg of Ivory from Africa.
- In the first three months of 2023, the Hai Phong Customs Department coordinated with competent forces to seize more than 8.2 tonnes of smuggled Ivory.

## Action Taken

N/A





BY VIETNAM  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 3

## SEIZURE OF 54 KG IVORY AND 22.6 KG RHINO HORN

### Fact

On 27th June 2023, a baggage cargo suspected of containing articles under the CITES category was found by a customs officer at Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi, Vietnam. Four parcels containing CITES materials were found when the Hanoi Customs Department, which is a division of the General Department of Vietnam Customs, examined eight shipments of commodities. Two shipments containing solid ivory and rhino horn cylinders, weighing 11.74 kg and 22.63 kg respectively, and two packages comprising solid, hollow, and solid ivory rectangular blocks, weighing 42.42 kg, were among the packages.



### Modus Operandi

The owner of the goods colluded with a number of employees of the cargo service company to smuggle the packages into the warehouse without going through inspection.



### Action Taken

Two passengers were arrested for smuggling 54 kg of ivory and 22.6 kg of rhino horn, and all the goods were transferred to the Vietnamese police force.





BY VIETNAM  
35TH ASEAN CECWG

# CASE 4

## SEIZURE OF 1,300 KG KETAMINE

### Fact

On 21st September 2023, Vietnam Customs and Vietnam Police have seized 30 unlabeled sacks containing 750 kg of ketamine from a warehouse in Hai Phong, Vietnam. The sacks were hidden in gas tanks and passenger beds, similar to the 30 bags seized in Hai Phong. The same bags were also found in a vehicle, with 22 bags hidden in fake gas tanks and passenger beds. The plan was to hide 52 bags containing 1.3 tons of ketamine mixed in cement bags, transporting them by sea to China for consumption, resulting in 1,300 kg of ketamine.



### Modus Operandi

- The criminals established a pharmaceutical company in Laos, then took advantage of it to buy precursors and chemicals to produce synthetic drugs.
- Finished drugs are transported to Vietnam via the gathering route in Thai Binh, then brought to Hai Phong for export to third countries.
- Subjects in the line entered Vietnam, booked hotels, rented cars, hired interpreters, rented warehouses, and bought 100 tonnes of cement to gather at a warehouse in Hong Bang district, Hai Phong, hiding bags containing ketamine mixed in cement bags and transporting them by sea to China.
- In the car that was seized, 22 bags were hidden in a fake gas tank and the passenger's bed.



### Action Taken

Seventeen individuals were arrested and 1,300 kg of seized ketamine were then transferred to the Vietnamese police force.





FOR ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS, KINDLY CONTACT US:

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