



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR

HM CUSTOMS
Custom House
Waterport



PRESS RELEASE

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Cigarette seizures & arrests

HM Customs have seized a further 89,920 cigarettes and made a number of arrests in several areas over the past few days.

Officers challenged a local man when he was seen acting suspiciously in the Western Beach area, the man was arrested after being found to have 10,000 cigarettes (50 cartons) in his possession. He has been bailed to surrender on November 21st.

A Spanish national was arrested by Customs on October 17th within the jurisdiction and consequent to an incident at Eastern Beach on Oct 10th which saw three men escape to Spain and the detection of 23,800 cigarettes (119 cartons) buried in the sand just south of the fence.

In a third incident, officers of HM Customs attended Western Beach and gave pursuit to two Spanish nationals who were seen running with four large holdalls towards the frontier fence. The men dropped the bags, and attempted to evade arrest. One of them entered the sea and was pursued by an officer who detained him some 30m off-shore; the other made good his escape to Spain over the frontier fence. Liaison with other Law Enforcement agencies resulted in a Gibraltar Defence Police launch recovering the detainee and Customs officer in the water and retrieving one of the bags which was afloat. Contact with Spanish Civil guards resulted in their attendance north of the fence and the detention of the second man who had climbed over the fence. The other three bags were recovered from the beach. In total, 19,920 cigarettes (over 99 cartons) were seized in the incident. The Spanish national arrested in Gibraltar has been bailed to surrender on November 22nd.

T: +350 200 78879 (c3741); F: +350 200 46706 (c3706); e: hmcustoms@gibraltar.gov.gi

Following a Customs pursuit and search of vehicle at British Lines Road, 10,000 cigarettes and a locally registered vehicle were seized in a separate incident. The car was detected alongside the frontier fence.

A further 50,000 cigarettes (250 cartons) were seized in the early hours of the morning when officers on a routine patrol challenged a group of men found on the northern area of Eastern Beach. The men immediately jumped into the seas and swam to Spain. An area search resulted in a find of five large packages of cigarettes concealed amongst the rocks in the vicinity.

All the cigarettes (over 449 cartons) have been seized by HM Customs.