



Wednesday, 19 September 2018

Press Release Malta Customs Department

Media Release: Malta Customs releases final figures pertaining to the drug bust

After 48 hours of a rigorous process conducted by the Anti-Drug Squad and the Forensic Unit, within the Police Force, in conjunction with the Malta Customs officials, the operation ended early this morning on the four containers which have been retained in the Freeport, in connection with the latest drug seizure,

The Department of Customs is now in a position to confirm that the seized narcotics totalled **10,729.40** kilogramms of resin of cannabis, at a market price in the region of **€28.5 million**.

During the operation, Malta Customs opened four containers which were under suspicion, following clear positive indications by the scanning equipment on two of the containers of inconsistency in the makeup within the containers.

- In the first searched container, which was declared as containing buckets full of detergent liquid, **28,436** packets of cannabis resin were taken out of the container, weighing in total **5,687.20** kilogrammes.
- In the second searched container, which was likewise declared as containing pales of detergent liquid, **25,211** pales full of detergent liquid were taken out of the container, weighing in total **5,042.20** kilogrammes.
 - These two containers, in fact, provided clear images in the scanner that the material contained within most probably consisted in drug content, leading to a physical examination that actually confirmed the suspicion indicated by the scanner.
- The third container, which did not provide to the scanner any inconsistency in what was inside, and which also was declared as carrying detergent pales, was also searched and had its contents examined individually. No drug content was in fact traced.
- The fourth container, which also did not provide to the scanner any inconsistency in its contents, and which, according to its declaration, was carrying blow torches, was also opened, again, with the negative result of any drug trace.
- Thus, in total, the seizure consisted of **10,729.40** kilogrammes of resin of cannabis at a total market cost in the region of €28.5 million.



D W A N A

The Department of Customs wishes to take the occasion of publicly conveying its appreciation and thank:

- The Anti-Drug Squad and Forensic Unit, within the Police Force, for their extensive assistance provided to Customs Department and for their professional aptitude in conducting the analysis operation;
- The Security Department of Malta Freeport who facilitated the smooth operation process that needed to be conducted under strict security; and
- All Malta Customs officials involved in this sensitive operation that entailed the biggest drug find ever recorded in Malta' history.

Finally, Malta Customs also wants to publicly convey its appreciation and takes the occasion to thank the European Commission, including OLAF, within the Commission, for co-financing, through various programmes, the purchase of the ZBV Backscatter scanner, the Nuctech scanner and the sophisticated analytical electronic equipment, operated by the Customs Intelligence Service, and the setting up of the new Canine Unit, within the Enforcement Directorate. These tools are indeed serving their purpose toward the attainment of the new targets which the Department of Customs in Malta is adamant to reach.

