

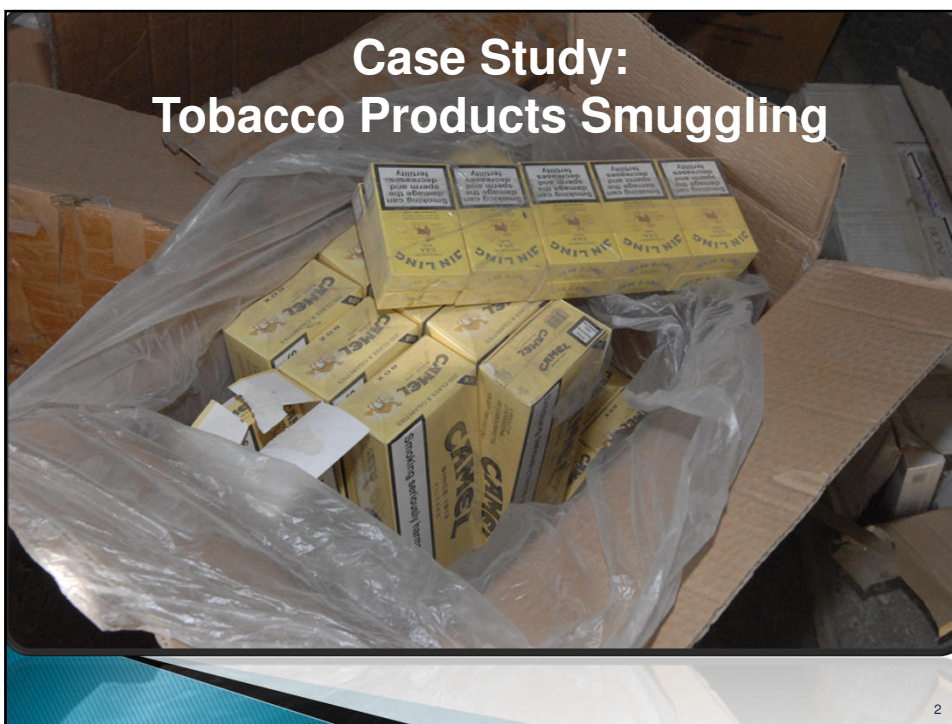


FINANCIAL POLICE DIVISION
Tax Policing & Social Insurance Protection
Department

Police Lieutenant LEVAKOS Sotirios

Athens, 13TH -14TH May 2015

Case Study:
Tobacco Products Smuggling





CASE OVERVIEW

- On the 4.4.2013 a person handed in a parcel to a transport company, which supposedly contained wood floor of laminate type and asked for the parcel to be delivered to a company in Italy. The parcel was considered suspicious by the transport company, it was opened and it turned out that it contained 23.368 packages of contraband cigarettes.



KEY ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY THE RELEVANT DEPARTMENT

- The person that was interested for the parcel's transportation to Italy, communicated with the transport company through a cell phone number, which belonged to an individual who had previously been arrested (during 2009) for cigarette smuggling.
- Men of our Agency watched the actions of that individual and found out that he was the leading member of a criminal organization which supplied the domestic and the European markets with smuggled cigarettes.



MODES OF ACTION BY THE CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION



- ❑ The Organization used storage spaces in places difficult to track and to observe, where its members packed the smuggled cigarettes in order to be distributed at points of sale.
- ❑ For the storing of the smuggled cigarettes, the organization used a warehouse and smaller storing spots, the covered parking spaces of houses, that were converted into storage and packaging places for the contraband cigarettes.



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- ❑ For the transport of the smuggled cigarettes, the members of the organization used their own vehicles and three transportation vans.



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POLICE OPERATION

- ❑ On 5.12.2013 a simultaneous police operation was carried out to all the places used by the criminal organization for its illegal acts.
- ❑ Investigations were conducted in a warehouse and three different residences used by the members of the criminal organization.
- ❑ The police officers of our Agency detected more than 1.620.000 packets of contraband cigarettes and 540 tobacco packs of 25 gr.



- ❑ Seven individuals were arrested, with six of them being characterized as members of the criminal organization.
- ❑ The unpaid tax and duties for the above-mentioned quantities of cigarettes and tobacco were calculated by the Customs authorities at around €5.507.000





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Thank you!

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