

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS
BY DEPUTY S.S.P.A. POWER OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2014**

Question

Could the Minister indicate what steps, if any, are being taken to control the amount of tobacco product being imported informally into the Island so that sale of tobacco outside night clubs, bars and restaurants can be stopped?

How many trucks and commercial vehicles, if any, have been stopped and searched for this specific purpose in the past year?

Answer

In order to control the amount of tobacco being imported into the Island without payment of duty, Officers in the Customs and Immigration Service continue to monitor this type of passenger traffic and, depending on the circumstances, either seize, charge duty, or prosecute individuals contravening the duty free allowances. There have been 2 prosecutions in recent months.

Extra resources will be allocated to identifying passengers importing goods in excess of the duty free allowance and particularly cigarettes. The Customs and Immigration Service have received funding to employ 2 temporary officers for 3 months from June 2014. These are the busiest months for Customs and Immigration Officers on the frontiers.

In relation to searches, it should be noted that when stopping and searching a passenger, vehicle or container, officers are searching for any type of goods that are restricted / prohibited on import. As a result, searches are not confined specifically to tobacco goods and the Customs and Immigration Service do not keep specific search records for vehicles / trucks.

However, I am able to confirm that in total 1909 searches were undertaken at the ports last year. As a result of these searches, 586 had a positive outcome from a tobacco seizure perspective. The seizure details are as follows:

182,500 cigarettes (Duty evasion - £39,100)
51 kgs of tobacco (Duty evasion - £13,200)