Man nabbed trying to smuggle 2.2mn cigarettes

A Malaysian national has been busted trying to smuggle more than two million cigarettes into New Zealand in Customs’ largest-ever tobacco seizure. He was arrested on Wednesday for attempting to evade $2.72m in duty and GST and trying to smuggle 2.2m cigarettes through the border. Customs’ group manager of intelligence, investigations and enforcement, Dana McDonald, said the tobacco seizure was “yet another example of organised crime involvement in tobacco fraud”.

“Criminals will do whatever they can to make money, regardless of the commodity – it’s just business for them,” she said. “With cigarette prices in New Zealand amongst the highest globally, tobacco fraud is seen as a lucrative business venture for criminals, and sadly we expect this trend to continue.”

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