

180,000 Contraband Cigarettes Seized by the Central St. Lawrence Valley Regional Task Force

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(Cornwall, Ontario) On April 9th, 2007, at 10:30 p.m., an officer from the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service stopped a 2002 Dodge Grand Caravan on Vincent Massey Drive in Cornwall, Ontario. Subsequent investigation revealed that the insurance card on the vehicle was expired. While the officer was issuing the ticket, he could smell an odour of tobacco. Both the driver and passenger were detained until officers from the Central St. Lawrence Valley RCMP were contacted. A Canadian Border Services Agency officer who works with the Central St. Lawrence Valley Regional Task Force arrived on the scene and found the van to be loaded with contraband cigarettes. The van and the contraband cigarettes were seized. The driver and passenger were released to appear in court at a later date.

Located inside the van were 300 cartons of Native Lights cigarettes, 300 cartons of Discount Light cigarettes and 300 cartons of Discount Full Flavor cigarettes. This represents a total of 180,000 cigarettes that were manufactured in the United States and smuggled into Canada. The driver, a 23 year old female resident of Syracuse, New York, will be charged under Section 32(1) of the *Excise Act 2001* for possession of a tobacco product that was not properly stamped according to the *Excise Act 2001*. The passenger, a 27 year old female resident of Solvay, New York also faces charges under the *Excise Act 2001*. The registered owner of the van is a 29 year old female resident of St. Regis, Quebec.

As an intelligence-led organization, the RCMP works closely with First Nations. The continued cooperation between the RCMP, the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service and the Canadian Border Services Agency enhances our border security and disrupts any illegal activity that organized crime groups attempt in our community.

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