

I. TRENDS IN ILLICIT DRUGS SMUGGLING

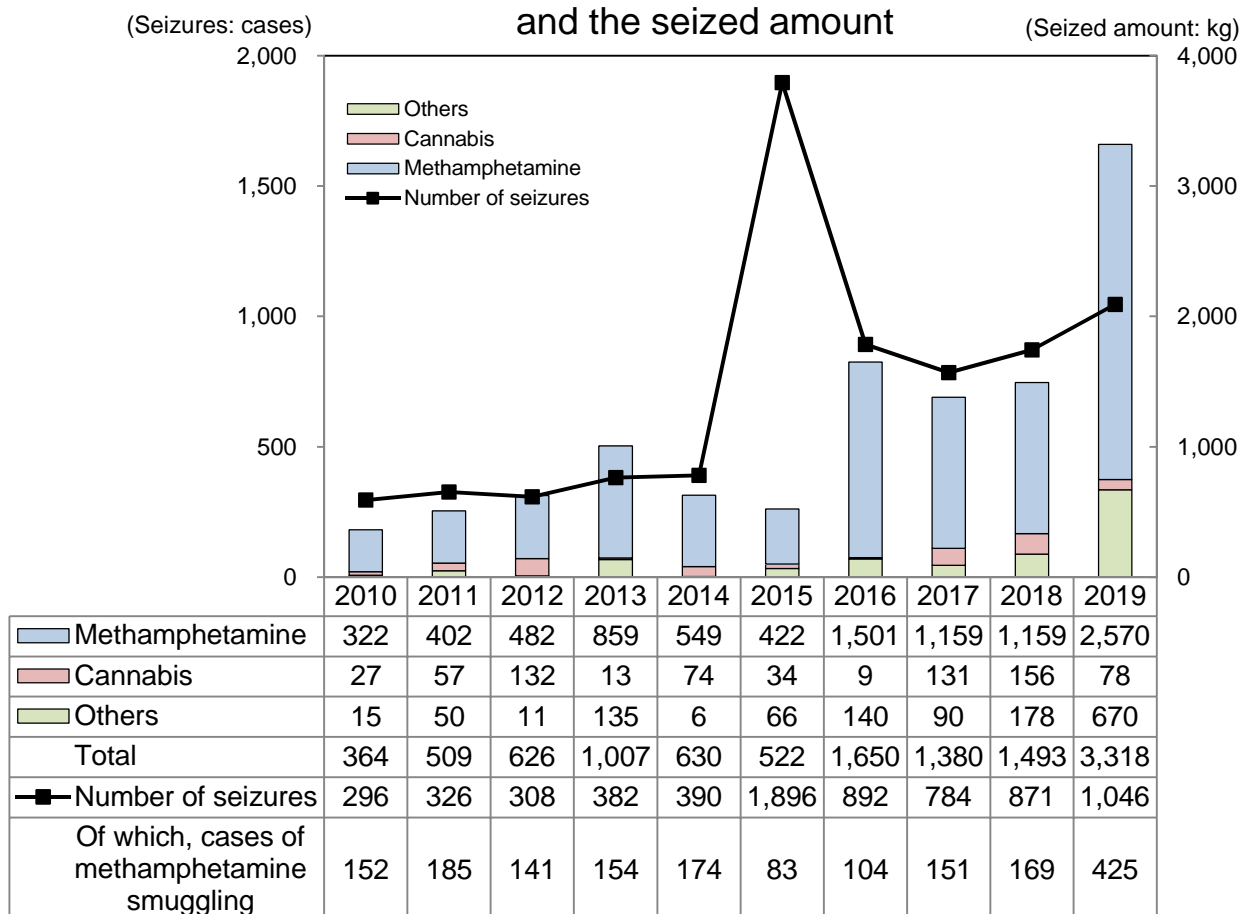
1. Seizures of Smuggled Illicit Drugs

The total number of seizures of smuggled illicit drugs*¹ during the one-year period from January to December of 2019 was 1,046 (up by 20% from the previous year), and the total amount of seized illicit drugs*² was approx. 3,318 kg (an approx. 2.2-fold increase from the previous year). In particular, the seized amount exceeded 3 tons for the first time. Illicit drugs smuggled into Japan have thus been increasing continuously, presenting an extremely serious situation.

*1 "Illicit drugs" refers to methamphetamine, cannabis, opium, narcotics (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, etc.), psychotropic substances and designated substances.

*2 "The total amount of seized illicit drugs" excludes tablet formed drugs.

Transition in the number of seizures of smuggled illicit drugs and the seized amount



(Note) "Others" includes opium, narcotics (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, etc.), psychotropic substances and designated substances. Designated substances were added to "articles prohibited from import" in April 2015. Figures for 2019 are provisional.

(1) Methamphetamine

< Seizures of smuggled methamphetamine >

The number of seizures of smuggled methamphetamine during the one-year period from January to December of 2019 was 425 cases, a significant increase of approx. 2.5-fold from the previous year, marking a record high. The amount of seized methamphetamine also increased significantly to approx. 2,570 kg (approx. 2.2-fold increase from the previous year), exceeding 2.5 tons for the first time and exceeding 1 ton for the fourth consecutive year. In two cases of drug trafficking by sea, approx. 1.6 tons of methamphetamine were seized, which accounted for over 50% of the total amount of seized methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine accounted for approx. 80% of the total amount of seized illicit drugs, which suggests that the smuggling of methamphetamine into Japan is particularly serious. Seized methamphetamine is equivalent to approximately 85.66 million doses, worth approximately 154.2 billion yen in end price.

< Major seizures of smuggled methamphetamine >

[Case 1] Trafficking by sea (The largest-ever amount)

Customs seized approx. 1 ton of methamphetamine trafficked by sea, to the southwest off Torishima Island, on the coast of Minamiizu-cho, Kamo-gun, Shizuoka. (June 2019, Tokyo Customs, etc.)



[Case 2] Trafficking by sea (The third largest amount)

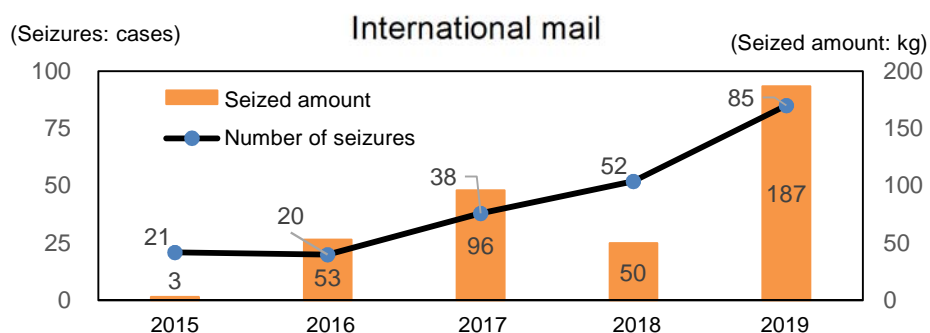
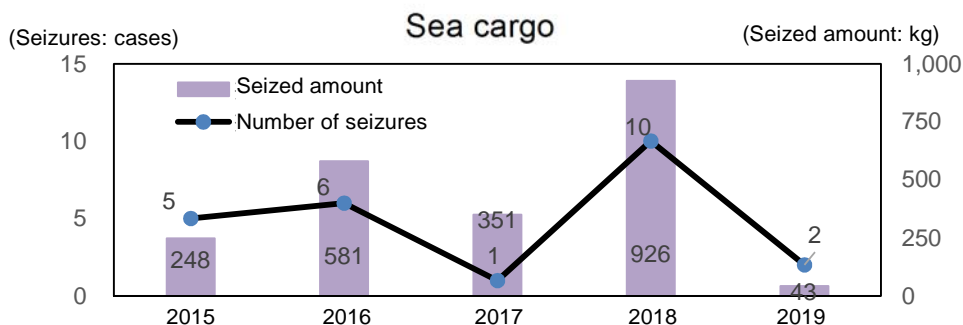
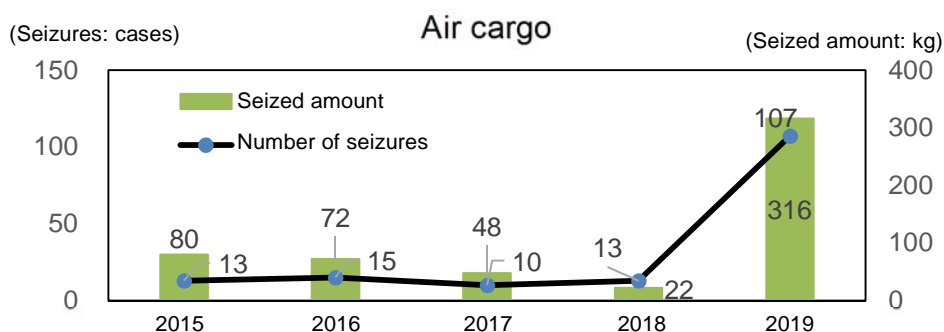
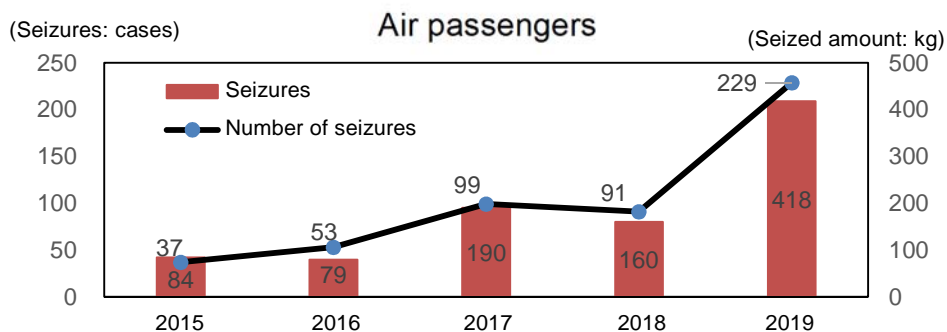
Customs seized approx. 587 kg of methamphetamine trafficked by sea on the East China Sea, at the port of Oniki-machi, Amakusa-shi, Kumamoto. (December 2019, Moji Customs, etc.)

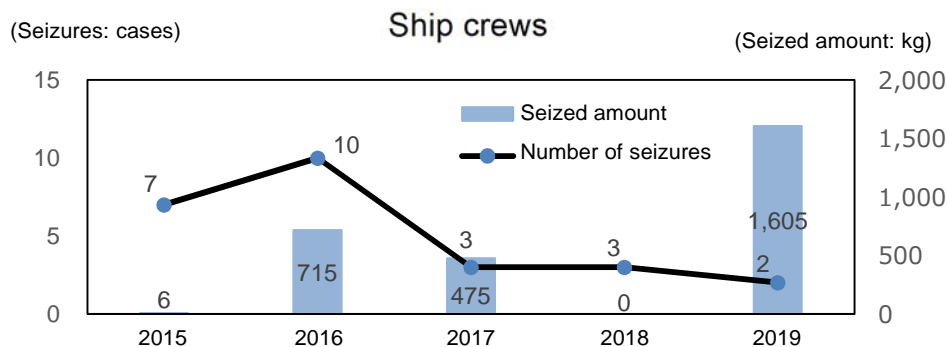


< Seizures of smuggled methamphetamine by mode of transport >

Methamphetamine smuggling by air passengers accounted for more than 50% of all seizures during the one-year period from January to December of 2019. Smuggling cases by air passengers increased approx. 2.5-fold in number and the amount of seized methamphetamine increased approx. 2.6-fold from the previous year, both showing significant increases. Out of commercial cargo, seizures of air cargo increased approx. 8.2-fold and the amount increased approx. 14-fold from the

previous year. Seizures of international mail increased by 63% and the amount increased approx. 3.7-fold from the previous year, while the amount of seized methamphetamine smuggled by ship crews (including trafficking by sea) showed an extremely significant increase of approx. 110,000-fold from the previous year.





(Note) "Air passengers" includes crew members, and "ship crews" includes passengers and cases of trafficking by sea. "International cargo" includes unaccompanied baggage sent by air, and "sea cargo" includes unaccompanied baggage sent by sea.

< Major seizures of smuggled methamphetamine by mode of transport >

[Case 3] Air passenger

Customs seized approx. 0.9 kg of methamphetamine concealed in personal effects (sandals) of a Polish woman, who arrived at Naha Airport from Malaysia. (October 2019, Okinawa Regional Customs)



[Case 4] Air cargo

Customs seized approx. 1.6 kg of methamphetamine concealed in air cargo for home delivery (auto mufflers) that arrived from the United States. (May 2019, Osaka Customs)



[Case 5] Sea cargo

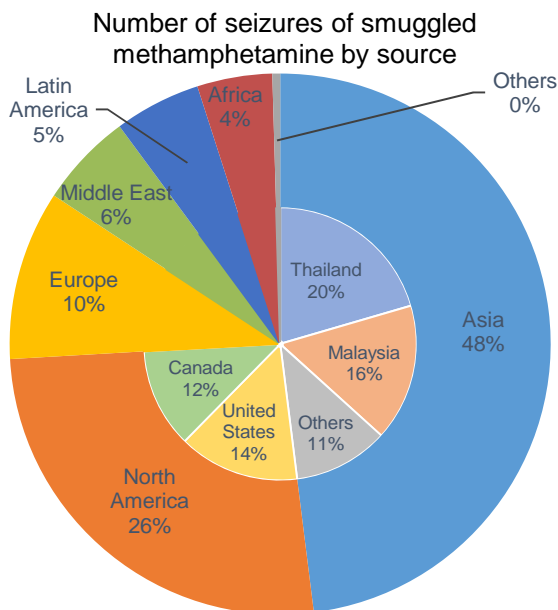
Customs seized approx. 43 kg of methamphetamine concealed in sea cargo (ship speed reducers) that arrived from Mexico via China. (May 2019, Tokyo Customs)



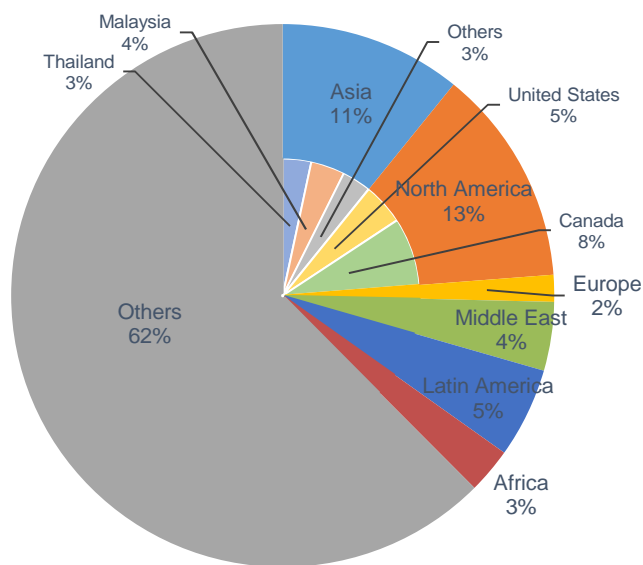
< Seizures of smuggled methamphetamine by source >

Looking at seizures of smuggled methamphetamine by source during the one-year period from January to December of 2019, Asia accounted for nearly half at 48%, followed by North America and Europe. These three areas accounted for approx. 80% of the overall total. In terms of the seized amount, Asia accounted for 11%, North America 13%, and other areas 62%. The reason for the large percentage of other areas is that sources were unknown for approx. 1 ton trafficked by sea to the

southwest off Torishima Island and approx. 587 kg trafficked by sea on the East China Sea. In Asia, seizures increased significantly for methamphetamine originated from Thailand and Malaysia, in particular.



Amount of seized methamphetamine by source

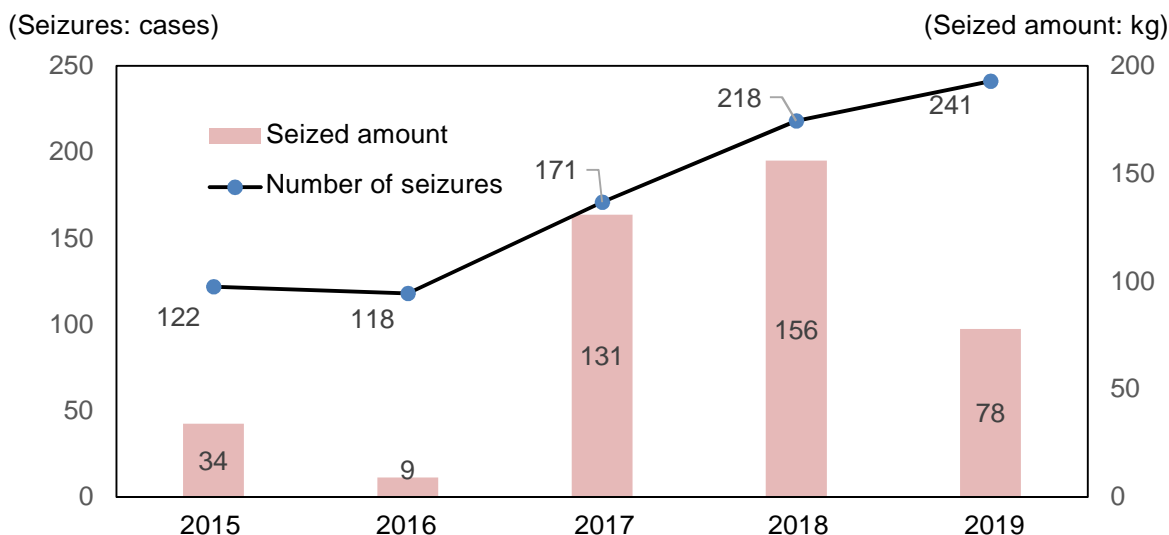


(2) Cannabis

The number of seizures of smuggled cannabis during the one-year period from January to December of 2019 was 241 cases, a slight increase by 11% from the previous year, while the seized amount decreased by 50% from the previous year to approx. 78 kg. The number of seizures exceeded 200 cases for the second consecutive year, and has doubled from 2015.

The number of seizures and the seized amount both decreased for herbal cannabis, but increased for cannabis resin, etc. (including cannabis products, such as cannabis liquid and cannabis sweets, in addition to cannabis resin) (131 cases [up by 46% from the previous year] and approx. 17 kg [up by 31% from the previous year]).

Transition in the number of seizures of smuggled cannabis and the seized amount



< Seizures of smuggled cannabis >

| Type | | Year | | | | | YOY |
|----------------------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | |
| Cannabis | cases | 122 | 118 | 171 | 218 | 241 | 111% |
| | kg | 34 | 9 | 131 | 156 | 78 | 50% |
| Herbal Cannabis | cases | 58 | 81 | 115 | 128 | 110 | 86% |
| | kg | 29 | 6 | 117 | 143 | 61 | 43% |
| Cannabis resin, etc. | cases | 64 | 37 | 56 | 90 | 131 | 146% |
| | kg | 6 | 3 | 13 | 13 | 17 | 131% |

< Major seizures of smuggled cannabis >

[Case 6]

Customs seized approx. 85 g of cannabis in liquid form that a Japanese man, who arrived at Fukuoka Airport from the United States via South Korea, had concealed by swallowing. (November 2019, Moji Customs)



*A photo of the cannabis in liquid form that the man swallowed

[Case 7]

Customs seized approx. 168 g of cannabis in total concealed in international mail (2 cases) that arrived from France, etc. (April and May 2019, Moji Customs, etc.)



(3) Narcotics

The number of seizures of smuggled narcotics (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, etc.) during the one-year period from January to December of 2019 decreased slightly to 209 cases (down by 7% from the previous year), but the seized amount increased significantly to approx. 656 kg (an approx. 4.1-fold increase from the previous year). In particular, the amount of seized cocaine showed a significant increase of approx. 4.2-fold to approx. 638 kg, although the number of seizures decreased slightly to 52 cases (down by 10% from the previous year). The number of seizures and the seized amount both increased for MDMA (67 cases [up by 14% from the previous year] and approx. 61,000 tablets [up by 91% from the previous year]).

< Major seizures of smuggled narcotics >

[Case 8] Foreign trading vessel (The second largest amount)

Customs seized approx. 178 kg of cocaine concealed in the seawater intake at the bottom of a foreign trading vessel that entered Mikawa Port (Toyohashi). (August 2019, Nagoya Customs)



[Case 9] Sea Cargo (The largest-ever amount for cocaine)

Customs seized approx. 400 kg of cocaine concealed in a marine container arrived from Brazil. (October 2019, Kobe Customs)



2. Influences of Illicit Drug Abuse

Methamphetamine and narcotics significantly harm the mental and physical health of people who abuse them, make them unable to live like human beings, or even cause deaths.

Hallucinations or delusions due to the illicit drug abuse may lead to heinous crimes, such as murder or arson, or traffic accidents in some cases. The abuse of illicit drugs may thus cause irredeemable damage not only to abusers themselves but also to the people around them and to society as a whole in the end.

(1) Mental and physical influences

The abuse of methamphetamine and other illicit drugs fatally destroys abusers' mental and physical health. Major organs are subject to serious adverse influences listed as follows, which may even cause death in the worst case.

- Brain: Brain atrophy and brain hemorrhage (memory deterioration and senility symptoms)
- Eyes: Optic nerve disorder and fundus hemorrhage (decreased vision and loss of sight)
- Bronchi: Mucosal abnormality (bronchitis)
- Lungs: Mucosal abnormality (lung cancer)
- Stomach: Gastric mucosal abnormality and bleeding (gastric pain, nausea, and emesis)
- Bone marrow: Red blood cell dysplasia (anemia)

The abuse of illicit drugs hinders normal brain development and worsens abusers' mental balance. Abusers may temporarily feel to be clear-headed or have nervous excitement, but will be overwhelmed by a sense of exhaustion or a feeling of fatigue, and will eventually have hallucinations and delusions.

(2) Influences on surrounding people

The abuse of illicit drugs not only exerts influences on individual abusers but also causes damage to the people around them and society as a whole. One of the representative adverse influences is violence. Long-term abuse of illicit drugs causes disturbance of perception, decreased appetite, emotional disorder, hallucinations and strong paranoia, due to which abusers often use violence on their family members or develop abnormal behavior, such as carrying a weapon all the time. Family members

and people around them are swayed by such behavior and are forced to live with fear and suffering.

The high prices of illicit drugs often make abusers heavily debt-ridden, leading to the destruction of families or failure of lives, or triggering minors to take money from the home. The abuse of illicit drugs thus also causes serious economic problems.

Furthermore, the abuse of illicit drugs triggers various offenses. There seems no end to the heinous crimes, such as murder, arson, captivity, and injury, caused by hallucinations, delusions or flashbacks,* or theft just to get money for purchasing drugs.

Additionally, it is also a serious social problem that money paid by illicit drug abusers becomes the source of funds for international drug crime organizations and organized crime groups in Japan. In this manner, the influences of abuse of illicit drugs threaten people's lives on a broad scale from various aspects.

*Once a person develops a hallucination, delusion or other symptoms of mental illness due to the abuse of illicit drugs, even if the person superficially seems to have recovered through treatment, his/her base prone to mental disorders remains and something may easily trigger a mental disorder, such as a hallucination or delusion, after the person stopped the drug abuse and resumed his/her normal life. This is called a flashback, which may be caused by a trivial stimulus such as drinking alcohol or mental stress.

Refer to Japan Customs' Website

<https://www.customs.go.jp/mizugiwa/smuggler/abuse.htm>