

Customs ensures the safety and security of Japanese society
Prevent harmful items from being smuggled into Japan

Ensuring Peoples'
Security and Safety

The economy and society in each country have been increasingly globalized and become borderless in recent years, and the volume of international trade and human exchanges have also expanded. Such trends increase the danger from illegal imports, including smuggling of illicit drugs such as methamphetamines and cannabis, firearms,terrorism-related materials threatening the security and safety of peoples’lives, as well as goods infringing intellectual property rights which impede the sound development of the economy. In order to secure peoples’security and safety and maintain economic and social order in Japan, Japan Customs puts preventing the inflow of such goods harmful to society at the border as one of the top priorities and is actively implementing various controlling measures.



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Effective Border Management

Japan Customs puts preventing illegal movement of prohibited goods such as illicit drugs and firearms as one of the top priorities and is actively implementing strict controlling measures. Japan Customs will enhance the inspection and surveillance and continue to improve border management through various measures, including effective use of large-scale X-ray inspection systems and close cooperation with other domestic and foreign authorities.

LARGE-SCALE X-RAY INSPECTION SYSTEM

Balancing competing goals for accuracy and speed

Customs inspects import/export cargoes, hand-carry items of inbound and outbound passengers and international mails/parcels, Japan Customs has installed various X-ray inspection systems for quick and accurate inspections without unpacking, which uncover smuggling of illicit drugs, such as methamphetamines and cannabis, and firearms. Responding to large-scale smuggling cases using large containers and in order to inspect large cargoes, such as automobiles, as well as the containers themselves, the first large-scale X-ray inspection system was introduced at the Port of

Yokohama in 2001, and since then, a total of 15 systems have been installed at 13 ports across the country. The systems complete inspections in about 10 minutes per container, compared with about two hours previously taken, greatly reducing the inspection time.



LARGE-SCALE X-RAY INSPECTION SYSTEM



DRUG DETECTOR DOG

Important partners indispensable for detecting drugs

After two drug detector dogs came to Japan in 1979 through the cooperation of U.S. Customs, about 130 drug detector dogs are assigned to customs throughout Japan at present.

The drug detector dogs sniff the personal effects of inbound passengers, foreign mails arriving in Japan and other imported items. The drug detector dogs have spotted a large amount of illicit drugs to date, such as cannabis and methamphetamines.

We introduced the explosive detector dogs as part of Customs' anti-terrorism measures in 2002, and also introduced the currency dogs to control cash smuggling in 2024.



TDS (ILLCIT DRUGS AND EXPLOSIVES DETECTORS SYSTEM)

Japan's uniquely successful inspection equipment

TDS enables us to detect hidden illicit drugs such as methamphetamine and explosives by mass analyzing of ionized specimen which was collected by wiping the surface of the exported/imported commercial cargoes, the personal effects of outbound/inbound passengers, foreign mails and so on. It has contributed to intercept a massive amount of illicit drugs such as methamphetamine.

It enables us to inspect exported/imported items promptly and strictly while outbound/

inbound passengers and exported/imported cargoes are rapidly increased, because it can detect hidden illicit drugs and explosives in a short time without destroying items.



METAL DETECTOR GATE

Key Equipment for Countermeasures to Stop Gold Smuggling

In 2017, to address the situation, Customs developed Emergency Countermeasures to "Stop Gold Smuggling", which consists of three core aims: "strengthening inspections", "tightening penalties", and "enhancing the collection and analysis of information, to actively and strictly promote the enforcement of relevant laws against gold smuggling at Customs, which comprise Japan's border. Metal detector gate was introduced as a key equipment for first core aim, "strengthening inspection". They are installed at all international airports and some seaports.

This approach enables us to take stricter regulatory measures against more passengers than when we use handy metal detector while performing customs clearance procedures promptly and smoothly.



No escape for any smuggling. Our policy is clear.

Never miss any smuggling of illicit drugs, firearms and golds, is the firm policy of the Customs and Tariff Bureau and regional Customs nationwide.

In 2024, the total seizure number of illicit drugs was 1,020 (up 24% YOY) and the total seizure amount was approx. 2,579kg (down 6% YOY), which exceeded 2 tons for two years in a row for the first time, and that situation is significantly serious . The seizure number of gold was 493 (up approx.2.3 times YOY), and the seizure amount was approx. 1,218kg (up approx.4 times YOY).



Number of seizures: Gold

Type	Year		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gold	cases		465	811	1,347	1,086	61	51	5	9	219	493 (Note)
	kg		2,032	2,802	6,277	2,054	319	150	27	135	302	1,218 (Note)

(Note) The figures for 2024 are provisional.

Number of seizures: Illicit Drugs and Firearms

Facing increasing smuggling of illicit drugs and firearms, Japan Customs has achieved steady records of seizures at the border.

Type	Year		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	YOY
Methamphetamine etc.	cases		72	95	301	297	139	47%
	kg		811	1,014	665	2,246	1,761	78%
Cannabis	cases		204	199	138	135	390	289%
	kg		126	153	473	171	344	201%
Herbal Cannabis	cases		86	94	57	76	234	308%
	kg		49	22	315	88	211	241%
Cannabis Resin etc.	cases		118	105	81	59	156	264%
	kg		76	132	157	83	133	159%
Opium	cases		—	1	—	—	—	—
	kg		—	4	—	—	—	—
Narcotics	cases		167	233	237	240	322	134%
	kg		822	61	188	312	464	149%
	Thousand Tabs		90	133	82	49	67	137%
Heroin	cases		2	—	—	—	2	—
	kg		0	—	—	—	0	—
Cocaine	cases		27	34	28	71	54	76%
	kg		820	14	49	123	260	211%
MDMA etc.	cases		74	81	98	61	90	148%
	kg		2	30	94	117	139	119%
	Thousand Tabs		90	130	81	48	67	137%
others	cases		64	118	111	108	176	163%
	kg		1	16	46	71	65	91%
	Thousand Tabs		0	3	0	0	0	33%
Psychotropic Substances	cases		2	6	16	10	4	40%
	kg		—	0	0	0	0	4%
	Thousand Tabs		1	1	2	1	1	93%
Designated Substances	cases		300	302	354	143	163	114%
	kg		169	19	19	13	10	78%
Total	cases		745	836	1,046	825	1,020	124%
	kg		1,928	1,251	1,346	2,741	2,579	94%
	Thousand Tabs		91	134	84	49	67	136%
Estimated number of Doses	10,000 Times		5,530	3,577	2,608	8,003	6,919	86%
Firearms	cases		3	1	6	1	26	26.0times
	Guns		3	1	7	1	27	27.0times
Pistols	cases		3	1	6	1	26	26.0times
	Guns		3	1	7	1	27	27.0times
Parts of Firearms	cases		—	1	2	1	1	100%
	Items		—	1	4	1	1	100%

- Note

 - The figures include seizures not only by Japan Customs but also by the police and other law enforcement agencies in collaboration with Japan Customs.
 - "Methamphetamine" includes methamphetamine and its raw materials.
 - "Cannabis plant" includes cannabis stipulated as "narcotics" under the amended Cannabis Control Act and Narcotics and Psychotropics Control Act which have been effective since December 12, 2024.
 - "Cannabis resin etc." includes THC products stipulated as "narcotics" under the amended Cannabis Control Act and Narcotics and Psychotropics Control Act which have been effective since December 12, 2024, in addition to cannabis resin, liquid cannabis and cannabis sweets etc. THC products mean liquids or sweets etc. which contain THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), harmful ingredients of cannabis.
- "MDMA etc." includes MDMA, MDA and MDE.
 - "Others" includes Ketamine and LSD etc.
 - "Estimated Number of Doses" is calculated based on a average dose of abusers as follows (methamphetamine 0.03g; herbal cannabis 0.5g; cannabis resin 0.1g; opium 0.3g;heroin 0.01g; cocain 0.03g ; MDMA etc. and psychotropic substances;1 tablet)
 - "Total" may not add up due to rounding.
 - "0" means less than 500 or 500 tablets, and "-" means nil.
 - The figures for 2024 are provisional.

CASE 1

Illicit drugs

In June 2024, Tokyo Customs seized approx. 19kg of methamphetamine concealed in the belongings of an air passenger - suitcase -arriving at Narita International Airport from Canada.
In May 2024, Osaka Customs seized approx. 825g of Cannabis products concealed in international mail – candy – arriving from the United State of America.



CASE 2

Gold

In January 2024, Moji Customs seized approx. 2kg of gold was detected from inside an underwear of air passenger arriving at Fukuoka International Airport from Korea.



CASE 3

IPR Infringing Goods

In July 2024, Nagasaki Customs accused a Japanese attempting to smuggle 34 trademark-infringing goods including clothes etc. by air cargo from China for violating the Customs Act.



CASE 4

Stolen Vehicles

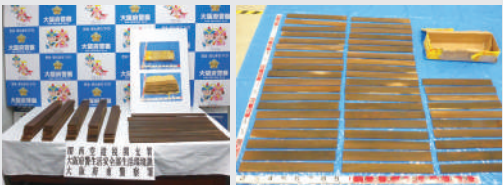
In December 2024, Yokohama Customs accused an Australian attempting to smuggle 2 stolen vehicles by sea cargo to UAE for violating the Customs Act.



CASE 5

CITES Violation

In June 2024,Osaka Customs accused a company and a Japanese attempting to smuggle a wooden board of the genus Dalbergia, by air cargo from Paraguay for violating the Customs Act.



Anti-terrorism and anti-weapons of mass destruction (WMD) measures

To reinforce Customs' anti-terrorism measures, materials and substances for explosives and chemical weapons, pathogens that can be used in terrorist attacks are designated as prohibited import items under the Customs Law in Japan. Japan Customs is actively joining international frameworks to prevent the proliferation of WMD.

LAWS ENACTED TO REINFORCE CONTROL

For anti-terrorism measures, necessary amendments of laws had been made; materials for explosives and chemical weapons, and pathogens that can be used in terrorist attacks are designated as prohibited import items and penalties on smuggling of the above items have been strengthened. In October 2005, post clearance audit was introduced for export cargoes, and since June 2007, customs declaration is required for cargoes related to

WMD transferred to a third country through Japan. These measures are part of Customs' commitment to deterring the proliferation of such weapons.

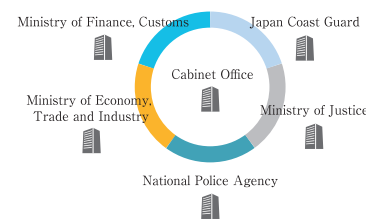
In addition, Japan Customs strengthens enforcement of terrorism-related materials at the border control by enacting laws to obtain advanced information on passengers and cargo for risk analysis before arriving.

CLOSE COOPERATION WITH RELATED

Concerted efforts of all government agencies are indispensable to fight against terrorism and curtail weapons of mass destruction. Customs maintains close contact with the National Police Agency, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and other related authorities, exchanging

information and interchanging personnel.

Customs cargo inspections are carried out in close communication with these agencies in order to interdict smuggling of explosives and illegal export of articles related to WMD.



DEVELOPMENT AND INTRODUCTION OF ADVANCED INSPECTION EQUIPMENT

Japan Customs has introduced Trace Detection Systems (TDS) and Gas Chromatograph-Mass Spectrometer (GC/MS) for illegal drugs and explosives, and furthermore, has worked on research and development of inspection equipment using advanced technologies.

Trace Detection System (TDS)
for illegal drugs and explosives



Implementation of AEO (Authorised Economic Operator) Program

To ensure security and facilitation of international supply chain, the Customs and Tariff Bureau and Japan Customs are striving to implement an AEO program which provides

benefits such as simplified and expeditious Customs procedures to the operators with a system to ensure compliance and cargo security.



COOPERATION WITH FOREIGN CUSTOMS

The International Intelligence Office is a window to communicate with foreign customs and other related agencies. The office collects and analyzes terrorist-related intelligence.

Japan Customs is also actively participating in international activities to fight against terrorism and proliferation of WMD.

Container Security Initiative (CSI)

Under CSI, customs officials are being stationed at foreign seaports to identify high-risk containers before being loaded onto vessels, in cooperation with the Customs officials of host countries. Japan has been implementing CSI with the United States and Canada. Japan Customs has been accepting customs officials of the United States since March 2003 at the Ports of Yokohama, Tokyo, Nagoya and Kobe. On a reciprocal basis, Japan Customs has been stationing officials to the Port of Los Angeles/Long Beach to assess the risks of containers destined for Japan.

PSI Maritime Interdiction Exercise 2008 New Zealand



Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)

PSI is an international effort to design and implement the joint measures of participating countries in order to prevent the proliferation of WMD, missiles and their related materials. Currently, 106 countries are participating and cooperating in PSI. Maritime and aviation interdiction exercises have been held around the world including exercises hosted by Japan.



■ Participation by Japan Customs in recent PSI exercises:

- ☐ July 2018, Yokosuka, Japan (Pacific Shield 18) Maritime interdiction exercise
- ☐ October 2021, Singapore (Deep Sabre 21) Maritime interdiction exercise
- ☐ August 2022, Hawaii, United States (Fortune Guard 22) Maritime interdiction exercise
- ☐ May 2023, Korea (Eastern Endeavor 23) Maritime interdiction exercise
- ☐ September 2024, Australia (Exercise Pacific Protector 24) Maritime interdiction exercise

Initiatives to Protect Intellectual Property

Goods infringing intellectual property rights (IPR) such as counterfeits and pirated goods may hamper economic development, and be a threat to peoples' health and safety. IPR infringement is a serious issue around the world.

IPR ENFORCEMENT

The Japanese government has enhanced the protection of intellectual property in closer cooperation with the private sector. Japan Customs, which are responsible for enforcement on prohibited exported/imported goods such as IPR infringement at the border, play our roles in protecting intellectual property.

The number of cases of IPR infringement is 33,019 in 2024, which exceeds 33 thousands and has become the highest record.

IPR infringing goods including pharmaceuticals being a threat to people's health and electronic devices having a risk of ignition. Japan Customs has strengthened to

enforce these goods for people's health and safety.

The detections of IPR infringing goods from postal items consist of a large number of the total IPR detection cases. Considering the situation, Japan Customs strengthens its enforcement for various modes of transport.



Counterfeit brand items

Suspended Cases

CASE 1



Smuggling of Clothes Infringing Trademark from China

In June 2024, Tokyo Customs, jointly investigating with Fukushima Prefectural Police Department, accused one Japanese of violating the Customs Act by attempting to smuggle 34 clothes infringing trademark from China.

CASE 2



Smuggling of Necklaces etc. Infringing Trademark from China

In February 2024, Kobe Customs, jointly investigating with Hyogo Prefectural Police Department, accused two Vietnamese of violating the Customs Act by attempting to smuggle 887 necklaces etc. infringing trademark from China.

The number of suspensions by type of Intellectual Property (Import)

(the upper: cases, the lower: items)

Type	Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	Growth over prev. year	Composition ratio
Patent rights	Cases	174	280	230	267	116.1%	0.8%
	Items	27,429	34,631	34,127	237,802	696.8%	18.3%
Design rights	Cases	302	354	348	502	144.3%	1.5%
	Items	73,953	136,148	442,073	298,131	67.4%	23.0%
Trademark rights	Cases	27,424	25,705	30,448	31,212	102.5%	93.6%
	Items	621,684	548,972	500,824	443,887	88.6%	34.2%
Copyrights	Cases	674	841	863	1,380	159.9%	4.1%
	Items	96,345	162,896	79,221	317,293	400.5%	24.5%
Unfair competition prevention goods	Cases	0	0	0	0	—	—
	Items	0	0	0	0	—	—
Total	Cases	28,270	26,942	31,666	33,019	104.3%	100.0%
	Items	819,411	882,647	1,056,245	1,297,113	122.8%	100.0%

The number of cases is the number of import declarations and postal items which contains IPR infringing goods suspended by Customs.

The number of items is the number of IPR infringing goods suspended by Customs.

(e.g. The number of items is 20, when 20 IPR infringing goods are contained in one import declaration or postal item.)

ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

IPR infringing goods have been a serious issue not only in specific countries but throughout the world. These goods may threaten consumer's health and safety. Against this backdrop, further enhancement of international cooperation among Customs authorities around the world has been discussed in order to prevent the proliferation of IPR infringing goods. For example, in the negotiations on various Economic Partnerships Agreements (EPAs), enhancement of IPR border enforcement has been actively discussed. Also, in cooperation with the World Customs Organization(WCO), Japan is actively being engaged with various technical assistance activities in order to

improve IPR border enforcement in developing countries, including dispatching experts, organizing regional seminars and accepting Customs officers from developing countries for master's degree scholarship program on IPR.



FURTHER COOPERATION WITH CHINA AND KOREA

Cooperation with the Chinese and Korean Customs authorities has a particular importance among international cooperation activities over IPR issues. The 1st Tripartite (Japan, China and Korea) Customs Heads' Meeting was held in April 2007 and the three Customs agreed to set up a working group on IPR in October 2007. In November 2017, Japan, China and Korea have renewed their effort to promote information exchange for effective IPR border enforcement among the three countries following the decision of the 6th Tripartite Customs Heads' Meeting.

