



**AGRI-FOOD & VETERINARY AUTHORITY
AND IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY
JOINT NEWS RELEASE**

Man fined \$3,500 for illegal import of Greek Tortoise

20 June 2018: 40-year-old Ong Yi Chao was fined \$3,500 by the court today for illegally importing a Greek Tortoise into Singapore.

2 On 9 February 2018, the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) was alerted by the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) on the detection of a live Greek Tortoise concealed in the rear left compartment of a Singapore-registered vehicle at Woodlands checkpoint.

3 AVA's investigations revealed that Ong did not have a valid permit to import the tortoise. The tortoise was identified to be Greek Tortoise (*Testudo graeca*), a protected species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The seized tortoise is being cared for by Wildlife Reserves Singapore.



The Greek Tortoise was kept in a plastic container and concealed in the rear left compartment of the vehicle. (Photo: AVA)

Public advisory

4 The Singapore Government has zero tolerance in the use of Singapore as a conduit for smuggling of endangered species. Our borders are our first line of defence in safeguarding Singapore's safety and security. The security checks are critical to our nation's security. The ICA will continue to conduct security checks on cargo, passengers and vehicles at the checkpoints to prevent attempts to smuggle in undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contrabands. AVA will continue to cooperate and collaborate with partner local and international enforcement agencies to curb wildlife trafficking. AVA will take enforcement action against any person or company that smuggles wildlife into or through Singapore.

5 In Singapore, CITES permits are required for any import, export and re-export of CITES-listed species. Offenders can be fined up to S\$50,000 per scheduled species (not exceeding a maximum aggregate of S\$500,000) and/or jailed up to 2 years, upon conviction.

6 The ICA and AVA would like to remind travellers against bringing live animals, birds and insects into Singapore without a proper permit. The public can refer to AVA's website or download AVA's mobile app, SG TravelKaki (available free-of-charge from [iTunes](#) and the [Google Play store](#)), for more information on bringing back animals from overseas. Members of the public with information on illegal wildlife activities may contact AVA at 6805 2992 or via AVA's [online feedback form](#). All information shared with AVA would be kept strictly confidential.

Issued by the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority and Immigration & Checkpoints Authority

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