



Two men jailed for animal smuggling and animal cruelty

Issued on 7 October 2015

Two Singaporean men, 44-year-old Toh Ng Siow and his son, 20-year-old Toh Han Rong, were sentenced today to three months and two months' jail respectively for illegally importing two spotted doves and three sugar gliders into Singapore. The two men also received the same sentence for the charge of animal cruelty as the illegally-imported animals were subjected to unnecessary suffering or pain. Both sentences will run concurrently.

2 Toh Ng Siow starts his three-month jail term today, and Toh Han Rong will begin his two-month jail term on 14 Dec 2015. The latter is currently out on S\$8,000 bail and his passport has been impounded.

3 On 25 August 2015, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) was notified by the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) on their detection of an illegal import of two spotted doves and three sugar gliders in a Singapore-registered car at Tuas Checkpoint.

4 AVA's investigations revealed that the animals – sourced from Johor, Malaysia – were imported into Singapore without the relevant import licences. The smuggled animals were also transported in a manner that subjected them to unnecessary suffering or pain. Food and water were not provided to the animals during the transportation.

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5 The spotted doves were kept in compressed bird cages that were hidden precariously outside the vehicle (in the gap between the rear bumper and the car boot). Placed in close proximity to the road, the journey would have been hot, noisy and bumpy for the spotted doves. Such conditions of travel would have caused significant stress to the spotted doves.



The bird cages containing two spotted doves were hidden under the rear bumper.



Two compressed bird cages, each containing one spotted dove.



Dimensions of the cage = L x 30cm B x 20.5cm H x 10cm

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6 The sugar gliders were concealed in a small black pouch, and placed behind the glove compartment that was enclosed, small and covered. This would mean that there was reduced ventilation for the sugar gliders.



The black pouch used to conceal the sugar gliders was placed behind the glove compartment, under the dashboard



Dimensions of the black pouch = L x 19cm B x 10cm

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7 The smuggled animals were seized and have been sent to the Singapore Zoo and the Jurong Bird Park.

8 AVA would like to remind the public against bringing live animals or birds into Singapore without a permit from AVA. Under the Animals and Birds Act, it is an offence to import or tranship any animal or bird without written authorisation from AVA. Anyone found committing this offence shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding S\$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

9 Animals that are smuggled into Singapore are of unknown health status. As such, AVA strictly regulates the import of animals to safeguard the health and welfare of animals, and prevent the introduction of exotic animal diseases, such as bird flu and rabies, into Singapore. AVA's rigorous system of quarantine and health checks on imported animals mitigates the risk of exotic animal diseases affecting animal and public health.

10 In addition, AVA would like to remind the public not to import or keep wild animals such as sugar gliders as pets, as demand for such animals would fuel illegal wildlife trade. Wild animals are not suitable pets as some may transmit zoonotic diseases to humans and can be a public safety risk if mishandled or if they escape into our dense urban environment.

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Wild animals that are non-native to Singapore may also be a threat to our bio-diversity if released into the environment.

11 AVA will continue to safeguard animal health and welfare in Singapore through strict import regulations and enforcement, and work closely with other enforcement agencies such as ICA to deter illegal import across borders. The public can refer to AVA's [website](#) or download AVA's mobile app, SG TravelKaki, for more information on bringing back animals from overseas travels.

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Issued by the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore

On 7 October 2015

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Page 5 of 5