



**SINGAPORE
CUSTOMS**

Land Transport  Authority

MEDIA RELEASE

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SINGAPOREAN MAN TO SERVE MORE THAN 5 YEARS IN PRISON FOR EVADING DUTY AND GST, AND UNDERPAYING ARF ON IMPORTED MOTOR VEHICLES

Singapore, 1 October 2026 – A 48-year-old Singaporean man, Mah Chee Wern (“Mah”) (马启文), sole director of Karkaunsl Leasing Pte Ltd (“Karkaunsl”), was sentenced by the State Courts on 30 September 2026 for orchestrating a multi-year scheme to evade duty, Goods and Services Tax (GST), and Additional Registration Fee (ARF) on imported motor vehicles.

2 For Customs offences, Mah was fined more than \$4.8 million for fraudulent evasion of duty and GST. Mah did not pay the fine and in default, he will serve about four years and seven months’ imprisonment. He was also sentenced to two weeks’ imprisonment for falsification of payment records to Singapore Customs (“Customs”) as supporting documents.

3 Mah pleaded guilty to 18 charges under the Customs Act – 17 for fraudulent evasion of duty and GST, and one for falsifying seven payment slips submitted to Customs. These offences involved the suppression of values on 866 motor vehicles imported by Karkaunsl between January 2017 and February 2022, resulting in more than \$1.2 million in duty and GST evaded. Another 48 charges were taken into consideration during sentencing.

4 Karkaunsl imported motor vehicles for resale to local retailers, including Hybrid Vehicle Singapore Pte Ltd (“HVS”). A former HVS director, 36-year-old female Myanmar national Su May Thu (“Su”), had coordinated with Mah and overseas suppliers to import cars intended for HVS through Karkaunsl. Su was sentenced on 9 July 2025 to a fine of \$418,300 after pleading guilty to the fraudulent evasion of duty and GST involving 34 vehicles, with more than \$72,000 in duty and GST evaded. Another 34 charges were taken into consideration.

5 Mah was also sentenced to 21 weeks’ imprisonment for under-declaring the values of vehicles at the point of registration with the Land Transport Authority (“LTA”), which resulted in the underpayment of the ARF. Mah pleaded guilty to two amalgamated charges under section 11(9) of the Road Traffic Act for providing incorrect information in relation to the value of 683 motor vehicles. Seven similar amalgamated charges involving another 193 motor vehicles were taken into consideration during sentencing. These incorrect declarations resulted in a total ARF shortfall of \$9,928,993.00. The Court ordered Mah to repay the outstanding amount to LTA.

Investigations Uncovered an Elaborate Scheme

6 Customs launched investigations into Karkaunsl after detecting discrepancies in declared vehicle values submitted for duty and GST assessment.

7 Investigations revealed that the scheme operated through two distinct arrangements.

- Direct operations: Mah instructed overseas suppliers to issue invoices with suppressed values, allowing Karkaunsl to pay reduced duty and GST while retaining profits of about \$800 to \$1,500 per vehicle.
- Third-party arrangement: Karkaunsl acted as an import agent for HVS, where HVS liaised with overseas suppliers to obtain invoices with suppressed values. Karkaunsl used these invoices to submit to Customs for duty and GST assessment, despite knowing the values in these invoices were suppressed.

8 Under the Customs Act, any person convicted of fraudulently evading duty or GST shall be fined up to 20 times the amount of duty or GST evaded. In addition to the fine, the offender shall be liable to imprisonment for up to 12 months.

9 Under the Road Traffic Act, any person who gives incorrect information in relation to any matter affecting the amount of ARF chargeable shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to an imprisonment term not exceeding six months, with the maximum penalty doubled for amalgamated charges under s124(8) of the Criminal Procedure Code. The court shall also order the payment of any under-charged ARF to LTA.

10 Members of public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of duty or GST can provide information to Customs at <https://go.gov.sg/reportcustomsoffence>.

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About Singapore Customs

Singapore Customs protects revenue and facilitates trade for Singapore's economic growth while continuously striving to be a world-leading customs authority. As a partner of the Ministry of Finance, we ensure compliance with customs and tax regulations, safeguard the nation's financial interests, and combat illicit trade activities. We also enable seamless trade by simplifying customs processes, building global trade connectivity, and maintaining Singapore's position as a trusted global trading hub. Guided by our values of integrity, commitment, courage, responsiveness and teamwork, we strive for excellence with a professional and innovative team. Together, we ensure revenue and enable trade, fostering a thriving Singapore economy.

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About the Land Transport Authority, Singapore

The Land Transport Authority (LTA) spearheads land transport developments in Singapore. We plan, design, build and maintain Singapore's land transport infrastructure and systems. We aspire to strengthen Singapore's land transport connectivity and integrate a greener and more inclusive public transport system complemented by walk and cycle options. We harness technology to strengthen our rail and bus infrastructure and develop exciting options for future land transport.

The land transport network has transformed significantly since the inception of LTA in 1995, with more than 160km of expressways spanning the island, an MRT network of more than 200 km, over 600 km of cycling paths and park connectors, and increasingly varied commuting options.