



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR

HM CUSTOMS
Custom House
Waterport



PRESS RELEASE

No: 37/2019

Date: 22nd January 2019

HM Customs Officers seize 1,500 cartons of cigarettes and a small speedboat

In the early hours of this morning whilst carrying out a routine patrol of BGTW, Officers from HM Customs Marine Section engaged in a chase of a suspect vessel loaded with tobacco.

The vessel, a small speedboat approximately 5.5 metres in length, made numerous evasive manoeuvres before HMC Tango 1 was able to intercept it. Two other suspect vessels believed to be involved in tobacco activity tried to assist the small speedboat from making its escape.

The occupants of the speedboat were able to escape by land. When Customs Officers confiscated and boarded the small speedboat, the other two vessels rammed it and attacked the Officers, hitting an Officer on the shoulder.

An individual on one of the vessels then threatened the Officers, making comments about a weapon and acting as if he had retrieved a firearm by pointing both his hands towards them.

The two suspect vessels then attempted to ram HMC Seeker and HMC Tango 1, causing both suspect vessels to collide and one of the individuals to fall overboard. The suspects managed to retrieve the individual from the water and made their escape into Spain.

Customs Officers detained 1,500 cartons of cigarettes and paraphernalia related to tobacco smuggling. Investigations continue.