

## Almost R2m seized at Cape Town Airport

Currency worth close to R2 million was seized at the Cape Town International Airport at the weekend.



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The South African Revenue Service (SARS) said about R1,946,802 was found hidden in the luggage of a South African man en route to Dubai.

“As part of our integrated operations, the possible smuggling of currency was successfully detected by our officers. We have noticed recently that passengers who normally use OR Tambo International Airport to travel and take out currency, have started rerouting via other ports. This is why it is important that all of our units work closely together to prevent this from happening,” said Chief Officer: Customs and Excise, Teboho Mokoena, on Saturday.

Mokoena said the airport received a tip-off from customs officials at OR Tambo International Airport (ORTIA) about the man. Once at the Cape Town Airport, the man was stopped by customs officials and members of the Detector Dog Unit as he was about to embark on the flight to Dubai.

The revenue service said one of the detector dogs reacted positively to the luggage and the bag was opened up and searched. Customs officials then discovered 10 packets of currency hidden amongst his clothing.

The case of the failure to declare the dollars when departing the country has been handed over to the South African Police Service (SAPS) for further investigation.

Mokoena commended cooperation among the different divisions within customs which led to the success:

bust.

In March, the revenue service announced that close to R400 million was netted through a string of seizures of illicit goods since the start of the year.

At the time SARS said a recent currency bust at OR Tambo International Airport was the latest in a string of six currency busts with a combined value of over R27 million.

In that incident a South African male about to depart for Dubai was intercepted and taken to the search area where customs officers scanned his luggage. Currency in US dollars, valued at R4,595,344, was found hidden in sweet containers, milk powder tins and soap boxes under clothing.

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