

CICC APPLAUDS CONTRABAND TOBACCO BUST \$11M Worth of Tobacco Seized in BC

The Convenience Industry Council of Canada (CICC) issued the following statement today in response to the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU) in BC seizure of \$11 million of contraband tobacco on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland in British Columbia.

“CICC congratulates the incredible work, coordinated efforts of the CFSEU on this historic action that seized millions of dollars of illegal contraband. The sheer volume of this seizure reinforces the scale and size of these organized criminal groups. They are directly funding their activities from the sale of contraband tobacco,” said Sara MacIntyre, Vice-President, Western Canada.

“Guns, drugs, ammunition are part of the illicit tobacco trade, and this is not a victimless crime. Rather, it is the funding source for most other organized criminal activity. Today’s announcement and the success of the CFSU demonstrates the value of effective enforcement teams. CICC has been pressing the BC Government to tackle the out-of-control contraband tobacco networks littered across this province.”

“We recently released a report by Ernst & Young that shows that illegal tobacco is between 32-49% of the entire tobacco market in British Columbia. It’s big business and its organized. And nearly \$600 million has been taken out of public services from the proliferation of this illegal industry. Criminals don’t ask for ID or pay taxes. We hope the BC government will invest more resources and prioritize shutting down organized crime and the proliferation of contraband products. There is much more work to be done.” concluded MacIntyre.

About the Convenience Industry Council of Canada

The Convenience Industry Council of Canada (CICC) is a national, not-for-profit council that represents more than 25,000 convenience retailers nationwide. Our sector employs more than 212,000 Canadians and generates an estimated \$55 billion in economic impact from coast to coast to coast. Convenient in good times and essential in tough times. In British Columbia, the CICC represents over 2,200 retail locations, directly employs 19,000 people, and collects over \$1.6 billion in provincial taxation annually.