

Media Releases 2007

Major drug seizure at ORTIA

Pretoria, 7 December 2007 – Customs officials of the South African Revenue Service (SARS) this morning confiscated a large quantity of cocaine that was being smuggled into South Africa as imported cargo.

The drugs were concealed as part of a consignment of cargo that was on board a flight from Sao Paulo, Brazil which landed at OR Tambo International Airport (ORTIA) after 08:00am this morning. The cocaine was concealed in musical instrument boxes.

Preliminary investigations indicate that the quantity of the cocaine amounts to about 67 kg with an estimated street value of over R30 million making it one of the biggest seizures in recent times.

SARS has been working closely with the South African Police Service and other law enforcement agencies in the fight against the illicit trade in drugs and other illegal goods.

These combined law enforcement efforts have thus far resulted in significant breakthroughs in the illicit supply chain of smuggled goods. In January this year SARS Customs confiscated 20 kg of cocaine at ORTIA and a further 23 kg of cocaine which was detected and confiscated.

During the last financial year (2006/07) SARS Customs conducted 86 seizures of various quantities of cocaine at border posts across South Africa.