

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 26 NOVEMBER 2011**

**RE: NPA RESTRAINS PROPERTY IN CIGARETTE CASE**

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On Friday 25 November 2011, the Asset Forfeiture Unit executed a restraint order against the assets of Walter Eleazar Cyril, Letisha Pillay, Waldo Headger and Nkhensane Maluleka. The trio were arrested and are facing various charges of fraud and contraventions of the Customs and Excise Act. The criminal case concerns misrepresentations made to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) regarding exportations of cigarettes which did not in fact take place. They will appear at Wynburg Magistrate's Court in Alexander on Monday 28 November 2011 for formal bail application.

Headger and Maluleka, both former employees of the South African Revenue Service, had allegedly fraudulently affixed their Customs stamps and other reference numbers to export documents knowing that they had never been processed on the SARS' system. Based on the misrepresentations, SARS was defrauded of approximately R 119 million, which amount would have been due had the cigarettes been declared and the VAT and duties paid. It is alleged that the cigarettes which had been legitimately imported had been diverted and sold in South Africa.

Property that was seized includes luxury vehicles, bank accounts, jewellery and immovable property, including property held in a trust. The restraint order is the result of excellent co-operation between the South African Police Service, SARS and the NPA and demonstrates the commitment of law enforcement agencies to combating crime and recovering the benefit derived from unlawful activities.

**Issued by:**

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