



## THE TOBACCO INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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### MEDIA RELEASE

**For immediate release  
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#### **Vanderbijlpark raids net close on 100,000 illegal cigarettes**

SAPS officials recovered close on 100,000 illegal cigarettes from random raids in the Vanderbijlpark area on 16 January 2012. The illegal brands - Director, Dullahs, Mega, York, Remington Gold, Shasha and Seviles - were confiscated from various retailers found to be stocking these in their outlets. Four arrests were made.

According to the Tobacco Institute of Southern Africa (TISA), the trade in illegal cigarettes costs legitimate retailers more than R7-billion in turnover profit and more than R750-million in margins annually.

“We commend the work that is being done by SAPS, SARS and the Hawks in addressing the illegal trade in cigarettes,” says Francois van der Merwe, CEO of TISA. “During 2011, around 1,2 billion illegal cigarettes were seized through over 7000 interventions by law enforcement officials. In addition, approximately 800 key players in the illicit industry were arrested on charges relating to the smuggling and trade of illegal cigarettes during 2011. The arrests should send a strong warning signal to other illicit traders that no-one is above the law.”

For more information contact:

- SAPS Vanderbijlpark (Captain Claasen and Sgt. Vermaak)

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS**

##### **Penalties:**

The penalties if a retailer, or reseller, is caught with illicit products and prosecuted under the Customs and Excise Act (evasion of taxes) are: A fine of R20 000 or three

times the value of the goods, depending of which one is the greatest; or up to 5 years on prison. A person prosecuted can therefore pay a fine and go to jail.

**How to Spot Illegal Cigarettes:**

- 1) Paying less than R 14.50 for a pack of 20s (suspect price)
- 2) There is no excise stamp on the pack
- 3) The tar and nicotine readings are higher than 12 mg Tar and 1.2 mg respectively
- 4) There are no health warnings on the pack

**For Media Enquiries directed at the tobacco industry, please contact:**

**The Tobacco Institute of Southern Africa**

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**Ends**