



## Office of the Traffic Commissioner

Traffic Commissioner Press Notice

Date: 20 November 2017

### **Two year transport ban for Blaydon-on-Tyne scaffolder who posed serious risk to road safety**

- Vehicle driven without MOT or tax for almost a year
- Industry regulator rules owner Craig Scott had “no desire to comply with transport law”

The owner of a Blaydon-on-Tyne scaffolding business has lost his transport licence and been disqualified from running vehicles for two years because he posed a “serious risk to road safety”.

Ruling that Craig Scott had been serially non compliant, the Traffic Commissioner for North East of England, Tim Blackmore, said he had no evidence whatsoever that Mr Scott would meet safety and licensing standards in the future.

The industry regulator’s decision, which took immediate effect following a public inquiry in Leeds on 08 November 2017, means Mr Scott can no longer operate HGVs in connection with his scaffolding business.

Mr Scott did not attend the hearing and had allowed his licence to lapse in October 2017.

“Trust in this operator is broken,” the Traffic Commissioner remarked in a written decision.

“I am clear that he has neither the knowledge or desire to comply in the future; this strikes at the heart of the principles of road safety and fair competition on which the Operator Licensing System is founded.”

The transport operating licence held by Mr Scott was called to a public inquiry after government inspectors found one his vehicles was bring driven without an MOT and untaxed. Mr Scott was driving the vehicle when it was stopped in Newcastle.

Mr Scott subsequently failed to cooperate with a Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) examiner investigating the illegal operations, twice failing to make himself available for interview.

Records available to the enforcement agency also revealed that the vehicle stopped in Newcastle had failed its previous MOT because of a number of brake related

faults.

Ruling that Mr Scott posed a serious risk to road safety, the Traffic Commissioner said he needed time outside of the industry to educate himself on operator licensing responsibilities.

**A copy of the Traffic Commissioner's written decision is available from the Office of the Traffic Commissioner Press Office - details below.**

#### **Notes to editors**

1. The Traffic Commissioner for the North East of England is Mr Tim Blackmore. There are eight traffic commissioners in total, each supported by a number of deputies, covering England (divided into six regions), Scotland and Wales. Details of each traffic commissioner can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/traffic-commissioners>
2. Heavy goods vehicle operators and operators of public service vehicles and local bus routes must be licensed. The traffic commissioners' role in this licensing process is essential to deliver safer roads, fair competition in road haulage and passenger transport, reliable and convenient public transport, and to help preserve the environment.
3. All traffic commissioners are statutorily independent licensing authorities responsible for bus, coach and goods vehicle operators and for local bus service registrations. They can also take action against the vocational entitlement of bus, coach and lorry drivers who commit road and certain other offences.
4. Traffic commissioners have the power to revoke, suspend or curtail an operator's licence to operate commercial vehicles and to impose a condition limiting the number of vehicles authorised on licences held by bus and coach operators, if they are satisfied that the operator is failing to comply with its licence obligations such as failing to maintain vehicles in a fit and serviceable condition or failing to observe the drivers' hours' rules and tachograph regulations.
5. Action can also be taken against public service vehicle operators who fail to operate local bus services properly or in contravention of the registered particulars. Traffic commissioners have the power to cancel or restrict local bus services, or to impose a fine if services have not been operated, or operated improperly, to a significant extent.
6. Traffic commissioners rely mainly on evidence from DVSA but also from the police, local authorities, and the public to decide whether an operator is fit to hold a licence, or of good repute.
7. Public inquiries are judicial in nature and are called where concerns have been raised about the financial standing, professional competence or good repute of operator licence holders and where there appears to be a breach of any condition previously applied to the licence. Traffic commissioners can also consider environmental concerns expressed about the location of (or operations from) the applicant's operating base.
8. Where concerns are raised about a lorry, bus or coach driver's behaviour or actions – or evidence is submitted about convictions or other serious misdemeanours – commissioners will consider whether to take action against the driver. Commissioners have the power to revoke and suspend a driver's entitlement and are also tasked with considering all applications for HGV and PSV vocational driving licence entitlements. Drivers can be called before a commissioner to consider evidence relating to their driving standards and previous conduct.

**Office of the Traffic Commissioner Press Office**

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