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REGULATORY



Scotland welcomes new traffic commissioner

Claire Gilmore has become the newest team member to join the traffic commissioners after commencing her post at the beginning of March 2019. She replaces Joan Aitken (www.is.gd.ovagev). Gilmore is a solicitor who has specialised in litigation. She is also a qualified engineer. Prior to taking up the position Gilmore was the senior investigating officer at the Office of the Ethical Standards Commissioner in Scotland. Before this, she worked mainly in government legal services focusing on regulatory litigation, which included licensing and public inquiries.

Seven ways to stay safe online

Although CV operators may understand the importance of security when it comes to

vehicles and what is carried in them, online security is no less important, but perhaps less well understood. It is also arguably riskier: DVLA received more than 1,000 reports of online scams in the last part of 2018. DVLA has published the following e-safety tips:

1. Only use Gov.uk. Double check that you are using a Gov.uk webpage so that you can be sure that you're dealing directly with DVLA.
2. Ignore scam emails. The DVLA won't email you to confirm your personal details. Do not open any links and delete.
3. Beware of misleading websites. Some third party websites can mislead, and their services may end up charging additional fees for things that are free or less expensive through Gov.uk.
4. Don't ring premium rate numbers. DVLA numbers should begin with 0300 and cost the same as a local call.
5. Be mindful of sharing documents online. Never share images of one's driving licence and vehicle documents. This personal information could be valuable to those looking to steal the identity of a vehicle or its owner.
6. Delete texts. The DVLA

never sends texts about vehicle tax refunds. Some scammers are texting operators with a link for credit card details; never click on these.

7. Report any suspected scams. If you are concerned about any calls, texts, emails or suspicious online activity, you should report it to the police via Action Fraud immediately (www.is.gd/unefeg).

Knowledge and attitude

Possession of the correct knowledge is a key element to a transport manager's role. However, having the correct attitude is important as well, according to deputy traffic commissioner Laura Thomas. A recent case that went to public inquiry found that a transport manager had acted as such "in name only". After DVSA visited the operator in September 2018, the CPC holder said he'd not been to the premises since the previous April. And, following the inspection, he did little to manage the operation. Apparently, he also thought that holding meetings about future compliance plans was sufficient to adequately discharge his duties as transport manager. But Thomas disagreed, arguing that by staying on as a transport manager in name only, he made a "clearly unravelling operator" seem

legitimate. As a result, he was disqualified from working in the industry, not because of lack of knowledge, but because of his poor attitude to the job. He needed time away from performing that role to contemplate what had happened, she judged.

Walk-around checks

DVSA has updated its leaflets describing the checks required in a daily driver walk-around pre-use inspection. At least one such check of the whole vehicle must be made every 24 hours, usually before the vehicle is driven. The HGV leaflet can be found via: www.is.gd/unopun. The PCV leaflet can be found here: www.is.gd/usiyax.

Watch out for data errors

Operators are being urged to check their records on the Vehicle Operator Licensing (VOL) service. Common errors include incorrect vehicle registration marks (VRM) on licences, and incorrect or out-of-date maintenance provider details. Making sure the right VRMs are listed on the licence is critical. It confirms that the vehicles being operated are authorised under the O licence. Also, if the vehicle is incorrectly registered, it could be stopped more often, because DVSA won't be able to find it on a licence. Operators can check their details via www.is.gd/yezise.