

# Press release: Oxford mobile phone dealer handed 12 year disqualification

William Robert Howard (45) director of the now liquidated Expeditors Limited has entered into an undertaking that prevents him from acting as a director for 12 years.

The mobile phone business was incorporated in 2004 and a petition was made to wind up Expeditors Limited in June 2017 by HM Revenue & Customs regarding an unpaid VAT bill of £22,545.40.

The Insolvency Service then conducted an investigation, which focused on the mobile phone company's participation in a form of VAT fraud known as Missing Trader Intra Community fraud (MITC).

Commonly known as 'carousel' fraud, MITC fraud sees large consignments of high-value electrical or small items invoiced rapidly and repeatedly around trading chains. On paper the goods look like they are being moved repeatedly from customer to customer but the goods are only moved as they enter or exit the UK.

In the case of Expeditors Limited, William Howard used the scheme to offset VAT and reclaim close to £350,000 in its 2005 to 2006 VAT return.

Examples of MITC conducted by William Howard were indicated by the rapid succession of same-day trades within the UK but goods weren't delivered and remained on a shared freight forwarder, there were common uses of the same offshore bank, as well as payments being arranged with third parties who were neither suppliers nor customers.

Additionally, all the traders banked with the First Curacao International Bank which was shut down by the Netherlands Antilles authorities in September 2006 in order to prevent money laundering.

William Howard's disqualification started on 5 February 2018 and means that he cannot promote, manage, or be a director of a limited company until 2030.

Anthony Hannon, Official Receiver in the Public Interest Unit of the Insolvency Service, said:

This type of VAT fraud is very serious and a high priority for HMRC and the Insolvency Service.

MITC fraud has caused loss to the public purse and has cost the tax payer substantial sums in fraudulent VAT claims. The Insolvency Service is committed to making directors accountable for their actions.

Expeditors Limited (CRO No. 05266310) was incorporated on 21 October 2004. It traded from premises in Oxford.

The petition to wind up the company was presented by HM Revenue & Customs in respect of unpaid VAT of £22,545.40. The winding up order against Expeditors Limited was made on 26 June 2017.

Mr Howard was born in November 1972.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

---

## News story: UK steps up commitment to a modernised NATO

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson met counterparts at a meeting of NATO Defence Ministers in Brussels. Crown copyright.

Mr Williamson signalled that the UK will meet its commitments, including an uplift of around one hundred personnel in our contribution to NATO's modernised Command Structure – the precise numbers will be determined through further work between now and the Summit. This will help to ensure that NATO can meet the security challenges of today and tomorrow.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

NATO is the cornerstone of our defence but we live in an uncertain world, with the confrontation and conflict we face shifting and evolving. NATO must modernise at the same pace, so we can respond better and faster to deter those that threaten our safety and way of life.

NATO will today discuss a range of issues including burden sharing, cooperation with the European Union, and efforts to modernise the Alliance. A key element of modernising NATO will be the adaptation of the Alliance's Command Structure. Defence Ministers will decide whether to implement a design which includes proposals for a new Command for the Atlantic and a Command to improve the movement of military forces across Europe.

The proposed Command Structure, which has been influenced by senior British staff, represents a key aspect of the UK's priority to modernise and strengthen NATO so it remains able to command and control its missions and operations wherever they are required.

Over the two-day Ministerial, Defence leaders will discuss efforts to strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence posture. Britain's Armed Forces have taken a leading role in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence, providing the Framework battlegroup in Estonia and a providing a company to the US-led enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup in Poland. The Defence Secretary welcomed the arrival of Danish forces in Estonia and the announcement that France will return in 2019 to support the UK-led force. NATO's role in the fight against terrorism was also discussed with the Defence Secretary welcoming the progress that has been made.

NATO remains the cornerstone of UK defence and, as one of the largest contributors, is one of only a few NATO countries pledging at least 2% of

their GDP to defence.

---

## [News story: Minister for Africa urges restraint and dialogue in Cameroon](#)

Minister for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development, Harriett Baldwin, visited West Africa between 11 and 14 February. On her first trip to the region since taking up this role, the Minister visited Cameroon and Côte D'Ivoire.

During her visit to Cameroon (13 and 14 February), the Minister visited the Anglophone region to discuss the ongoing dispute. Meeting with senior members of the Cameroonian Government, traditional rulers, human rights groups, and members of civil society organisations, she encouraged restraint and for a de-escalation of current tensions.

On the situation in the Anglophone regions, Minister Baldwin said:

As a long-standing friend and Commonwealth partner, the UK wants to see urgent steps taken on all sides to de-escalate current tensions.

President Biya's announcement in his New Year speech of steps to rebuild trust, resume dialogue, and allow decentralisation are a welcome start – but only a start. Cameroonians need to come together to talk and to secure a peaceful resolution.

During her visit to Cameroon, the Minister discussed issues around democracy, security, prosperity and human rights in meetings with Prime Minister Philemon Yang and other senior ministers, as well as with representatives from Cameroonian and UK businesses and civil society organisations.

The Minister visited a girls' school supported by a UK charity as well as the Lake Ossa Reserve, a Zoological Society of London and Darwin sponsored conservation project, which is an important refuge for West African manatees and other freshwater biodiversity.

Minister Baldwin said:

The UK and Cameroon share historic ties, and I have seen ample evidence that those ties – of business partnership, security cooperation, and support to education and wildlife conservation – continue to strengthen.

During her visit to Côte D'Ivoire (11 and 12 February), Mrs. Baldwin visited the headquarters of the Transnational Organized Crime Unit (UCT) to inspect a recent seizure of more than 600 kilos of ivory and pangolin scales by the Ivorian authorities. She handed over technical equipment gifted by the National Crime Agency to enable the UCT to improve the identification of illegal commodities during operations.

On the Illegal Wildlife Trade, Minister Baldwin said:

The extent of trafficking of wild and endangered animals is shocking. I am hugely impressed with the work here in Côte D'Ivoire to prevent wildlife being smuggled out of the country to overseas markets, and I am pleased that the UK is able to support these efforts.

Stronger regional and global cooperation is needed to prevent traffickers from profiting from this trade. That is why the UK is hosting a conference in October to bring countries together to ensure we take action collectively to tackle the despicable illegal wildlife trade.

As Côte D'Ivoire is a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Minister Baldwin held discussions on upcoming Security Council matters with President Ouattara and other senior ministers. She also met President of the African Development Bank, Akinwumi Adesina, to discuss the Bank's plans for inclusive growth across Africa.

## **Further information**

---

## **[Press release: Motorists receive millions of pounds in automatic refunds for vehicle tax](#)**

When you tell DVLA that you've sold your car, you're eligible for a refund of vehicle tax for any unused months.

While the quickest and simplest way to tell DVLA that a vehicle has been sold is online, the latest figures from DVLA show that more than 60% do not use the service. This means they will be waiting longer for their refund.

The online service only takes a few minutes to complete, the seller will get confirmation instantly that they are no longer the vehicle keeper and the refund will arrive within 3 to 5 working days. Further information is

available in the following video.

[Tell DVLA about a sale of a vehicle online.](#)

DVLA Vehicles Service Manager Rohan Gye said:

While some of our digital services have over 90% take-up there are still millions of motorists who tell us they've sold their vehicle by post. This means that they will have to wait longer for their automatic refund of any unused tax. My advice is the next time you sell your car – tell us online.

Motorists can also go online to put a personalised registration on a vehicle or to take one off – this service is proving popular with the majority (more than 85%) choosing the online route rather than posting paperwork to DVLA.

### **Notes to editors**

The [online service](#) is available on GOV.UK seven days a week from 7am to 7pm.

Since it was launched the service has been used over 12 million times.

### **Press office**

DVLA Press Office  
Longview Road  
Morrison  
Swansea  
SA6 7JL

Email [press.office@dvla.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@dvla.gsi.gov.uk)

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5pm – only for use by journalists and the media:  
0300 123 0791

Out of office hours – only for use by journalists and the media: 0300 123  
2407

---

[\*\*News story: New rules introduced to protect consumers against ticket\*\*](#)

# touting

Ticket resellers will be required to provide purchasers with additional detailed information about tickets

Fans of live events are set to benefit from new rules which will demand more information from sellers on secondary ticket websites.

Under the new rules, which will come into force in April 2018, ticket resellers will be required to provide purchasers with additional detailed information about tickets including the location of seats, disclosure of any restrictions and the original price of the ticket itself.

New guidance has also been published today to help prepare business for these changes, providing clarity to ensure they comply while also securing a better deal for consumers.

Consumer Minister Andrew Griffiths said:

All too often people are left feeling ripped off when buying tickets from resale websites. Whether it's a major music festival or a stadium concert, people want to know they're paying a fair price for tickets to see the events they love.

We are already taking steps to crack down on touts using "bots" to bulk buy tickets for resale and the CMA is investigating suspected breaches of consumer protection law online and today we are going even further, making it easier for consumers to understand what they are buying to help save them from rip off ticket prices.

Later this year, we will also publish a Consumer Green Paper which will examine how we can help people to engage with markets to find the best deals."

Margot James, Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries, said:

We want real fans to get the chance to see their favourite stars at a fair price. That is why we are clamping down on touts using bots to buy huge numbers of tickets, only to sell them on at rip-off prices.

Today's guidance will give consumers even greater protection and transparency in the secondary market, helping Britain's live events scene to continue to thrive.

Under the new rules, ticket resellers will have to provide additional detailed information about the tickets they are selling to better inform and

protect consumers. This will mean that ticket resellers must:

- identify the location to which the ticket provides access – such as the particular seat or standing area of the venue;
- disclose any restrictions that apply to the category of person who can use the ticket;
- disclose the original price of the ticket; and
- reveal the details of connections they have with either the online facility on which they are selling, or the organiser of the event for which the ticket is being sold.

For the first time, resellers will also have to supply the unique ticket number (UTN) to the purchaser if the event organiser or primary seller specifies one, helping to identify the tickets seat, standing area or location.

Today's guidance demonstrates a further commitment from government to improve conditions for consumers in the secondary market. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is taking enforcement action against secondary ticketing websites suspected of breaking consumer law, whilst the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) are investigating whether secondary ticketing websites have broken advertising rules.

Last week Google also announced that from 7 February they will require ticket resellers to be certified before they can advertise through their AdWords service. This should make it easier for consumers to find tickets on the primary market.

Citizens Advice provide [information for consumers](#) about buying event tickets and how to make sure a ticketing site is genuine.