

Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain publish 2021-22 annual report

The Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain have today (19 July 2022) released their Annual Report for 2021 to 2022.

The commissioners provide updates on their strategic objectives to 2023 and evaluate the longer-term impact of the pandemic. The traffic commissioners have worked hard to ensure that service users have been given the support and advice they require so that they continue to provide safe and effective transport services for the benefit of the country.

The report addresses issues such as:

- Entrants to the Road Haulage Industry
- The Decision-Making Process
- Certificates of Professional Competence (CPC)
- Load Security
- Maintenance
- Traction Only Services
- Driver Welfare

These includes some very important current issues such as driver shortages and the incoming legislation on LGVs between 2.5 and 3.5 tonnes.

Also discussed in the report are business recovery, legislative change, local bus services, better targeted regulation and helping compliant businesses.

Reflecting on the report, the Senior Traffic Commissioner Richard Turfitt said:

“It has been a difficult year once more in the goods vehicle and PSV industries, with costs increasing and shortages affecting all operators, so we would like to acknowledge the hard work of our compliant operators in keeping our GB roads as safe as possible.

“Traffic commissioners continue to operate successfully as a team and within the communities, which we have the privilege to serve. We are committed to

high-quality decision making against the standards set in legislation and to encouraging robust standards across the regulated industries .”

The Annual Report also contains statistics describing the licensing and regulatory activities. The data recognises the achievements of the commissioners and their support during the year, notably:

15,748 operator licence applications and variations processed

14,551 local bus registrations processed

1392 public inquiries determined

309 preliminary hearings held

57 Senior Team Leader (STL) interviews held

13,654 vocational driver cases closed

The report can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-annual-report-2021-to-2022>

The IPO reveals Wallace & Gromit's Cracking Ideas competition winners 2022

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) and Aardman are delighted to announce the winners of the 2022 ‘Wallace & Gromit’s Cracking Ideas’ competition.

The competition challenges youngsters to come up with an invention, support the awareness and understanding of IP rights through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects for Key Stages 1 and 2 (ages 4 – 11 years).

Entrants to the 2022 competition were challenged to answer ‘How should we be travelling in the future whilst considering the natural environment?’ Children were encouraged to take inspiration from Wallace & Gromit’s iconic inventions and consider how the design could be both fun and sustainable.

The competition saw a wonderful 1,126 entries, making it especially difficult for the judges to pick the ultimate winners from such a remarkable and inventive array.

The winning entry in the Key Stage 1 category was a design from Emily Benson from Cosby Primary in Leicestershire for the ‘Cheese Mobile’; powered by

sustainable resources and constructed from cheese, it's a cracking invention that caught the eyes of Wallace and Gromit. The runner up in this category with the creation of the 'Super Springy' boots was Minnie-Jay Williams from New Invention Junior School in Willenhall; special features of the boots include a cheese and water spray, handy for when you are thirsty or hungry on the go.

In the Key Stage 2 category, the winning entry was 'The Moon Rider' from Evie-Moon Cleary at Westcliffe Primary School, Scunthorpe; a litter collecting boat that is powered by the wind, sea, and sun, a great use of renewable natural resources. The runner-up in this category was 'Wallace & Gromit's Tea Wagon' from Jasmine Jayde Chin at Ysgol Nantgwyn, Tonypandy; the wagon has an offering of any type of tea you desire and is powered by used teabags. An inventive way to reuse the teabags that would have gone to waste.

Running alongside this year's challenge we had 'Wallace & Gromit's Tour of Innovation'. Travelling a mile around the UK for each competition entry received, Wallace & Gromit discovered innovations of the past and future. We can announce that the school that sent the duo the furthest is Cosby Primary in Leicestershire, a cracking total of 239 miles, congratulations.

The Intellectual Property Office's Chief Executive Tim Moss said:

Our Wallace and Gromit Cracking Ideas Competition continues to show how young people have the gift of imagination without limits, as the wealth of inspiring and imaginative entries demonstrate every year.

It's great to see that the competition is helping the next generation of creators and innovators understand the importance of protecting their original ideas. I would like to thank the teachers, parents, and helpers for encouraging the entrants and helping them grow their understanding of intellectual property as an asset for life. Encouraging and educating young people about the importance of IP will help build on the UK's proud history of creativity and innovation, helping secure their future and make life better for all.

Emily Jones, Brand Manager at Aardman, said:

It was a joy to see all of the fantastic inventions from more young creative minds this year. We were blown away by the oodles of creativity, ideas and inspiration taken from Wallace & Gromit, from tea powered engines to cheesy vehicles! Well done to all who took part.

The Intellectual Property Office provides a series of education resources, competition and outreach to support innovation, creativity and intellectual property, including 'Wallace & Gromit's Cracking Ideas'. To find out more,

you can get in touch with the IPO via ideas@crackingideas.com.

Notes to Editors:

- the Wallace & Gromit's Cracking Ideas campaign includes curriculum linked teacher resources for Key Stage 1 and 2, plus a competition
- the project will support STEM curriculums as well as areas of English and numeracy at Key Stage 1 and 2
- the campaign is a flagship education programme for the IPO and contributes to 'creating a world leading IP environment', helping increase IP's impact through awareness and education
- Aardman, an employee-owned company, is based in Bristol (UK) and co-founded in 1976 by Peter Lord and David Sproxton, is an independent and multi-Academy Award® and BAFTA® award winning studio. It produces feature films, series, advertising, games and interactive entertainment
- Wallace and Gromit, Aardman's most loved and iconic duo, have been delighting family audiences around the world for over 30 years. They are internationally celebrated, winning over 100 awards at festivals – including 3 Academy Awards® and 5 BAFTA® Awards
- the studio runs the Aardman Academy which has a commitment to nurturing talent by delivering excellence in film and animation training and mentoring. The Aardman Academy offers a variety of courses from intensive one-day workshops teaching production skills and storyboarding, to comprehensive twelve-week courses for professionals in craft based subjects from model making to animation
- in November 2018 it became an Employee Owned Organisation, to ensure [Aardman](#) remains independent and to secure the creative legacy and culture of the company for many decades to come

4 talented young people share their Kickstart Scheme journey

This year we have been privileged to welcome 4 talented young people into the Government Legal Department (GLD) through the Kickstart Scheme. Hanif Hatab,

Human Resources (HR), Rachel Fenner, Business Management, Nathan Lea, Business Management and Lauren Le, HR discuss the work that they have been undertaking during their time at GLD.

Hanif Hatab, HR Administrative Officer said:

I applied to the Kickstart Scheme as I had planned to explore other career options for myself outside of teaching.

My primary responsibility involves digitising sensitive confidential information and making sure it is stored digitally in the most secure way. Assisting with 2 different projects within diversity and inclusion inspired me to follow a similar route.

The experience is invaluable as being within a space of work where I feel comfortable has left me with certainty in what I want to pursue as a career. Now, I look towards achieving a Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) qualification so I can gain the necessary skills to progress within the HR field and become an integral part of the HR team.

Rachel Fenner, Business Management Administrator at Department for Transport (DfT) Legal Advisors said:

My name is Rachel and I am an Executive Officer (EO). After graduating in summer 2021 with a degree in accounting and finance, I decided to apply to the Kickstart Scheme. This 6 month programme was a great opportunity to gain work experience in an office environment while figuring out where I wanted my career to go.

I joined the Business Management Team in the Department for Transport in December 2021, working as a personal assistant for 3 different deputy directors. I have been part of an amazing team, who have made me feel welcomed and supported from day one.

My role mainly consists of diary management for lawyers I support, but I have also managed the special bonuses awards and I'm also an IT focal point. This involves on-boarding, off-boarding and various other admin tasks.

I have completed and currently finishing 3 different courses – The Agile Project Management (Foundation and Practitioner course), IBM SPSS Statistics and Crossing Thresholds which is a mentoring programme for women. My confidence has really grown since working here, especially with communicating in work environments and feeling comfortable in reaching out for help.

I have also gained clarity in the next steps in my career – I am starting a masters in psychology in September while working part time as an EO and afterwards plan to work as a research assistant

for a psychologist.

Nathan Lea, Business Management Administrator at Department for International Trade (DIT) Legal Advisors said:

I am Nathan Lea and I am 19 years old. I am currently working in DIT Legal Advisors Business Management Team as Office Support. I decided to apply for the Kickstart Scheme to get valuable work experience in a professional environment, with the allure of the Civil Service being one of the main reasons why I prioritised my application to GLD.

My role has involved project work for my head of business management and other deputy directors, mainly utilising Excel skills which I have cultivated during the time in my role. The benefits of this scheme have been innumerable to me.

Before this opportunity, I didn't know if the soft skills that I developed in school would translate over to work effectively, and this role has given me the confidence that I believe will allow me to progress in my career. The open, inclusive and welcoming environment has made me realise work is not as scary as I thought. I have been offered an EO role in DIT Legal and hope to continue my career in the Civil Service.

Laura Le, HR Administrative Officer said:

My name is Laura and I graduated in 2020. During the pandemic, I was in a predicament as I could not decide if I should continue a law career. I considered HR as it involved the application of employment law – something I enjoyed studying at university.

I was drawn to the Kickstart Scheme at GLD as the position was in HR and within the legal industry, meaning I could experience and contrast the 2 fields. I have since taken on various responsibilities supporting Employee Services and the Government Legal Profession's (GLP) Diversity Summer Scheme and Buddy Scheme.

I am currently assisting and learning from other departments within HR. I have found it especially useful to network and have found everyone at GLD extremely welcoming, supportive, and inclusive. I also have a lovely and supportive new mentor who stretches my personal and professional development.

My time at GLD has been immensely beneficial as I have acquired insight into HR and legal. I am now looking to secure a position within HR to develop expertise and complete a CIPD qualification.

Two million more women in work since 2010, as UK unemployment remains low

- New ONS data shows number of working women is now 2 million more than in 2010
- Women in high-skilled jobs is up 38.5% since 2010, with proportion of women progressing into top management roles growing by almost 25% over last 12 years
- The results come as the UK sees another unemployment rate of 3.8% – below pre-pandemic levels

The number of working women has now reached 15.7 million – a rise of 2 million since 2010 with more women progressing into senior, higher-skilled jobs.

The figures show the portion of women becoming managers, directors and senior officials has climbed almost 25% since 2010, rising by nearly a quarter of a million. Women in professional occupations is also up 40% since 2010 and almost 40% more have moved into associate professional and technical jobs like science, technology, engineering and maths.

Young women are currently one of the fastest growing working group, with 7.7% more women aged 16-24 moving into employment across the year. New OECD data also shows the UK has the second highest female and youth employment rates among the G7.

DWP Minister, Julie Marson MP said:

It's fantastic news that today we've got 2 million more women in work than in 2010, and the latest OECD data shows we have the second highest level of women in work in the G7.

As we grow the economy, it's vital we make sure everyone can find a job that's right for them – and importantly that they can progress in work.

That's why we're keeping up our support to get people at any age or career stage into work, including a new multi-million pound offer to help the over 50s get into, and remain in employment.

To help working mothers, the government [recently announced](#) a new package of measures to increase childcare support for parents amid rising costs. This included a call for more parents to take up support through Universal Credit, which allows families to reclaim up to 85% of their childcare costs, worth up to £1,108 per month.

The government knows that work is the best route out of poverty, and people can be £6,000 better off in work than out of work on benefits. DWP work coaches are supporting jobseekers, at any age or stage, get into secure and long-term employment, because as well as financial benefits a job also brings social and wellbeing benefits.

DWP is also investing a further £22 million in its 50PLUS Champions jobcentre support package. The [recent announcement](#) means more over 50s jobseekers will receive more one-to-one employment support, so they can continue to reap the benefits of their invaluable work experience and boost earnings ahead of retirement.

The jobs figures out today come as the DWP's [Way to Work jobs drive](#) reached its target of helping half a million people on benefits find work in five months and as the department sets out to build on its in-work progression agenda – helping working people receiving Universal Credit to progress in their jobs and earn more money for their families.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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[HS2 bidder merger raises competition concerns](#)

Press release

The CMA has found that a merger between 2 businesses currently bidding for the installation of overhead power cables for HS2 could raise competition concerns.



Image credit: iStock

Bouygues and Equans (part of Engie Group) are both large and well-established players within the railway supply chain in Europe. Bouygues agreed to buy Equans in a £6 billion deal announced in November 2021.

In the UK, Bouygues and Equans are close competitors in the supply of catenary systems (the overhead power cables used to supply electricity to trains) for high-speed railways. Both businesses are currently competing to supply High Speed 2 (HS2) – the only contract in recent years for the supply of catenary systems to high-speed railways in the UK.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) found that there would be a sufficient number of credible competitors for any future contracts for the installation and maintenance of high-speed catenary systems in the UK. But as the current HS2 tender is at an advanced stage, and the merging businesses are 2 of a smaller number of bidders in the final stages competing for the contract, the CMA is concerned that these 2 bids coming under the control of the merged business could make the remainder of the tender process less competitive.

The CMA is concerned that this reduction in competition could result in a higher-cost final contract, which would have an adverse knock-on effect on taxpayers.

Colin Raftery, Senior Director at the CMA, said:

Competitive tenders help make sure that taxpayers get the best possible deal when large public works, like HS2, are undertaken.

The HS2 tender for overhead catenary systems is at an advanced stage, but the remaining bidders are continuing to compete on the final aspects of the contract. It's important to ensure that this process isn't undermined, as this could result in unnecessary additional costs, ultimately leaving taxpayers worse off.

The firms now have 5 working days to submit proposals to address the CMA's competition concerns. The CMA then has a further 5 working days to consider whether to accept any offer instead of referring the case for an in-depth Phase 2 investigation.

For more information, visit the [Bouygues / Equans merger inquiry page](#).

1. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.
2. Under the Enterprise Act 2002 the CMA has a duty to make a reference to Phase 2 if the CMA believes that it is or may be the case that a relevant merger situation has been created, or arrangements are in progress or contemplation which, if carried into effect, will result in the creation of a relevant merger situation; and the creation of that situation has resulted, or may be expected to result, in a substantial lessening of competition within any market or markets in the United Kingdom for goods or services.

3. The CMA found that the merger gives rise to a realistic prospect of a substantial lessening of competition in the supply of high-speed overhead catenary systems in the UK.
4. The transaction is also subject to review by the European Commission, which is also scheduled to issue a decision on its Phase 1 investigation by 19 July.
5. Visit the [High Speed 2 website](#) for more information on the tender for the supply of catenary systems for HS2.

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