



Traffic Commissioners  
for Great Britain

# Annual Report to the Secretary of State 2020-21



**Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain:  
Annual Report to the Secretary of State  
2020-2021**

(For the year ending 31 March 2021)

Annual report presented to the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 55 of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981.

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Transparency Data: Information relating to the salaries, spending, gifts and hospitality of traffic commissioners is published on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

# Foreword by the Senior Traffic Commissioner

This report identifies some of the key achievements during a very difficult year for the transport industry. Traffic commissioners take responsibility for effective licensing and regulation of the commercial vehicle industries, but the success of any public service relies on the energy and willingness of those at the frontline. People are at the heart of the Office of the Traffic Commissioner (OTC) and the delivery of quality services to our stakeholders; it remains the mission of everyone in OTC to promote safe, fair, efficient, and reliable passenger and goods transport.

The scope of the traffic commissioners' work is much wider than the statistical information can report. It involves using the regulatory framework to best effect, leading and engaging with others to improve road safety. The tables illustrate that we will not hesitate to intervene where road safety or effective regulation is put at jeopardy, but we continue to add to our regulatory toolbox to influence operators and encourage them to manage their own risks.

Our activities remain aligned to priorities, which benefit all parts of Great Britain. The versatility of our service was reflected in support of the national effort. Whilst it is now 90 years since the first meeting of traffic commissioners, the last year has illustrated that traffic commissioners adapt to the needs of an ever-changing world. Instead of turning inwards we took the initiative in support of vital industries.

As each sector within the regulated transport industries sought to adapt, the traffic commissioners and staff have changed, to support operators to meet their responsibilities. The RAC foundation referred to the growth in internet retailing as arguably the most significant structural change in the domestic marketplace in the last 20 years. That research could not have foreseen the changes brought about over the last 12 months. The increase in e-commerce has provided opportunities, but those traction operations face challenges in ensuring compliance. We also want to look at how OTC can contribute to a net zero economy. This report identifies how we intend to take forward some of the initiatives employed during the pandemic, and to make them part of normal business.

Staying relevant relies on sound strategy, so we have brought forward new objectives to improve our policies and service. OTC must remain responsive and outward looking. That will require planning and greater accountability as OTC adopts to new ways of working. We are therefore very pleased to have secured agreement to new standards for the service that is to be delivered to traffic commissioners by DVSA.

We look forward to working with Loveday Ryder in her new role as Chief Executive of DVSA. Whilst the service level agreement will require time to be implemented, her involvement is already paying dividends and shows what can be achieved towards our shared interests in a modern regulatory tribunal.

This report is deliberately forward looking, but I must record the exceptional efforts of my colleagues during the last year. It is my privilege to be asked to continue to lead them into the future.

# Our purpose

The Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain (TCs) are independent regulators for the heavy goods vehicle (HGV) and public service vehicle (PSV) industries and their professional drivers.

Collectively, we are a non-departmental tribunal and licensing authority, sponsored by the Department for Transport (DfT). Our mission is to promote safe, fair, efficient and reliable passenger and goods transport through effective licensing and regulation of the commercial vehicle industries.

Our shared vision is for traffic commissioners to be recognised by our stakeholders as providing a proportionate, accountable, consistent and transparent decision-making - a model of independent regulation.

# What we do

We work to keep Great Britain's roads safe by licensing and regulating the commercial vehicle industries. With DfT, its agencies, the police and industry stakeholders we support the compliant, licensed operation of HGVs and PSVs. We do this by:

- providing statutory guidance and statutory directions to commissioners and industry regarding the operator licensing regime and tribunal activities
- holding regulatory hearings to examine evidence and take proportionate action to maintain safety standards and promote fair competition in the industry
- holding conduct hearings to examine evidence and take proportionate action to ensure professional driving standards are upheld
- targeting limited tribunal time so that the most serious cases are dealt with quickly and fairly
- delivering efficient, digital licensing services to responsible new applicants and compliant operators
- liaising with other regulatory bodies to identify and share knowledge around non-compliance
- educating and communicating with industry about the value of compliance and the licensing regime

Traffic commissioners seek to reduce regulatory burdens and support compliant businesses. However, statistics are unable to record the instances where the advice or assistance provided by individual traffic commissioners has resulted in improved compliance and road safety.

# Overview: regulation & industry

## Domestic freight (UK registered vehicles)

- 79% of domestic freight moved by road<sup>1</sup>
- 153 billion tonnes kilometres moved<sup>1</sup>



## International freight (UK registered vehicles)

- 4.9 billion tonnes kilometres moved<sup>1</sup>

## Local bus services

- 4.5 billion local bus service passenger journeys<sup>2</sup>
- 57% of all public transport journeys<sup>1</sup>



## Employment

- 1.46 million people employed in Transport and Storage<sup>3</sup>

## Our licensing work<sup>4</sup>

- 69,528 valid goods vehicle operator licences
- 61,305 goods vehicles authorised
- 6,602 valid PSV operator licences
- 93,438 passenger vehicles authorised
- 14,080 operator licence applications and variations processed
- 21,717 local bus registrations processed



## Our regulatory work<sup>4</sup>

- 1054 public inquiries determined
- 178 preliminary hearings held
- 46 Senior Team Leader (STL) interviews held
- 10,442 vocational driver cases closed



<sup>1</sup> Department for Transport, Transport Statistics 2020

<sup>2</sup> Department for Transport Annual Bus Statistics year ending March 2020

<sup>3</sup> Data published by Office for National Statistics, Employment by industry, 18 May 2021

<sup>4</sup> Figures represent the period 2020-21 as set out in the statistical section of this report.

# Strategic Plans to 2021

## Performance to 2021

At the mid-point, good progress had been made in the delivery of our strategic plan, but we could not anticipate the full extent of the changes the COVID-19 pandemic would bring.

Our priorities changed, to support the HGV and PSV industries during the pandemic, but we set out below what was achieved and how we adapted the objectives to meet the needs of the time.

## Objective 1:

**Deliver a modern, effective operator licence regime that ensures operators are fit to hold a licence whilst minimising the regulatory burden on the compliant.**

### Efficient Licensing services

We set a target to drive down the average time taken to determine applications (for new licences or for a major variation to an existing licence) to an average of 35 working days by 31 March 2021, whilst still maintaining appropriate checks on the applicants.

By March 2020 we were seeing good progress towards this target and published statistics show that between April 2019 and March 2020 it took an average of:

- 36.45 days to process a goods vehicle licence application
- 50.1 days to process a PSV licence application

This was achieved through setting a clear focus to the licensing teams. Cases were subject to regular reviews after they had been outstanding for 4 months. Traffic commissioners have now reduced this to 3 months. This has made the teams more accountable by giving greater visibility to outstanding cases.

The impact of the continuing pandemic has seen the average processing times increase and the performance currently sits at 47.4 days for HGVs and 54 days for PSVs. The pandemic restrictions required a great deal of work into balancing the needs of both operators and residents and the slower lines of communication made delays inevitable. The prompt action taken by the traffic commissioners during the pandemic has ensured that the impact on service delivery has been mitigated.

Going forward, the traffic commissioners have signed a new service level agreement which commits DVSA to improving the service delivered to the regulated industries.

## **Leaving the European Union**

We said we would help prepare to leave the European Union by:

- reviewing guidance available to industry to ensure that it reflects the legal position;
- providing updated Statutory Documents;
- engaging with the Secretary of State and the Upper Tribunal to support the development of legislation and case law during the period of transition;
- supporting the development of Tribunal Rules that assist operators in the tribunal process;
- providing relevant support to the competent authority in the issuing of road freight permits;
- providing a single point of contact within the OTC for issues related to exiting the EU.

The preparations for exiting the EU needed to maintain a degree of flexibility. We planned for a number of scenarios and inevitably some did not materialise, but this planning was useful as it helped inform the contingency arrangements, which were then adapted to meet the pandemic.

At the time of writing this report, the Senior Traffic Commissioner is preparing a limited consultation with industry representatives on a new statutory document relating to appeals against the cancellation of international road transport permits.

As the relationship between the UK and the EU evolves, the traffic commissioners will continue to update the relevant guidance and provide support to the Government and industry.

## **Future-proofing the Office of the Traffic Commissioner**

We undertook to review the capability of the Office of the Traffic Commissioner to support and deliver the statutory functions of traffic commissioners and to establish whether it is properly resourced.

The Office of the Traffic Commissioner has been subject to three different reviews over the last 36 months. These reviews have varied greatly in scope and detail, touching on various aspects of the statutory functions of the traffic commissioners. They are yet to be concluded which leads to continued uncertainty.

Throughout the process of reviews, it has become more readily apparent that there is a need for a more holistic approach to ensure that we have a modern tribunal which is fit for purpose. Our liaison with the Enforcement Directorate of DVSA has continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is further work to be done in order to improve the evidence presented to traffic commissioners so that it is as strong and clear as possible. The traffic commissioners need to see that improvement in the standard and consistency of evidence. Traffic commissioners continue to provide assistance and advice to DVSA in this important area.

## **Improving transparency of income and expenditure**

This objective is yet to be fully achieved. Department for Transport officials have commenced work with the aim of providing assurances, but this is not complete. The traffic commissioners have a new service level agreement with the DVSA and we should see the benefits of this over the coming reporting period.



Throughout the past year there has been an increase in the number of applications received when compared with recent years. There is evidence of changing industry practices with a significant move towards e-commerce. With many retailers closed for the bulk of the year, through necessity, online shopping has expanded in a way previously unseen. This may have changed the face of the goods vehicle industry permanently.

Many operators have realised the opportunities for development at this time and the traffic commissioners have an opportunity for OTC to renew the offering to industry. The forthcoming introduction of operator licences for international LGV operators, provides additional opportunities, whilst maintaining the strong emphasis on road safety.

## **Objective 2:**

**Promote a safe road transport industry, which supports compliance, fair competition and protects the environment.**

### **Reducing the time to wait for a hearing**

The traffic commissioners set out to reduce the time taken for cases to be allocated a first hearing date at public inquiry by:

- ensuring that all cases listed for a hearing before a traffic commissioner are allocated a first hearing date within 12 weeks, save where the interests of justice require it;
- developing a mechanism to facilitate the transfer of cases between offices to enable the 12-week target to be met, whilst maintaining access to justice.

Last year, the timeliness of hearings had been raised to around 98% and the traffic commissioners were very close to successfully reaching their target in all cases. Unfortunately, in-person hearings stopped from March to July 2020 as a result of the restrictions imposed due to COVID-19 and this impacted our ability to hear cases within the target timeframes.

The traffic commissioners worked hard throughout this period and beyond and are confident that actions have been taken that created an environment that is capable of returning to business as usual quickly and they fully expect the performance to recover those performance levels next year.

As a part of recovery, the traffic commissioners introduced the use of virtual hearings, including a centralised virtual Tribunal. The traffic commissioners recognised the shortcomings of virtual hearings and used lessons learnt to improve the arrangements. These arrangements enabled the traffic commissioners to quickly shift many hearings to virtual in place of the already arranged in-person hearings at the commencement of the third lockdown in January 2021.

The experience has confirmed the value of in-person hearings for the more complex cases and to ensure understanding for the parties and witnesses appearing before the traffic commissioner. The overriding emphasis continues to be on the fairness of proceedings.

Going forward, it is likely that a targeted mix of both types of hearing will be used.

## **Targeting communication and education**

We sought to use industry segmentation to enable us to more effectively target communication and educational resources towards specific service users. This was particularly directed at those operators who do not already enjoy access to relevant information or organisations to assist them with compliance.

Over the course of the past year, we have increased our targeted messaging. This was especially important for messaging in the lead up to leaving the EU and during the pandemic.

To improve the availability of advice, every new operator now receives a suite of messages over a period of sixteen weeks. These cover a number of topics relevant to ensuring a compliant operation and are designed to help them by directing them to the sources for readily available advice. This campaign has proved to be very successful with a high level of engagement recorded with the campaign.

When the Minister requested guidance be sent out to industry after several high-profile bridge strikes, the traffic commissioners responded with support and advice through targeted messaging. They adapted their previous advice to give clear examples, setting out their clear expectations of operators to prevent future incidences.

## **Working with other regulators, enforcement agencies and stakeholders**

The traffic commissioners continue their partnership working with agencies of the Home Office, Department for Transport and others on facilitating the sharing of data. They maintain their role as an active participant in the National Roads Policing review and have identified other opportunities to work with the Home Office and HMRC on issues such as clandestine entrants and financial crime. The traffic commissioners want to see an improvement in data sharing for enforcement purposes and have identified other areas of concern, e.g. the misuse of Bounce-back Loans. There will be on-going work in this area.

## **Tribunal facilities that are fit for purpose**

The traffic commissioners envisaged that much of this work would be achieved through the Tailored review. Unfortunately, that work was delayed but it is hoped that it will now be completed by the end of 2021.

We now have experience of the benefit and pitfalls of virtual hearings. As services open up again, the accessibility of the facilities available in the Tribunal will increase in importance.

The traffic commissioners will continue to challenge any threats to the fairness and independence of the tribunal. The reviews will benefit from their expert knowledge and experience so that that the importance of suitable facilities, both physical and technical, is fully recognised.

## **Reviewing and modernising bus performance monitoring**

Our intended review of the methods used to measure the performance of local bus services and to issue updated statutory guidance was delayed as we switched our emphasis, in support of the national effort during the pandemic.

During this period, we have facilitated positive arrangements to allow the industry to adjust to a rapidly changing environment across the constituent parts of Great Britain. The traffic commissioners have continued to engage with stakeholders to review the guidance provided and ensure that a proportionate balance has been achieved between the needs of the operators and those of the passengers.

The importance of performance monitoring is recognised by the traffic commissioners and the relationships we have established during the pandemic will assist us in taking this work forward in the updated objectives for 2021-2023.

## **Continuity of service during the Pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all facets of the transport industry and the ongoing effects will be felt for the foreseeable future. We, and the staff who support us, are no exception.

Throughout the past year, the regulated industries have kept the country moving. The commissioners and OTC staff have worked throughout the pandemic to provide a service to support these industries in the national effort, even as many other functions temporarily ceased.

Shortly before the first national lock-down in March 2020, the Senior Traffic Commissioner sought to anticipate some of significant challenges which would face the road transport industries. He published a statutory document for Contingency and Emergency Planning ahead of the restrictions being introduced. This was accompanied with further guidance providing practical advice and clarification for operators. The first iteration of 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): Advice for Heavy Goods (HGV) and Public Service Vehicle (PSV) Operators' was published on 18 March 2020 and has been updated as the pandemic developed to ensure it reflected the current circumstances.

Traffic commissioners used their experience to pursue a proportionate approach in maximising the discretion allowed within the legislation and adopting a flexible approach for operators. Throughout the pandemic the traffic commissioners have worked with various public and private organisations to inform the decision-making process, whilst maintaining a heavy emphasis on the road safety objectives.

Key areas of the guidance include:

### **Issuing of Exemptions**

Legislation provides for a traffic commissioner to grant a temporary exemption from any requirement to hold a standard goods vehicle operator's licence. This may be used by those who are issued only with a restricted licence who need to carry goods for hire or reward or to bodies that do not hold any licence but find a need to transport goods urgently.

Guidance was issued on how a temporary exemption may be sought and details on how a commissioner may approach such an application. Since March 2020, 37 exemptions have been issued to operators allowing them to operate additional vehicles or for restricted licence holders to operate for hire or reward. Many of these exemptions will have assisted businesses to generate income to offset losses resulting from the pandemic or to contribute to the wider national effort in the distribution of goods.

## **Processing of applications**

A little understood part of the legislation provides opportunity for the owners and residents of land within the vicinity to oppose proposals for a haulage business to use an operating centre. The restrictions placed on the general population in March 2020 potentially impacted on the ability of some residents to identify applications and raise concerns with the traffic commissioner.

Traffic commissioners balanced the interests of vulnerable people, whilst ensuring operators could be granted authority to assist with the national recovery. This included delaying permanent grant of applications to allow additional time for residents to identify issues. Time limited interim authority was issued in many cases so that operators could begin operations without delay. As restrictions eased in June 2020 these processes evolved further along using a risk-based approach to take into account the location of the proposed operating centres and any previous adverse history related to the site.

## **Periods of Grace**

The Senior Traffic Commissioner identified the potential challenges faced by operators in meeting the requirements of financial standing or professional competence as a consequence of the pandemic. Legislation empowers traffic commissioners to grant a maximum six-month period of grace to operators who apply for the dispensation. When considering applications traffic commissioners will consider the likelihood of the operator being able to comply in the future and will seek to adopt a supportive approach.

Advice was also issued to operators on the process for applying for a Period of Grace. Given the exceptional circumstances, the Senior Traffic Commissioner directed that a traffic commissioner can rely on a previous satisfactory financial check that is no older than the last 12 months, as evidence to support the granting of a Period of Grace. Copy or internet documents were also accepted in place of original documents.

Over 150 applications have so far been submitted since the start of the pandemic. Due to the level of Government support during the pandemic it is anticipated that the majority of operators requiring a Period of Grace will rise as some of the support schemes end.

## **Maintaining vehicle safety**

In Spring 2020, traffic commissioners were made aware that some operators were unable to gain access to maintenance facilities. Working closely with the trade associations and DVSA policy teams, the traffic commissioners produced guidance around a series of risk-based scenarios for operators who were unable to maintain vehicles in accordance with their stated maintenance programs. Initial guidance on maintenance concentrated on essential services but this was developed for other areas.

As initial restrictions eased guidance was provided to operators on how they may reintroduce fleets of vehicles after periods of inactivity.

## **Maintaining skills**

Access to training allows responsible operators to remain on top of compliance and traffic commissioners often receive undertakings from operators and transport managers that they will attend further training to demonstrate their commitment to a safe operation. These undertakings may give the traffic commissioner confidence to reduce the regulatory action that would otherwise be taken against the business of the operator, on the promise of future compliance.

The restrictions initially prevented physical attendance at training. Traffic commissioners worked with industry to identify remote alternatives to the established training courses. Commissioners used their experience to ensure that virtual training replicated, as far as possible, the benefits of more traditional, classroom-based training. A standard set of criteria was developed and communicated, and this has allowed a number of training providers to offer virtual courses to operators and transport managers that meet the criteria.

Commissioners also developed and communicated advice on how regular compliance audits could be undertaken remotely. This advice helped to ensure that operators continued to have access to independent audit reviews on their arrangements to ensure a safe operation. Similar work was also undertaken with DVSA to assist the enforcement agency in remotely auditing an operator's systems.

## **Regulatory Action**

Public inquiries and other hearings were postponed between 18 March and 6 July 2020. Traffic commissioners responded to the risk (presented by non-compliant operators being permitted to carry on operations in the absence of a public inquiry) by relying on their experience and regulatory toolkit to triage the outstanding cases. Where appropriate they sought an alternative method for disposal that would ensure that the risk to road safety was effectively managed pending the resumption of hearings. Of the 286 cases that were listed for hearings on 20 March 2020 in excess of 100 cases were managed through this risk-based process.

As set out earlier the traffic commissioners also made use of modern technology to hear cases virtually. Approaches have been blended and COVID-safe in-person hearings have also ensured the fairness of proceedings. Driver Conduct hearings have benefitted most from this approach. An example of how our changes have assisted individual drivers can be seen in Scotland, where the need for travel from outlying areas and islands for short hearings has been reduced. Previously, a driver might need to take an entire day off work for a 15-minute hearing but with a virtual hearing neither the driver nor their employer may be subject to the additional expense. As with all hearings, the requirements of justice are the priority.

## **Local Bus Service Registration**

The initial restrictions led to a significant decrease in passenger numbers and led to operators seeking to adjust service levels at much shorter notice than the usual time allowed for in the legislation.

Traffic commissioners have used the powers in the legislation to grant short notice dispensation to support operators in the short-term, with a view to services returning to normal when circumstances allow. Fees were waived on the proviso that the services would be returned to that which was previously registered at the earliest opportunity. This process was introduced to

ensure that bus services will not be lost on resumption of more normal operations.

Throughout the pandemic the traffic commissioners have continued to work with the Department for Transport officials and officials in the devolved Governments, representatives of operators and the local authorities to maintain a flexible approach that reflected the developing situation. This has ensured that a proportionate balance has been achieved between the needs of the operators and those of the passengers. The traffic commissioners continue to monitor the situation as restrictions ease and will engage with stakeholders on the returning the services to normal.

### **Looking forward**

The traffic commissioners will seek to carry forward some of the innovation which resulted from the pandemic. Where new ways of working provide improvements to the service users or effective regulation, the traffic commissioners intend to adapt for more settled times. Examples of this will be the continued use of virtual hearings where appropriate and the acceptance of online training (where found to be effective).

The DVSA has committed to an OTC recovery plan to reduce the average processing times for applications to meet the 35-day target set by traffic commissioners and supported by Ministers. The Department for Transport is supporting these efforts through the provision of funding for additional staff in 2021/22 and OTC management have provided assurances that the 35-day target for average processing times will be being met by April 2022.

## **Our objectives for 2021-23**

As ever, we will aim to deliver a modern and effective operator licensing regime that ensures operators are fit to hold a licence whilst minimising the regulatory burden on the compliant.

We will also promote and develop a safe road transport industry, which delivers compliance, fair competition and protects the environment.

### **Inter-dependencies**

The traffic commissioners recognise that they do not operate in a vacuum. They are highly reliant on the support provided by the Department for Transport, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and our other stakeholders.

There is frequent confusion about the extent to which traffic commissioners can dictate the services provided to tribunal and licensing users. It is the industry which provides the funding for the service that is delivered. Traffic commissioners do not employ or manage their own staff. Fees obtained in the name of the traffic commissioners are paid to DVSA. The staff of the OTC are provided by the DVSA and as such, fall under the new service level agreement (SLA). The traffic commissioners should be viewed as a customer of the DVSA and expect there to be value for the fees charged, both in staffing and in the standard of support.

Despite this reliance, the commissioners should not be viewed as an instrument of the DVSA. We share an interest in road safety, but our statutory functions are different. The respective public bodies also differ considerably in size and resources. The relationship requires mutual respect.

We highlight that delivery of the service relies on it being appropriately resourced and staffed, so that it can function effectively. This requires a flexible and responsive approach from those supporting us.

Traffic commissioners also rely heavily on the evidence provided by the DVSA. It is in all interests to work together to improve the standard of investigations, but ultimately, we need respect and understanding for the legal parameters.

We are looking forward to working with DVSA's new Chief Executive, Loveday Ryder. Traffic commissioners are a major stakeholder of DVSA, and this relationship is reflected in the new Service Level Agreement, which should allow us to perform our role more effectively.

We have updated the strategic objectives for 2021 – 2023. The full document is published separately.

## **Business Recovery**

1. To ensure that the new relationship with DVSA delivers a licensing service, which is properly resourced to deliver the agreed performance levels.
2. To work with stakeholders to rebuild services in support of communities across Great Britain.

### *How we will deliver this:*

- Developing the new working relationship with DVSA to ensure the efficient delivery of services.
- By challenging the Office of the Traffic Commissioner to meet the target to process applications within an average of 35 working days and to ensure that cases are listed for public inquiry within 12 weeks, as set by Ministers.
- Identify opportunities for the improved use of IT to streamline quality processes.
- Ensure that the tribunal facilities are fit for the purposes of a modern regulatory tribunal reflecting the efficiencies and new working practices developed during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- To seek a review of fees to ensure that a structure is in place where the burden is proportionate to the size of business and level of service received and to investigate how that might be used to deliver environmental targets.

We have already advised that the OTC management have committed to a 35-day average processing time by April 2022. All of us recognise the need for action on emissions and the changes that innovation in vehicle technology will bring. This presents a golden opportunity to consider how progress might be influenced through a different fee structure.

## **Legislative Change**

3. Seek legislative change for the benefit of the operator licensing system.

### *How we will deliver this:*

- Investigate opportunities within the licensing system for reform which will contribute towards removing the cost of entry to the transport industry.
- Working with stakeholders to minimise the burden on responsible businesses on the integration of Light Goods Vehicles and 'longer semi-trailers' into the operator licensing system.
- Support innovation in the operator licensing system to prepare for future means of transport, such as autonomous and electric vehicles.

We have already commenced the preparatory work with the Department for Transport and the DVSA on developing and implementing the changes that will be required to bring internationally operated LGVs and other vehicles into the licensing system. Similar, positive work is on-going regarding 'longer semi-trailers'.



## **Local bus services**

4. Support the delivery of improved local bus services and better journeys.

*How we will deliver this:*

- Integrate changes brought about by the National Bus Strategy.
- Review how performance of local bus services is measured by engaging with the industry and other stakeholders and promoting updated statutory guidance.
- Using the opportunities arising from the Bus Open Data service to improve local services.

The Bus Open Data service will make available more data than ever before on an operator's performance. This will create an opportunity for the traffic commissioners to modernise how we measure performance to reflect the way that the public actually use differing modes of transport. We will be engaging with all stakeholders as this work develops.

## **Better Targeted Regulation**

5. Ensuring the efficient use of resources to deliver compliance across all sectors.

*How we will deliver this:*

- Identify opportunities for the improved use of IT to assist with taking responsive action against the non-compliant.
- Helping the DVSA to deliver the high standards it has committed to deliver to our service users.
- Using our experience to assist in developing a risk-based management approach to enforcement.

## **Helping compliant businesses**

6. We will support those we regulate, to comply and grow; making engagement accessible so that operators and drivers are provided with the information they require to manage their licences and meet safety standards.

*How we will deliver this:*

- Continuing our efforts to effectively target our communication and educational resources at service users, particularly those who do not already enjoy access to relevant information or other advice and to assist them with compliance.
- Improving the guidance available to operators and developing channels for engagement
- Ensuring fair competition through checks on the eligibility and the main operation of licence holders.
- Improving the transparency of the reasons for decisions in our publications.

We are pleased with the steps taken last year on accessibility and intend to build upon this. We will improve the guidance that is available to operators, and this will include producing information from the Statutory Guidance and Statutory Directions in a more user-friendly format. We will be producing guidance in more formats and will seek to deliver through more channels than previously, so that we reach even more drivers and operators than we currently manage.

# Summaries from England, Scotland, and Wales

For a second year, we have collated the collective observations of the traffic commissioners into defined narrative sections. Adopting this format, the following sections again combine those themes and observations of the traffic commissioners.

## Traffic commissioners for England

Sarah Bell, Tim Blackmore, Nick Denton, Gerallt Evans, Kevin Rooney, Richard Turfitt

### *OTC Services*

We have adapted as the offices were closed and then as restrictions changed. Office of the Traffic Commissioner Licensing and Compliance teams have continued to serve users of the tribunal and licensing functions during the pandemic, but they too deserve a consistent level of support. The renewal of the service level of agreement with DVSA after 13 years is intended to deliver proper support across the OTC. It recognises the reliance the traffic commissioners have on the DVSA for both staffing and resource. It emphasises the need to provide value for the operators' fees. The development of new operating instructions should ensure consistency and quality in the services provided on behalf of traffic commissioners.

### *Trailer operations*

Even during the reduced sittings of last year, a concerning pattern has emerged where the maintenance of trailers has been at issue. We have previously reported on improvements to brake test results at annual tests of heavy commercial vehicles. The considerable effort by DVSA and other stakeholders to make roller brake test reports accessible to all, has sadly passed by a number of operators who seem oblivious to the support available from the Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness. It makes the ongoing work commissioned by DfT all the more important. In the meantime, we would urge all trailer operators to implement the guidance.

We have seen a growing number of traction-only operators, driven by the increase in e-commerce. Section 3.3 of the Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness reminds operators that roadworthiness can be problematic for the traction service operator. Even though for short-term use, the trailer owner is normally responsible for routine maintenance, including safety inspections, traffic commissioners stress that the operator must comply with the obligations of their operator's licence, which extend to the trailer, whilst it is being used by them. The traction only operator and the trailer owner should work together to ensure the roadworthiness of the trailer. This includes the operator taking a risk-based approach to ensure that the maintenance arrangements comply with off their own schedule of maintenance and inspections, including regular brake testing.

### *Availability of drivers*

The shortage of HGV drivers continues to be a challenge for operators. Trade representatives and other industry leaders have raised awareness of the impact significant on the supply chain. The obvious risk is that operators may be tempted to retain drivers even after retraining and disciplinary processes have failed to import the standards expected of a professional driver.

The introduction of IR35 is unfortunately, still continuing to be a problem for many operators.

We would encourage all operators to make themselves aware of the tax status of all the drivers undertaking work for them. The differences between self-employed drivers, what constitutes a self-employed driver, drivers engaged as a personal service company and drivers provided by agencies need to be fully understood, especially where they relate to HMRC and financial standing. There has been much guidance provided by the trade associations and the government and we would strongly suggest operators access these resources and seek appropriate advice where required.

The regulated industries require new drivers. They in turn need to be mentored by competent and experienced drivers who can act as exemplars. The current driver demographic presents a real risk and operators and Transport Managers may be tempted to engage drivers who fail to live up to even the basic standards. It must be understood that whatever the commercial expediency, safety standards must be retained and that the ability to manage an operator's licence will be put in jeopardy, if they fail to ensure compliance from their drivers.

## *Risk management*

As the above sections imply, there are many potential risks to road safety and fair competition. In the past year, traffic commissioners have encouraged operators to develop the skills to manage the risks in their own businesses. Operators know their businesses best. Traffic commissioners expect operators to proactively manage their own risks to head off any potential problems. Doing so would avoid the need for many of the public inquiries undertaken. Operators who find deficiencies in their operations need to draw on good practice and change their control procedures, before they attract regulatory action.

One example is viewing driver defect reporting as a daily exercise, with a simple walk around at the beginning of the day. A competent driver will ensure that defects are detected before the vehicle and trailer go into service, but driver defect reporting is more than just a tick box in the morning. Extra walk around checks might be necessary if a vehicle has been driven over difficult terrain or it is an older vehicle, for instance. If a risk becomes evident during operation, a driver should be trained to record his/her findings and to report the defect.

The past eighteen months has caused massive disruption to many businesses. Many have needed to invest significantly to deal with social distancing and the commissioners are aware this can deplete reserves. Standard operators should be aware of the facility to seek assistance and to obtain a Period of Grace. They should equally be aware that the periods are limited in law with a maximum of 6 months in the case of financial standing.

## *LGV vans*

We cannot avoid mentioning the need for operators with Light Goods and other vehicles between 2.5 and 3.5 tonnes to prepare for changes in the law. If operating internationally they will be required to apply for an operator's licence and have transport managers for vehicles that have previously been outside the traffic commissioners' remit. This will also inevitably increase the pressure on the OTC, who are also preparing to implement these changes.

# Traffic Commissioner for Scotland

Claire Gilmore

For the second time in my tenure as Scottish Traffic Commissioner, I am reporting whilst our country remains impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. Through my work with operators and others this year I have seen, first-hand, the challenges faced by businesses as they seek to navigate a path toward recovery.

The need for consistent, fair and proportionate regulation is never more acute than in times of crisis. I have continued to work with my fellow Commissioners on common initiatives, and in developing guidance for our industries as they strive to deliver safe, high quality, services in the most difficult of circumstances. I adopt the comments of my English colleagues, and would urge readers to note them, for they highlight issues which affect operators the length and breadth of Great Britain. Driver availability, for example, and the shortage of other skilled staff to support our industries remains a constant challenge, particularly so in remote and rural communities across Scotland.

Following the first lockdown, OTC Scotland staff worked quickly to re-establish inquiries for regulatory cases and licensing applications. The Scottish Traffic Area is the largest of all, geographically, and we will continue to use technology to our advantage in delivering effective, value for money, services. As restrictions have eased, we have adapted our procedures for in-person hearings so that we can safely maintain a physical presence across Scotland. That blended approach continues to ensure equality of access for all.

The volume of devolved Scottish work undertaken by my office has remained steady this year, despite the pandemic. However, considerable additional pressure has been brought to bear in administering the temporary local bus service registration arrangements which were implemented in response to COVID 19. The spotlight of the pandemic has highlighted the need for modernisation of the current arrangements. We must be ambitious in driving change and look to build a system which has accessibility, and transparency for service users, at its heart.

Work has restarted on developing the regulations and guidance which will support the implementation of much of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. The Act introduces significant new powers for my office in relation to Bus Service Improvement Partnerships and franchising. There is much work to be done to ensure that the proposed partnership arrangements deliver maximum public benefit.

Taken together, these developments will give rise to a considerable increase in resource demand for my office. As I reported last year, my office currently receives no financial contribution from the Scottish Government in support of my existing devolved responsibilities. Sufficient resource must now be made available in order that we are able to deliver upon the existing, and burgeoning, devolved remit of my office. I will continue to engage with the Scottish Government in this regard.

Low Emission Zones are soon to be introduced in Scotland's four major cities. COP26 will offer an opportunity for operators across Scotland to showcase the work which they have already undertaken to reduce emissions as we strive to reach net zero.

These are challenging, but exciting, times for the transport industries. The resilience, spirit, and dedication to task of operators and drivers in the Scottish Traffic Area is second to none. As the country looks toward economic recovery, maintaining road safety and ensuring fair competition will remain my priorities. I look forward to collaborating with partners and stakeholders this

coming year to ensure that those priorities are to the fore as we work to shape our industry for the future.

This report would not be complete without recognising the contribution of those who have worked with my office throughout the pandemic to support the local bus service registration process. Local Government partners, represented by COSLA and ATCO, the Confederation of Passenger Transport in Scotland, and bus operators - large and small - came together, in what can only be described as an exemplar of partnership working, to ensure that the integrity of the system was maintained for public benefit. The individuals involved are too many to mention by name, but I extend my gratitude to them all. We have resolved to build on those partnerships as we turn our attention to modernising and improving our systems for the future.

My sincere thanks, as ever, go to OTC staff Edinburgh and Leeds, and to the Deputy Traffic Commissioners who work with me here in Scotland, for their continuing support. They have worked tirelessly, in difficult circumstances, to maintain the services which help to keep the wheels in our industry turning.

Finally, I extend my thanks to the agents who appear on behalf of operators in Scotland for their co-operation and efforts to ensure the timely submission of documents throughout the pandemic. That has been of great assistance as we have faced the fresh challenge of conducting remote and physically distanced hearings.

# Traffic Commissioner for Wales

Victoria Davies

At the end of my first full year in office, I inevitably reflect on what has been a truly exceptional year for the transport industry in Wales. The challenge presented by the coronavirus pandemic for operators and drivers has been unprecedented and, like my fellow traffic commissioners, I recognised the need to respond innovatively and proportionately, as discussed above.

In South Wales, we faced a backlog of hearings which could not be heard virtually or dealt with by way of alternative disposal. Although I enjoy an office with hearing facility in Caernarfon, cases in South Wales have historically relied on the courts in Cardiff. Due to social distancing and court backlogs, those facilities are no longer available. This delayed the opening up in Wales but thanks to Rhondda Cynon Taff Council (facilitated by Transport for Wales) we were able to use the Municipal Buildings in Pontypridd from August through to the end of 2020 to deal with the backlog of postponed and new cases. I would like to thank the officials at Rhondda Cynon Taff Council who were extremely helpful in accommodating me, OTC staff and those attending the hearings, in the very difficult circumstances after the first lockdown.

I am delighted to report that my new office at 3 Llys Cadwyn, Pontypridd has now opened and that I have been sitting there since March of this year. The facility has been funded by the Welsh Government and equipped by Transport for Wales. I am very grateful to them for providing what I am sure will prove to be a first-class tribunal facility. My last report anticipated there being 3 bilingual caseworkers in post by Autumn 2020. A recent exercise to recruit a bilingual caseworker, based in Pontypridd, was not successful. OTC and Welsh Government officials are working together to address this resourcing issue. I am currently supported by 1.8 full time equivalent caseworkers in Wales, and a dedicated senior team leader who has now been made permanent.

I have continued to work closely with the Welsh Government during this reporting year, including in relation to bus registrations, with bespoke arrangements now in place in Wales following discussions with Government and local authority officials, Traveline Cymru, as well as bus operators and their representatives. I also engaged with Welsh Government officials in the development of “Llwyber Newydd – the Wales Transport Strategy 2021” which sets out their intentions for the transport system in Wales over the next 20 years. In the coming months, I will have further discussions with officials about proposals for bus reform, particularly in the context of bus registrations.

I echo the observations of my fellow traffic commissioners, especially regarding the availability of drivers. This is an issue that has recently been highlighted in the Welsh press as having a significant impact on Welsh HGV operators. From recent discussions, I am aware that the shortage of drivers is a continuing problem for the bus industry. The Covid restrictions have resulted in a lack of driver training and testing. I know that this is a particular concern for SME operators in Wales. Welsh Government is working with other stakeholders to identify workable solutions.

This has, inevitably, been a challenging first year as Traffic Commissioner for Wales. Despite that, my induction has progressed well. My Welsh language training went on-line and, whilst no substitute for face-to-face learning, the virtual training has undoubtedly improved my Welsh language skills. I am keen to develop further over the coming months, supported by the Welsh speaking staff in my Caernarfon office!

I want to thank Anthony Seculer, Deputy Traffic Commissioner, for his continued support,

particularly with our backlog. I also want to thank my traffic commissioner colleagues, in particular Kevin Rooney, who has been an excellent mentor to me over this past year, and Richard Turfitt, the Senior Traffic Commissioner, for his invaluable guidance and support. The dedicated OTC staff in Caernarfon and Leeds have gone above and beyond in supporting me in exceptionally difficult circumstances.

As we look to the future and how best to “build back better”, I am most looking forward to getting out and meeting operators, drivers and DVSA examiners who have been working at the coal face throughout this pandemic. I have huge admiration for the dedication of those working in the transport industry in these unprecedented times.

## Further Acknowledgements

The operator licensing jurisdiction is not well-known amongst the general population, but the efforts of the operators, directors, partners, sole traders, transport managers and drivers impact on almost every element of national life. When they do things right no-one comments, but when things go wrong, they are the subject of considerable criticism. One of the benefits of having an independent, specialist tribunal is that decisions are based on knowledge and evidence. The multiple challenges faced by the regulated industries, during the 12 months of this report, speak to the resilience of these businesses. As they face the ongoing challenges of recovery, of driver shortages, modal shifts, changing markets and the move to cleaner and alternative vehicles, it is only right that we start with an acknowledgement of those we regulate, and the safety standards employed widely across the industries.

The contribution made to the national effort may not be widely recognised, but the statistics speak for themselves. To achieve this within a relatively modest budget requires the support of DVSA. This report starts with an acknowledgement of the staff allocated to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner. In particular, we welcome the work undertaken by Naomi McCoy and her team to deliver the long-awaited improvements in internal instructions and training. This would have been a significant task even without the challenges of remote working. We look forward now to seeing progress in the ongoing work to build on skills within the DVSA enforcement teams.

We must also mention the small cadre of Deputy Traffic Commissioners, which has adapted to virtual hearings and other restrictions and has offered considerable support to their full-time colleagues. Deputy Traffic Commissioners allow for flexibility within the jurisdiction and can be deployed to relieve particular pressures or backlogs. We therefore recognise the contribution of Tim Hayden after 13 years, sitting mainly in the Western Traffic Area, and send him our very best wishes for a happy retirement.

As other areas of regulatory practice have attracted a higher profile, transport and operator licencing has remained a highly specialised but niche practice. The industries rely on a small community of consultants and lawyers to support them in achieving compliance with safety standards. As with many tribunals, the traffic commissioners also benefit from the involvement of those advocates in the smooth running of their hearings. It was with great sadness that we learned of the untimely passing of a leading light amongst the road transport lawyers. Tim Nesbitt QC of Outer Temple Chambers, appeared in many of the appeal cases, which have helped to shape and professionalise this jurisdiction. That he was so popular from Bench to professional colleagues and clients speaks of his commitment, learning and self-effacing charm. He will be sadly missed by all those who had the pleasure to know him.



# Statistics

Please note that some of the statistics set out in the tables are compiled manually by OTC staff. This can result in the potential for minor inaccuracies occurring within the statistics. To minimise the potential for inaccuracies the figures have been subject to a validation exercise undertaken by OTC managers who have provided the traffic commissioners with their assurance that the figures are accurate to the best of their knowledge.

In particular, we draw your attention to the footnote in Table 13 relating to Local Bus Service Registrations and the accounting error identified in previous annual reports.

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**TABLE 1: GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS - LICENCES CONTINUED AND IN ISSUE**

	Type of Licence			Total number of licences in issue	Total continuations sought	Continuations not sought	
	Year	Restricted	Standard National				Standard International
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	6330	4457	2158	12945	1869	355
	2019-20	6264	4392	1949	12605	1852	429
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	5100	4097	1309	10506	1597	337
	2019-20	5120	4129	1216	10465	1662	363
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	5038	3482	1075	9595	1478	330
	2019-20	5027	3526	989	9542	1450	313
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	4454	2536	1123	8113	1218	335
	2019-20	4533	2546	1106	8185	1254	335
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	3942	2819	968	7729	1150	231
	2019-20	3972	2820	838	7630	1179	264
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	5473	3504	1325	10302	1500	332
	2019-20	5441	3518	1245	10204	1581	371
Scotland	2020-21	2632	2413	568	5613	903	201
	2019-20	2649	2447	546	5642	895	207
Wales	2020-21	2536	1783	406	4725	711	160
	2019-20	2536	1782	392	4710	717	188
Total	2020-21	35505	25091	8932	69528	10426	2281
	2019-20	35542	25160	8281	68983	10590	2470

**TABLE 2: GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS - NUMBERS OF SPECIFIED VEHICLES ON LICENCES**

	Specified vehicles by type of licence			Total number of specified vehicles	Certified copies of UK Licence for the Community	
	Year	Restricted	Standard National			Standard International
<b>Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>17040</b>	<b>36000</b>	<b>18983</b>	<b>72023</b>	<b>7762</b>
	2019-20	16821	35255	17658	69734	7663
<b>North Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>13641</b>	<b>30439</b>	<b>14746</b>	<b>58826</b>	<b>5738</b>
	2019-20	13811	29813	13773	57397	5539
<b>North Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>13179</b>	<b>27062</b>	<b>11784</b>	<b>52025</b>	<b>4462</b>
	2019-20	13247	26423	11388	51058	4298
<b>South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>12750</b>	<b>20111</b>	<b>8853</b>	<b>41714</b>	<b>4389</b>
	2019-20	13440	20059	8987	42486	4288
<b>West Midlands Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>9786</b>	<b>20658</b>	<b>10078</b>	<b>40522</b>	<b>3529</b>
	2019-20	9930	20106	9372	39408	3591
<b>Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>13684</b>	<b>27839</b>	<b>11118</b>	<b>52641</b>	<b>4657</b>
	2019-20	13700	27316	10686	51702	4497
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>6489</b>	<b>19845</b>	<b>5424</b>	<b>31758</b>	<b>2419</b>
	2019-20	6578	19595	5167	31340	2411
<b>Wales</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>5627</b>	<b>10877</b>	<b>3274</b>	<b>19778</b>	<b>1465</b>
	2019-20	5680	10656	3169	19505	1504
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>92196</b>	<b>192831</b>	<b>84260</b>	<b>369287</b>	<b>34421</b>
	2019-20	93207	189223	80200	362630	33791

Note: UK Licence for the Community replaced Community Licences in December 2020.

The operator is also issued with an office copy and certified copies which have to be carried in vehicles on international journeys.

**TABLE 3: GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS - APPLICATIONS FOR NEW LICENCES AND TO VARY LICENCES**

	Year	Number of applications processed		Number of licences issued in full		Number of applications refused		Number of applications withdrawn		Number of licences issued with environmental restrictions	
		New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	1347	1595	1229	1544	111	51	102	75	14	7
	2019-20	1045	1396	998	1356	94	29	69	82	22	19
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	764	1059	689	1030	73	29	74	52	5	3
	2019-20	691	990	630	973	51	19	67	57	6	3
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	758	933	664	910	82	23	56	37	6	5
	2019-20	666	888	594	891	71	23	42	39	14	5
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	734	913	613	858	119	55	106	65	30	25
	2019-20	669	915	541	854	108	48	65	48	40	30
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	722	806	612	771	102	35	46	46	10	9
	2019-20	640	713	529	679	98	29	43	34	7	2
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	772	1070	700	1048	62	22	67	51	22	12
	2019-20	760	1032	716	1013	45	14	72	46	31	28
Scotland	2020-21	313	515	273	507	33	8	25	24	5	4
	2019-20	286	475	281	462	23	7	22	26	1	2
Wales	2020-21	324	369	284	355	37	14	23	20	3	2
	2019-20	292	345	257	328	32	15	30	17	6	3
Total	2020-21	5734	7260	5064	7023	619	237	499	370	95	67
	2019-20	5049	6754	4546	6556	522	184	410	349	127	92

**TABLE 4: GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS - RESULTS OF OPPOSED APPLICATIONS FOR NEW LICENCES AND FOR PUBLISHABLE VARIATIONS TO LICENCES**

	Number of applications received		Number of applications processed		Number of applications opposed		Opposed applications issued in full		Opposed applications issued with restrictions		
	Year	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	1690	1805	1347	1595	16	17	3	7	4	4
	2019-20	1114	1478	1045	1396	13	30	5	10	4	10
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	924	1195	764	1059	3	7	1	5	1	0
	2019-20	760	1047	691	990	5	10	2	5	0	3
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	896	1050	758	933	4	11	1	5	3	3
	2019-20	708	927	666	888	7	6	0	3	6	2
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	935	1004	734	913	29	23	7	6	13	13
	2019-20	740	963	669	915	21	21	1	3	10	12
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	864	895	722	806	11	4	2	3	4	1
	2019-20	680	747	640	713	9	4	0	2	2	1
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	953	1240	772	1070	11	11	5	4	3	3
	2019-20	832	1078	760	1032	17	20	4	4	9	15
Scotland	2020-21	391	601	313	515	3	6	0	1	2	4
	2019-20	309	501	286	475	1	8	1	3	0	2
Wales	2020-21	381	437	324	369	1	3	0	2	1	1
	2019-20	317	362	292	345	4	3	0	0	2	2
Total	2020-21	7034	8227	5734	7260	78	82	19	33	31	29
	2019-20	5460	7103	5049	6754	77	102	13	30	33	47

**TABLE 4 (CONTINUED)**

	Year	Opposed applications refused		Opposed applications withdrawn		Number of applications heard at Public Inquiry	
		New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	5	0	4	5	0	0
	2019-20	3	3	1	6	6	6
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	0	2	1	0	0	0
	2019-20	1	0	3	2	0	2
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	0	1	0	2	1	0
	2019-20	2	0	3	2	2	1
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	3	1	4	5	1	0
	2019-20	3	0	5	5	8	6
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	3	0	2	0	0	0
	2019-20	3	0	4	0	0	0
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	2	0	1	4	0	0
	2019-20	0	1	3	2	1	1
Scotland	2020-21	1	0	0	1	0	0
	2019-20	0	1	0	2	0	0
Wales	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	1	0	1	0	0
Total	2020-21	14	4	12	17	2	0
	2019-20	12	6	19	20	17	16

**TABLE 5: GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS - COMPLAINTS AGAINST EXISTING OPERATING CENTRES**

	Year	Total licences reviewed where complaints received	Number called to public inquiry	Continued without change	Continued with new restrictions	Removal of operating centre
Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	16	2	7	7	2
North Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	3	0	2	1	0
North Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	10	0	5	4	1
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	8	0	2	3	3
West Midlands Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	5	1	1	1	3
Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	12	0	3	7	2
Scotland	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	2	0	1	1	0
Wales	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	4	0	2	2	0
Total	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	60	3	23	26	11



**TABLE 6: GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS - ACTION TAKEN AT PUBLIC INQUIRY FOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

	Year	Number of public inquiries completed	Licence revocations	Licence suspensions	Curtailment or conditions imposed	Notification of formal warning	Disqualification of licence holder under Section 28	Disqualification of transport manager	No action taken
<b>Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>
	2019-20	113	42	19	50	28	12	14	4
<b>North Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>
	2019-20	114	37	3	38	51	8	14	8
<b>North Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>
	2019-20	116	39	7	42	63	8	15	11
<b>South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>
	2019-20	160	60	32	53	35	18	12	8
<b>West Midlands Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	95	33	25	16	18	23	17	5
<b>Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
	2019-20	102	39	9	22	42	6	13	3
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
	2019-20	57	11	2	12	30	5	7	1
<b>Wales</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	61	21	12	23	12	8	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>42</b>
	2019-20	818	282	109	256	279	88	96	43

Note: the figures in the last seven columns may not equal the number of public inquiries completed, as more than one action may be taken against a licence holder.

**TABLE 7: GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS - RESULTS OF UNOPPOSED NEW AND VARIATION APPLICATIONS HEARD AT PUBLIC INQUIRY**

	Number of applications determined at public inquiry		Applications granted as applied for		Applications granted in part		Applications granted with conditions		Applications refused		Applications withdrawn		
	Year	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations	New licences	Publishable variations
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	39	21	14	6	3	3	10	1	12	10	0	1
	2019-20	44	27	22	17	1	3	2	0	18	6	1	1
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	36	14	16	7	3	0	1	0	12	5	4	2
	2019-20	31	13	20	7	1	1	0	0	8	5	2	0
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	26	10	14	5	1	1	0	0	10	4	1	0
	2019-20	32	14	22	6	1	4	0	0	9	4	0	0
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	59	38	29	19	4	3	4	0	17	16	5	0
	2019-20	64	27	32	8	2	4	10	1	12	12	8	2
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	29	16	18	8	0	1	0	0	11	7	0	0
	2019-20	38	16	24	9	3	2	0	0	10	5	1	0
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	29	4	19	3	0	0	0	0	10	1	0	0
	2019-20	25	18	11	12	3	2	0	0	9	3	2	1
Scotland	2020-21	22	8	11	3	1	1	4	1	6	2	0	1
	2019-20	29	9	21	8	2	0	2	0	4	1	0	0
Wales	2020-21	12	1	9	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0
	2019-20	16	13	8	3	4	6	3	0	1	4	0	0
Total	2020-21	252	112	130	51	12	9	20	2	80	46	10	4
	2019-20	279	137	160	70	17	22	17	1	71	40	14	4

Note: this table only shows applications that were heard at public inquiry whereas table 3 shows the total number of applications determined.

**TABLE 8: BUS AND COACH OPERATORS - LICENCES CONTINUED AND IN ISSUE**

	Year	Restricted	Standard National	Standard International	Total number of licences in issue	Total continuations sought
<b>Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>131</b>
	2019-20	278	356	299	933	139
<b>North Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>1054</b>	<b>147</b>
	2019-20	427	374	290	1091	173
<b>North Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>1011</b>	<b>133</b>
	2019-20	442	374	214	1030	150
<b>South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>115</b>
	2019-20	276	312	376	964	129
<b>West Midlands Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>81</b>
	2019-20	253	214	173	640	80
<b>Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>114</b>
	2019-20	275	308	251	834	140
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>120</b>
	2019-20	235	371	139	745	122
<b>Wales</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>81</b>
	2019-20	255	207	153	615	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2311</b>	<b>2460</b>	<b>1831</b>	<b>6602</b>	<b>922</b>
	2019-20	2441	2516	1895	6852	1019

**TABLE 9: BUS AND COACH OPERATORS - DISCS IN ISSUE**

	Year	Restricted	Standard National	Standard International	Total discs
<b>Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>5687</b>	<b>4845</b>	<b>10919</b>
	2019-20	398	5733	4950	11081
<b>North Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>6125</b>	<b>5812</b>	<b>12534</b>
	2019-20	617	6274	5979	12870
<b>North Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>6348</b>	<b>3995</b>	<b>10946</b>
	2019-20	626	6412	4062	11100
<b>South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>10960</b>	<b>8346</b>	<b>19694</b>
	2019-20	401	11429	8241	20071
<b>West Midlands Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>4432</b>	<b>2700</b>	<b>7406</b>
	2019-20	345	3881	2848	7074
<b>Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>6429</b>	<b>4923</b>	<b>11771</b>
	2019-20	422	6360	5151	11933
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>6187</b>	<b>4434</b>	<b>10953</b>
	2019-20	339	5448	5135	10922
<b>Wales</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>2468</b>	<b>2914</b>	<b>5757</b>
	2019-20	384	2363	3067	5814
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>3375</b>	<b>48636</b>	<b>37969</b>	<b>89980</b>
	2019-20	3532	47900	39433	90865

**TABLE 10: BUS AND COACH OPERATORS - APPLICATIONS FOR NEW LICENCES AND TO VARY EXISTING LICENCES**

	Year	Number of applications processed		Number of licences granted in full		Number of licences granted with less than applied for		Number of applications refused		Number of applications withdrawn	
		New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations
Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>
	2019-20	104	76	55	62	0	0	18	11	19	7
North Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6</b>
	2019-20	131	70	65	58	1	0	36	5	31	5
North Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>
	2019-20	131	72	78	63	2	0	27	3	19	9
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	117	88	82	82	1	0	22	1	19	5
West Midlands Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>
	2019-20	68	51	43	40	0	0	17	0	14	6
Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>
	2019-20	79	53	48	51	0	0	13	1	19	4
Scotland	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>
	2019-20	86	62	61	54	1	0	14	2	26	7
Wales	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
	2019-20	61	38	37	41	0	0	14	2	15	1
Total	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>50</b>
	2019-20	777	510	469	451	5	0	161	25	162	44

Note: figures included applications treated as withdrawn because the fee had not been paid

TABLE 11: BUS AND COACH OPERATORS - RESULTS OF APPLICATIONS HEARD AT PUBLIC INQUIRY													
	Year	Number of applications determined at public inquiry		Applications granted as applied for		Applications granted in part		Applications granted with conditions		Applications refused		Applications withdrawn	
		New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations	New licences	Major variations
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	4	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	5	4	3	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	9	7	1	3	1	1	0	0	5	3	2	0
	2019-20	21	4	9	2	0	0	0	0	12	1	0	1
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	9	3	3	1	0	1	2	0	4	1	0	0
	2019-20	7	1	5	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	6	2	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	7	2	5	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
	2019-20	9	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0
	2019-20	7	4	5	2	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
Scotland	2020-21	3	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
	2019-20	11	2	6	2	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
Wales	2020-21	5	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
	2019-20	8	2	1	1	4	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
Total	2020-21	46	15	17	7	3	2	7	0	16	6	3	0
	2019-20	75	20	37	13	6	0	4	0	27	5	1	2

Note: this table only shows applications heard at public inquiry whereas table 10 shows the total number of applications determined.

**TABLE 12: BUS AND COACH OPERATORS - SPECIAL RESTRICTED PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLE OPERATOR LICENCES**

	Year	Licence applications processed	Licences issued	Applications refused	Applications withdrawn and grants not taken up	Licences continued at five-year review date	Licences not continued at five-year review date	Total number of licences in issue
<b>Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>
	2019-20	4	3	1	0	1	1	11
<b>North Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>
	2019-20	2	0	1	1	2	1	12
<b>North Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
	2019-20	1	1	0	0	1	0	5
<b>South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
	2019-20	3	1	1	1	0	0	3
<b>West Midlands Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
	2019-20	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
<b>Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
	2019-20	2	1	0	1	1	1	6
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>
	2019-20	11	10	0	1	8	2	38
<b>Wales</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
	2019-20	2	1	1	0	4	2	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>81</b>
	2019-20	26	17	5	4	17	8	85

Note: the figures in columns 2-4 may not equal the figures shown in the 'licence applications processed' column, as applications may have been carried over from the previous year or carried forward into next year.

**TABLE 13: LOCAL BUS SERVICE REGISTRATIONS - LIVE, NEW, VARIATIONS AND CANCELLED LOCAL BUS SERVICES 31 MARCH 2020 31 MARCH 2019**

	Year	Live local bus registrations	Applications processed		Applications accepted		Refused	Withdrawn	Existing registrations cancelled
			New	Variations	New	Variations			
Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>2448</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>2448</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>193</b>
	2019-20	2341	278	1764	278	1764	0	0	296
North Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2770</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>3842</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>3842</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>375</b>
	2019-20	3559	381	2392	381	2392	0	0	442
North Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2847</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>2393</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>2393</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>254</b>
	2019-20	3177	548	1875	548	1875	0	0	577
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1611</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1611</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>
	2019-20	2341	87	804	87	804	0	0	117
West Midlands Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1532</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>1789</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>1789</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>138</b>
	2019-20	2222	103	914	103	914	0	0	99
Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>3240</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>3240</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>200</b>
	2019-20	2683	288	2194	288	2194	0	0	267
Scotland	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2153</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>3478</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>3478</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>295</b>
	2019-20	2963	293	2781	293	2781	0	0	358
Wales	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1198</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1483</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1483</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>35</b>
	2019-20	1507	155	783	155	783	0	0	129
Total	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>15418</b>	<b>1433</b>	<b>20284</b>	<b>1433</b>	<b>20284</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1521</b>
	2019-20	20793	2133	13507	2133	13507	0	0	2285

Notes: The impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic resulted in a large number of urgent and temporary variations. These were initially for a specified time-period but as the pandemic developed the expiry date was changed, and then left open to be determined. This may have a minor impact on the accuracy of the figures detailed in the table but the numbers are expected to settle in future years.

It has been identified that the total number of live local bus registrations have been presented incorrectly by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner for a number of years. Services running in multiple local authority areas have been recorded multiple times, e.g. a service running between the West Midlands and Staffordshire has been presented as two services when it should have been counted as a single service. This has now been rectified and accounts for the significantly lower figure from 2019/20.



**TABLE 14: FLEXIBLE BUS REGISTRATIONS**

	Year	Received	Accepted	Refused	Withdrawn	Varied	Cancelled
Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>
	2019-20	45	38	0	1	15	7
North Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	12	9	0	4	1	2
North Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	9	9	0	0	1	4
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	6	4	0	2	1	2
West Midlands Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>
	2019-20	5	5	0	0	1	0
Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	7	5	0	0	1	0
Scotland	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wales	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	2019-20	22	22	0	0	1	4
Total	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>23</b>
	2019-20	106	92	0	7	21	19

Notes: The impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic resulted in a large number of urgent and temporary variations. These were initially for a specified time-period but as the pandemic developed the expiry date was changed, and then left open to be determined. This may have a minor impact on the accuracy of the figures detailed in the table but the numbers are expected to settle in future years.

**TABLE 15: BUS AND COACH OPERATORS - NUMBER OF STANDARD, LARGE AND COMMUNITY BUS PERMITS ISSUED**

	Standard Bus Permits Issued by						
	Year	Traffic Commissioners	Local authorities	Designated bodies	Total	Large Bus Permits	Community Bus Permits
Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>
	2019-20	736	451	398	1585	0	41
North Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>
	2019-20	777	209	323	1309	19	41
North Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
	2019-20	794	266	293	1353	4	1
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>1081</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
	2019-20	1015	388	615	2018	24	8
West Midlands Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>
	2019-20	298	265	209	772	4	0
Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>1067</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>
	2019-20	849	493	573	1915	0	21
Scotland	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>
	2019-20	404	233	219	856	14	21
Wales	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>
	2019-20	239	76	193	508	0	54
Total	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2763</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>1245</b>	<b>5218</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>163</b>
	2019-20	5112	2381	2823	10316	65	18

Note: The numbers of permits issued by local authorities or designated bodies cannot be verified. A small number of permit issuing bodies have been unable to provide returns or have provided incomplete returns to the traffic commissioners. The figures provided for permits issued by the traffic commissioners are correct.

**TABLE 16: BUS AND COACH OPERATORS - ACTION TAKEN AT PUBLIC INQUIRY FOR NON COMPLIANCE (UNDER THE PUBLIC PASSENGER VEHICLES ACT 1981)**

	Year	Number of public inquiries completed	Licence revocations	Licence suspensions	Reduction of vehicles authorised on licence	Other conditions imposed on licence	Formal warning given	Disqualification of licence holder under the 1985 Act	Disqualification of transport manager	No action taken
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	8	4	2	3	0	0	0	3	0
	2019-20	12	5	2	3	1	4	0	1	0
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	8	3	0	2	0	6	0	0	1
	2019-20	39	22	0	5	2	10	2	5	2
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	14	3	3	2	1	12	1	0	0
	2019-20	23	12	0	7	0	3	2	1	1
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	14	3	1	4	0	2	2	1	4
	2019-20	16	4	3	3	2	6	0	1	1
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	23	8	0	4	0	5	2	3	2
	2019-20	23	11	7	5	0	4	3	6	0
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	12	6	0	1	0	4	0	5	0
	2019-20	25	9	3	5	2	10	2	2	1
Scotland	2020-21	5	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	1
	2019-20	14	2	0	3	2	8	0	0	0
Wales	2020-21	6	2	1	2	0	3	1	1	0
	2019-20	22	13	0	10	0	3	2	3	0
Total	2020-21	90	30	7	18	3	35	6	13	8
	2019-20	174	78	15	41	9	48	11	19	5

Note: the figures in the last 8 columns may not equal the number of public inquiries held, as more than one action may be taken against a licence holder.

**TABLE 17: LOCAL BUS SERVICES - ACTION TAKEN AGAINST OPERATORS (UNDER THE TRANSPORT ACTS 1985 AND 2000)**

	Year	Number of public inquiries	Restrictions imposed on licences under Section 26 of the 1985 Act	Penalty imposed under Section 155 of the 2000 Act*	Formal warnings given	No action taken
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	1	0	0	0	1
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	1	0	0	1	0
	2019-20	2	0	2	0	0
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0
Wales	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	2	1	1	0	0
Total	2020-21	2	0	0	1	1
	2019-20	4	1	3	0	0

Note: the figures contained in the last four columns may not equal the number of public inquiries held, as more than one action may be taken against an operator.

\* In Scotland action is taken under Section 39 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001.

**TABLE 18: PUBLIC INQUIRIES**

	Year	Traffic Commissioners	Deputy Traffic Commissioners	Total
<b>Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>157</b>
	2019-20	74	135	<b>209</b>
<b>North Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>146</b>
	2019-20	170	57	227
<b>North Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>154</b>
	2019-20	122	80	202
<b>South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>212</b>
	2019-20	219	66	285
<b>West Midlands Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>144</b>
	2019-20	187	7	194
<b>Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>118</b>
	2019-20	171	12	183
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>65</b>
	2019-20	48	74	122
<b>Wales</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>58</b>
	2019-20	95	33	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>1054</b>
	2019-20	1086	464	1550

**TABLE 18A: PRELIMINARY HEARINGS AND SENIOR TEAM LEADER INTERVIEWS**

	Year	Preliminary hearings	Senior Team Leader interviews	Total
Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>46</b>
	2019-20	55	7	62
North Eastern Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>29</b>
	2019-20	50	6	56
North Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>30</b>
	2019-20	28	10	38
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>
	2019-20	38	3	41
West Midlands Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>40</b>
	2019-20	62	32	94
Western Traffic Area	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>
	2019-20	50	6	56
Scotland	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>
	2019-20	6	70	76
Wales	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>
	2019-20	29	6	35
Total	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>224</b>
	2019-20	318	140	458

**TABLE 19: BUS, COACH AND LORRY OPERATORS - APPEALS TO THE UPPER TRIBUNAL**

	Year	Number of appeals made	Number of appeals heard	Number of appeals withdrawn	Number of appeals successful or partially successful
<b>Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
	2019-20	4	1	2	0
<b>North Eastern Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
	2019-20	6	5	1	0
<b>North Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	9	2	0	0
<b>South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	5	3	2	1
<b>West Midlands Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	10	7	2	5
<b>Western Traffic Area</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	13	8	0	3
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019-20	4	3	0	2
<b>Wales</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
	2019-20	3	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
	2019-20	54	31	7	11

Note: the number of appeals heard cannot be directly compared to the number of appeals made in the year, as some of the appeals heard will have been made in the previous year, and some may still be pending.

**TABLE 20: LGV AND PCV DRIVER CONDUCT CASES - ACTION AGAINST DRIVERS**

	Total	Total cases closed	Licences refused	Licences revoked	Licences suspended	Licences granted	Verbal warning	Routine warning letters		Refer on application	No action taken	Called to a hearing
								Endorsable	Non-endorsable			
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	1,804	559	14	84	13	21	518	2	59	536	126
	2019-20	2,690	690	19	96	97	36	650	2	20	1,082	335
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	1,811	390	12	70	71	34	522	56	139	546	222
	2019-20	2,948	382	18	82	30	37	508	56	223	1,572	238
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	1,062	286	51	99	458	32	275	91	144	154	289
	2019-20	2,226	344	67	112	560	113	268	90	209	463	490
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	1,311	445	12	57	22	52	300	18	39	371	232
	2019-20	2,436	584	29	69	104	93	412	25	95	1,028	414
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	1,059	269	13	100	72	7	159	19	54	366	153
	2019-20	1,667	371	20	101	56	59	311	58	28	669	260
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	1,232	344	12	33	36	23	191	0	55	534	227
	2019-20	2,151	379	17	39	59	31	295	2	54	1,298	243
Scotland	2020-21	908	200	8	78	47	44	81	46	68	329	208
	2019-20	1,942	250	13	106	140	144	162	81	97	964	489
Wales	2020-21	634	138	6	18	120	16	105	28	42	135	92
	2019-20	977	188	36	35	99	0	104	40	65	438	214
Military	2020-21	621	208	0	1	5	1	219	0	101	123	0
	2019-20	900	200	0	0	3	1	260	0	151	285	0
Total	2020-21	10442	2839	128	540	844	230	2370	260	701	3094	1549
	2019-20	17937	3388	219	640	1148	514	2970	354	942	7799	2683

Note: The figures for military drivers were reported for the first time in 2019/20



**TABLE 21: APPLICATIONS FOR THE RETURN OF IMPOUNDED VEHICLES**

	Year	Number of vehicles impounded	Number of applications received and processed	Granted		Refused		Appeals to Upper Tribunal				
				with hearing	without hearing	with hearing	without hearing	made	heard	withdrawn	successful	
Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Eastern Traffic Area	2020-21	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	3	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Western Traffic Area	2020-21	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	7	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area	2020-21	3	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	7	14	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Midlands Traffic Area	2020-21	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	4	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western Traffic Area	2020-21	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	2020-21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wales	2020-21	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	3	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	2020-21	17	12	3	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2019-20	25	30	1	1	18	0	1	0	0	0	0

Note: the number of applications received and processed may be greater than the number of vehicles impounded as more than one application may be made for the return of a vehicle where there is a dispute regarding the ownership of a vehicle.

# Contact Details

Further details about the commissioners and their other publications can be found at:  
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(tables 1-5 and  
8-14)

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(tables 6-7 and  
16-21)

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## Enquiries

[https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/  
traffic-commissioners/about/media-enquiries](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/traffic-commissioners/about/media-enquiries)