



AVRO News

Association of Vehicle Recovery Operators

Issue 39

October/November 2016

Welcome to our new member:

Hobbs Recovery Services,
Region 11

Inside this issue:

New member	1
Do not ignore smart motorway safety concerns	2
Prices from Fuelmate	3
New company requirements come into effect	3
New measures to support prompt payment	4
Spotlight on capital gains tax	5
Small businesses' profits affected by National Living Wage, FSB suggests	6
DVSA seeks views on changes to tachograph centre rules	6
Air pollution in London—have your say	7
Apex Networks	8
Cyber threats: protecting your business from internet attacks	9
Clean air zones could hurt small haulage firms	10
Driver safety	11
Vehicle safety recalls	12
Instant dismissal	13

AVRO welcomes new member



We are Isis Rescue & Repair Centre, a vehicle breakdown, recovery and repair service based in Oxfordshire.

Operating from our Peterley Road Site, Isis Rescue was established in 1996 to provide vehicle recovery and repair services in the Oxford area. Through our association with Hopcrofts Holt Service Station in Steeple Aston, we however draw upon more than 40 years' experience of the vehicle repair and recovery business.

The company has undergone a period of rapid expansion and change in recent years. April 2005 saw the acquisition of a local recovery business providing us with an additional depot and workshop facility in Banbury. In August 2008 we opened our Training Centre at our Hopcrofts Holt site near Bicester, demonstrating our commitment to the continuous training and development of our staff. In November 2008, we further expanded the range of services we are able to offer our Customers by investing heavily in the equipment and personnel required to cater for the needs of the commercial vehicle recovery market. This was seen as an important step in becoming a 'One-Stop Shop' for our Customers regardless of the size and type of fleet they operate.

Established as a family-run business, we now rely upon a team of people with a wealth of experience to deliver a friendly, efficient and professional service but importantly have still retained that 'small company' ethos with a 'Can Do' philosophy.

We work for most of the UK's major motoring organisations (with the exception of RAC and Green Flag), government agencies and insurance companies. We have also established partnerships with a number of local dealerships, hauliers, PSV operators, bodyshops, vehicle financing companies and other Vehicle Recovery Operators. The general motoring public accounts for the rest of our business.

Isis Rescue Ltd, Peterley Road,
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Oxford OX4 2TZ Tel: 01865
434343 E: mail@isisrescue.co.uk



TSC: Do not ignore smart motorway safety concerns

The Transport Select Committee says the government must not ignore safety concerns presented by its recent All Lane Running report.

In a report published in June, the TSC warned that government should not proceed with 'All lane running' schemes while major safety concerns exist. The Committee argued that the permanent conversion of the hard shoulder into a running lane is a radical change to the nature of motorways and creates a real challenge for motorists.



However, Ministers seem determined to press ahead with the latest design of all lane running schemes, ignoring the concerns expressed by MPs and other motoring organisations.

Louise Ellman, chair of the TSC, commented: "The Department for Transport is blatantly ignoring the safety concerns set out in our report. We had barely received the response to our report before the government endorsed an all lane running scheme on the M4.

"The Committee isn't arguing with the government about the need for more capacity on our motorways, or their statement that motorways are our safest roads. We support smart motorways such as the M42 scheme.

"But we take real issue with the government's assertion that all lane running schemes on motorways are no different to other types of roads without hard shoulders. Motorways are a different class of road and drivers have different expectations when using them.

"In the same response, Ministers recognise that the public needs to learn about variable speed limits and compliance with Red X signals on these motorways. Even then, we believe that education will fail without enforcement and ministers need to ensure that failure to comply is backed up with effective enforcement.

"The Committee remains concerned about the size and spacing of Emergency Refuge Areas. While we are pleased that Highways England has committed to a review, the M4 proposal should not have gone ahead until the review is complete.

"We are not the only people who are worried about this incarnation of all lane running schemes. In the course of our inquiry, there were genuine concerns raised by the emergency services, road workers and recovery operators. The government cannot ignore them."

Article courtesy of Highways Magazine
www.highwaysmagazine.co.uk



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Prices from Fuelmate

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W/C 31st October

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Shell	: 98.68 ppl Excl VAT
Texaco	: 97.31 ppl Excl VAT
UK Fuels	: 96.63 ppl Excl VAT
Keyfuels	: 97.09 ppl Excl VAT

W/C 24th October

Esso	: 97.63 ppl Excl VAT
BP Bunker	: 97.63 ppl Excl VAT
Shell	: 98.74 ppl Excl VAT
Texaco	: 97.36 ppl Excl VAT
UK Fuels	: 97.72 ppl Excl VAT
Keyfuels	: 97.12 ppl Excl VAT

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 Hull HU8 7JR

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New company requirements come into effect

New company legislation recently came into effect, requiring all UK private companies and UK LLPs (with limited exceptions) to create and maintain a register of 'persons with significant control' (PSCs) and file relevant information annually with Companies House.

The information will be held in a public register, with the stated aim of increasing transparency in the ownership and control of UK companies and helping to combat money laundering.

Meanwhile, the annual return has been replaced by a new 'check and confirm' process, in which companies

supply a confirmation statement stating whether the information remains up to date.

The PSC register must be updated on an ongoing basis, either by entering the information when the annual confirmation statement is made, or by electing to hold your own register at Companies House and updating this register in real time.

Companies must ensure that their own PSC register is available for inspection at their registered office address, or provide copies if requested to do so.

*Article courtesy of Newby Castleman
www.newbycastleman.co.uk*

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New measures to support prompt payment

New measures to support the voluntary Prompt Payment Code (PPC) and combat the problem of late payment have been confirmed by the Small Business Minister, Margot James.

A letter to PPC signatories from Ms James and Philip King, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Credit Management (CICM), outlined that firms should aim to pay suppliers within 30 days, and that this should eventually become the norm.

However, payment within 30 days is not compulsory: the letter states that the Code Compliance Board will not be enforcing payment within this time frame.

Currently, over 1,800 firms are signed up to the PPC, which sets out measures to ensure the fair and equal treatment of suppliers. These firms agree to maximum payment terms of 60 days. If payment terms extend beyond 60 days, companies are required to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances apply. The Code Compliance Board will consider each case individually.

Additionally, from 6 April 2017, large businesses will be required to report on their payment practices under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015.

The letter also confirmed the future appointment of a Small Business Commissioner, who will provide advice and support on payment issues and queries.

Minimising the late payment risk

Small and medium-sized enterprises are particularly vulnerable to the effects of late payment. Consider the following to help you avoid falling foul of today's 'late payment culture'.

- ✦ **Carry out a credit check on clients** - Failure to accurately assess the credit history of new or potential customers could leave your business at significant risk of late payment or, potentially, non-payment.
- ✦ **Ensure terms and conditions can easily be found** - Include your payment terms and conditions on all relevant documentation sent to new and potential customers. These should clearly detail the payment period for any invoice.
- ✦ **Promote early payments** - Consider offering small discounts to those who pay their bills early.
- ✦ **Invoice on time** - Ensure that invoices are distributed on time. Unnecessary delays can be prevented by ensuring that your contact lists are kept up to date.
- ✦ **Know your rights** - It is advisable to keep up to date with the latest legislative changes, to avoid becoming a victim of late payment.

We can help you to improve your business's cashflow - please contact us for further advice.

*Article courtesy of Newby Castleman
www.newbycastleman.co.uk*

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Spotlight on capital gains tax

Q. How is CGT charged?

A. As a basic rule, CGT is charged on the difference between what you paid for an asset and what you receive when you sell it, less your annual CGT exemption (£11,100 for 2016/17) if this has not been set against other gains.

The rate of CGT payable on gains depends on the level of the individual's taxable income and gains for the tax year. Effectively, the rules operate by ensuring that any unused basic rate band (£32,000 in 2016/17) can be used in the most beneficial way to reduce the CGT charged.

The figure for total taxable income and gains is calculated after taking into account all allowable deductions including losses, personal allowances and the CGT annual exempt amount.

Q. What are the current rates?

A. Prior to 6 April 2016, CGT was charged at 18% where the individual was a basic rate taxpayer, or 28% to the extent that the individual was a higher rate taxpayer or the gains exceeded the unused part of an individual's basic rate band.

However, in the 2016 Budget, the Chancellor announced that the 18% rate would be cut to 10%, while the 28% rate would fall to 20%. These changes came into effect from 6 April 2016.

Q. Do these new rates apply across the board?

A. No, the CGT rates remain at 18% and 28% for residential property gains, non-resident CGT gains, ATED-related gains and gains accruing under the carried interest rules.

Q. How can I minimise my liability to CGT?

A. The good news is that there are a number of strategies that can help to mitigate a potential liability to CGT. Consider the following action points:

- ⇒ **Transfer assets** - is it possible to transfer assets to a spouse or civil partner or hold them in joint names? Holding an asset in joint names means the annual exempt amount for each individual (£11,000) is deducted from the gain before tax is due.
- ⇒ **Make pension contributions** - Increasing your pension contributions could allow you to extend the limits of the lower tax rate band. Any gains realised from other assets are taxed in accordance with this extended band after allowances have been taken into account.
- ⇒ **Utilise reliefs** - It is possible that reliefs could reduce a 20% CGT bill significantly. However, it is important to consult with an accountant about the timing of any sale, and the CGT reliefs and exemptions to which you might be entitled.
- ⇒ **Sell gradually** - Individuals with a particularly large gain may want to realise it gradually to take full advantage of more than one tax year's allowance, thus sheltering the gain from a higher CGT charge.

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Small businesses' profits affected by National Living Wage, FSB suggests

New research by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has revealed that more than half of small businesses have had their profits adversely affected by the National Living Wage (NLW).

The NLW, which was introduced in April, requires employers to pay employees aged 25 and over at least £7.20 an hour.

Data from the FSB's Small Business Index for the second quarter of 2016 revealed that some 59% of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are absorbing NLW costs by taking lower profits.

The research also suggested that 47% of these businesses now consider wages to be the main contributor in the rising cost of doing business.

The FSB has called for the Low Pay Commission (LPC) to be given flexibility on how to meet the

Government's NLW target of 60% median earnings by 2020.

Mike Cherry, National Chairman of the FSB, commented: 'Small employers have stretched to meet the challenge set by the NLW, with many paying their staff more by reducing operating margins. This will get harder for many firms in later years, with the targets set in a 'pre-Brexit decision' economy.

'Considering the uncertain economic climate, the LPC must be given the opportunity to adapt the target in future years so that it can be met without job losses or harming job creation.

'The rate of the NLW should be set at a level the economy can afford, based upon economic and not political priorities.'

*Article courtesy of Newby Castleman
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DVSA seeks views on changes to tachograph centre rules

DVSA has launched (19 October 2016) a review on proposals to improve rules for approved tachograph centres

Approved tachograph centres (ATCs) install, calibrate and inspect tachographs, which record information about driving time, speed and distance. Proposals include:

- Removing the requirement for ATCs to offer analogue tachograph calibration

- Reviewing the site dimensions to allow smaller sites to be used
- Updating the ATC manual

The DVSA want your views so they can fully understand any negative (including unintended) effects of the proposals on your business, so an informed decision can be made.

The review will close on 9 November 2016.



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Air pollution in London - have your say

On 10 October, the Mayor, Sadiq Khan launched the second phase of consultation on proposals to improve air quality in London.

Earlier this year, the Mayor received a positive response from thousands of Londoners who gave their views on a number of initiatives to improve the quality of the air and the health of Londoners. They are now seeking views on the Emissions Surcharge proposal and options for enhancing the Ultra Low Emission Zone.

The emissions surcharge

Transport for London would now like your views on the proposal to introduce a new Emissions Surcharge (also known as the T-charge) in 2017. This would be a £10 daily charge for cars, vans, minibuses and heavy vehicles driving in Central London that do not meet the emissions standards. It's mostly for vehicles registered in 2005 and older and would be in addition to the Congestion Charge.

This is a formal Variation Order consultation on the introduction of the Emissions Surcharge.

Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

This is a separate scheme that will operate 24/7 and introduce stricter emissions standards for vehicles.

They are also seeking your views on the following ideas:

- Bringing forward the introduction of the ULEZ in central London to 2019. This is currently planned to be introduced in 2020;
- Extending the ULEX from Central London up to the North and South Circular roads for all vehicles in 2019 or later: and
- Extending the ULEX from Central London to Londonwide for heavy vehicles (HGVs, buses and coaches) in 2019 or later.

Please visit the Transport for London website tfl.gov.uk/airquality-consultation for further detailed information about their proposals to improve air quality.

To provide your views, please complete the online survey on the TfL website or alternatively email them directly at airqualityconsultation@tfl.gov.uk

Have your say on
air pollution in London



MAYOR OF LONDON



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Apex Networks

Established since 2006 and with over 500 clients Apex Networks are the leading supplier of innovative IT software and networks to the rescue & recovery and automotive industries.

In addition to having established itself as the leading supplier of business management software, Apex Networks provides and supports the ANS network, which is the chosen electronic communications platform of the vehicle recovery industry. Apex ANS connects the UK's motoring organisations and recovery operators, allowing them to pass and upstate jobs electronically via a common network standard.

The Apex Team

Based in Ramsgate the Apex team comprises 14 people; Steve Williams, Managing Director, Chris White, Technical Director and David Brinklow, Commercial Director. Steve and Chris are the founders of the company and have many years experience in the IT and Networks Industry. David joined the company in 2010 bringing his many years' experience in the recovery and automotive logistics industry to the business.

The business comprises of four departments, Software Development, Support, Networks and Customer Relations and Training.

Andy Mark, Software Development Manager heads up the software development team who are responsible for the creation and continual development of all of Apex's software products and for ensuring that they continue to meet the needs of clients, both currently and into the future.

Ken Tong, Support Manager heads up the support team who ensure that the migration of new clients to Apex's products is achieved with the minimum of

disruption to the clients operation. Ken's team are also responsible for providing the 24/7/365 support that is a feature of all of Apex software products.

Jason Kemp, Customer Relationship Manager and his team are responsible for the sale of Apex products, training and ongoing customer support. Jason is ably supported by Terry Benson who manages the requirements of clients in the north of the country.

Gary Widdison, Networks Manager is responsible for the complex network infrastructure and data centres that host and support Apex products. Apex client's systems are hosted in data centres located in London, Maidstone and Wakefield to provide additional resilience in the event of an outage. All networks are monitored 24/7/365 to ensure that data outages are swiftly dealt with and disruption to Apex clients is kept to a minimum.

Apex Products

Apex products specific to the recovery industry comprise; RMS (Recovery Management Software). RMS Lite & RMS Lite+, PinPoint and ANS (Automotive Network Service).

Look out for more information on these products in the next issue of AVRO News.

Not able to wait? Then call Jason Kemp on 0203 195 6757 or email sales@apex-networks.com.



Please quote you are an AVRO member when negotiating your new Apex RMS products and receive 50% reduction in your first 3 months licence fee.



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Cyber threats: protecting your business from internet attacks

The way the internet has permeated every aspect of business has brought some significant opportunities and efficiencies, but it has also brought risks. Here are some of the key ways that you can protect your business against cyber threats ...

Cyber essentials

To help businesses protect themselves from common internet based threats, the Government has developed the industry-backed scheme 'Cyber Essentials'. Guidance aimed at small businesses recommends two initial ways that firms should tackle cyber security: getting the basics right, and adopting a risk management approach.

Cyber security: the basics

As an initial step, make sure you implement these simple protections and behaviours:

1. **Download software updates** - Download software and app updates as soon as they appear on your devices and computers.
2. **Use stronger passwords** - One tip for creating a strong password is to combine three random words to create a password that is both memorable and hard to guess (e.g. 'greenstarbulb'), as well as mixing upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols.
3. **Always delete suspicious emails** - If in doubt, just delete unusual or suspicious emails, particularly requests for information or messages asking you to click on a link.
4. **Use anti-virus software** - Make sure you install anti-virus software on all your devices, including mobiles, and keep it up-to-date.
5. **Train your staff** - Provide full information for your staff regarding cyber security threats and how to

deal with them.

A risk management approach

The risk management approach to cyber security comprises four key steps:

1. **Understanding the risks** - Consider what is at stake if you suffer a breach: money and IT equipment, information (from client details to trade secrets), and even your reputation. Think also about who poses the risk - malicious hackers and criminals, but also accidental security failures by employees - and what about what forms a breach could take, whether it be malware sent by email or the physical loss of a laptop. What could be the potential damage to your business?
2. **Planning** - Ask questions such as: which information assets are critical to your business and what risks could they be exposed to? How could you continue to operate if your systems were attacked? What legal and compliance obligations does your business have?
3. **Implementing**—This involves putting in place security controls to protect your equipment, information, IT systems and outsourced IT services, and explaining responsibilities and best practice to staff.
4. **Reviewing** - Create processes for routinely reviewing the effectiveness of your controls and keeping up-to-date with information about the latest threats.

Further information about helping to guard your business against cyber threats is available on the Cyber Essentials website:

www.cyberstreetwise.com/cyberessentials

*Article courtesy of Newby Castleman
www.newbycastleman.co.uk*



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Clean air zones could hurt small haulage firms

Smaller haulage firms could struggle to absorb the costs of fleet upgrades when clean air zones are created across five UK cities, according to a Defra impact assessment published recently.

The assessment accompanies a national consultation to decide how to implement clean air zones as part of the government's drive to improve air quality.

Zones will be required in five cities by 2020 - Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton - however the government said any local authority can look to introduce one, should it see fit.



All clean air zone cities will see the most polluting vehicles, including HGVs that do not meet the Euro-6 emissions standard, diesel buses, taxis and coaches, discouraged from entering.

Birmingham and Leeds will also extend the requirements to vans, requiring Euro-6 diesel standard or Euro-4 if petrol.

However, cars are excluded from the zone requirements - a decision condemned by hauliers and the FTA, which said all road users have a part to play in reducing emissions.

Defra's assessment found that for smaller HGV operations and owner-operators, measures requiring them to upgrade their vehicles "could pose a significant financial impact and could lead to an increase in the retail prices of the goods they carry".

It also said that research has shown that it may be difficult for operators to pass on costs. This could result in some smaller firms going out of business.

The FTA has raised concerns over the effect of clean air zone proposals, in particular the time frame for their introduction, on freight operators.

Christopher Snelling, FTA head of national and regional policy, said: "Introducing this too soon, and without support, would impose substantial costs on the logistics industry and significantly disadvantage small businesses that use HGVs and vans."

The FTA said the planned timescale to launch clean air zones would mean there is not yet a sufficient second-hand market for small businesses to be able to buy compliant fleet vehicles.

*Article courtesy of Commercial Motor
www.commercialmotor.com*

Commercial Motor



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Driver safety

Over 500 deaths per year are caused by work related driving and this can therefore be one of the riskiest activities for businesses.

Driving is covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which means as an employer, you must do what is reasonably practical to protect your employees and others from harm. This will include carrying out risk assessments of all work activities and implement risk control measures which the assessment has been shown to be necessary.

All drivers must ensure they are fit to drive, have the right licence and insurance and are satisfied that the vehicle is roadworthy.

As an employer, the minimum you have to do for the duty of care of your employee is:

- Undertake a risk assessment of driving activities
- Include driver safety in the health and safety policy
- Avoid scheduling type of work which causes excessive tiredness or encourages speeding

- Ensure vehicles are suitable for the purpose and kept in good order
- Check the employees have a valid licence and they are fit for the job
- Make sure vehicles are insured for the appropriate category of business use
- Encourage adherence to the law on the use of mobile phones

*** Risk assessments and policies are legally required to be written down if there are five or more employees ***

There is no legal requirement in regards to additional driver assessment or training programmes.

Article courtesy of Lawgistics
www.lawgistics.co.uk

law
gistics

legal solutions
for the motor trade

Cartel concerning European truck manufacturers

If you purchased a new truck manufactured between 1997 and 2011 from MAN, Daimler, Iveco, DAF, Volvo or Renault, it's likely you are entitled to claim damages and interest resulting from an overcharge.

AVRO in conjunction with CMG have already started this process by engaging a leading law firm (RPC (UK) who specialise in competition law.

If you would like to register your interest, with the view to being included within the group, you can do so by visiting the AVRO website www.avrouk.com and completing the online form "Cartel Claims".



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Vehicle safety recalls

DVSA reference number	Make and model	Issue
R/2016/124	Mercedes-Benz: CLA, GLA & A-Class	Vehicle may stall
R/2016/152	Toyota: Prius, Prius V, Auris & Lexus CT200h	Fuel may leak / risk of fire
R/2016/153	Toyota: 2010 to 2012 MY Toyota Prius, Prius PHV and 2011 to 2012 MY Lexus CT200h	Curtain shield airbag may deploy unintentionally
R/2016/177	Honda: Civic & Civic Tourer	Possible wheel lock when abs activated
R/2016/181	Mercedes-Benz: Sprinter	Bonded windows may detach in a collision
R/2016/183	Mercedes-Benz: Sprinter	Window adhesion may not be sufficiently bonded
R/2015/185	Nissan: Primastar	Steering wheel may break/detach and cause loss of steering
R/2015/187	Ford: Fiesta	Fire may occur
R/2016/188	Mercedes-Benz: Actros, Antos, Aroc, Atego & Econic	Brakes may be adversely affected
R/2016/189	Mercedes-Benz: Vito	Fuel may leak
R/2016/190	Mercedes-Benz: C-Class	Fuel may leak
R/2016/193	Fiat: Scudo	Airbag may deploy incorrectly
R/2016/194	Fiat: Arbarth 500 & Fiat 500	Seat may not perform as expected during a collision
R/2016/200	Vauxhall: Vivaro B	Bonnet catch may fail
R/2016/202	MAN Bus: P20 & P22	Rear wheel trim panels may detach
R/2016/204	WRIGHTBUS: Streetlite DF & Streetlite WF	Loss of control
R/2016/205	Westfield: Calliper—2342168 & 2342169	Front wheel may lock
RM/2016/038	Husqvarna Motorcycles: Model year 2017 only: TC 125, TC 250, FC 350, FC 450, TX 125, TE 250 EU, TE 300 EU, FE 250 EU, FE 350 EU, FE 450 EU and FE 500 EU	Braking performance may be reduced
RM/2016/039	KTM Motorcycles: 250 & 350 SX-F, 150 XC-W, 250 EXC, 300 EXC Six Days, 300 EXC, 250 EXC-F Six Days, 350 EXC-F Six Days, 350 EXC-F, 450 EXC-F Six Days, 250 & 450 EXC-F	Braking performance may be reduced
RSPV/2016/012	Kawasaki: Mule	Floor pan could be punctured
RSPV/2016/013	Polaris: Model Year 2014 Ranger XP / CREW XP 900	Risk of fire



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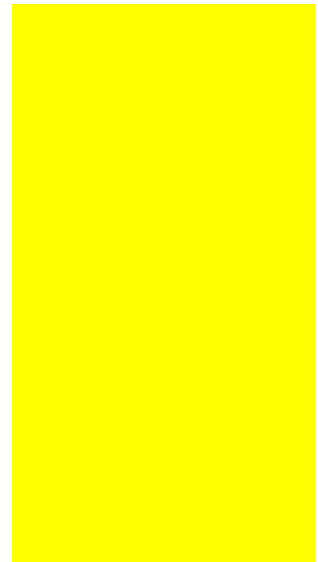
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Instant dismissal

Sacking on the spot aka instant dismissal could land you in hot water. Instant dismissal suggests that the employer is justified in sacking the employee on the spot due to their actions. In cases where you feel the actions are gross misconduct such as fighting, theft or fraud in the workplace, the advice would be to suspend the employee on full pay whilst you carry out an investigation and gather evidence! Contrary to popular belief, there is no situation that gives you the automatic right to sack an employee on the spot. If you did so, the employee may be able to claim unfair dismissal.

Our advice is ALWAYS follow a fair and reasonable procedure when imposing a dismissal. Where you have employees who have less than two years

service, you may think that the extra effort to carry out the procedure is not worthwhile. However, even an employee who has been with you a short time could still accuse you of unfair dismissal and discrimination. By carrying out a disciplinary procedure which documents the reason for dismissal, you will be able to defend such allegations.

*Article courtesy of Lawgistics
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