



To: Chief Executives of unitary and district local authorities in England

4 July 2005

Dear Chief Executive

**MOTOR SALVAGE OPERATORS REGULATIONS 2002
(MADE UNDER THE VEHICLES (CRIME) ACT 2001)**

1. Each year over 2 million vehicles reach the end of their useful life, the majority of which are disposed of legally in authorised facilities. However, a minority are abandoned by their owners and then become your responsibility for removal and disposal.
2. In recent months and years - thanks to your support - we have had huge success in dealing with the problems of abandoned and nuisance vehicles. This is an important part of our agenda for creating cleaner, safer, greener public spaces which are fundamental to the quality of life of all our citizens and to the creation of sustainable communities.
3. Last November we published our strategy '*Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities: Removing Nuisance Vehicles*' for reducing abandoned vehicles and introduced new powers in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, recognising that vehicle crimes significantly influence the number of abandoned vehicles.
4. There are estimated to be 1 million vehicles that have been unlicensed for more than three months, are uninsured and without a current keeper, and it is these vehicles which are most likely to be abandoned. Taking every opportunity to identify these vehicles will help reduce the eventual number of abandoned vehicles.
5. The related Motor Vehicle Salvage Regulations require local authorities to maintain a register of motor vehicle salvage operators. Such registers can have a significant impact both in reducing crime, by driving out illegal operators, and in helping to reduce the number of abandoned vehicles by ensuring that properly run, lawful salvage businesses exist which have the confidence of vehicle owners. Not all Authorities, however, are implementing these regulations effectively.
6. The purpose of the attached letter is, therefore, to ask that your Authority reviews its implementation of these provisions and, where it has not already done so, takes immediate steps to set up and maintain a register as required by the Act.

MAVIS McDONALD
Permanent Secretary
Office of the Deputy
Prime Minister

LEIGH LEWIS
Permanent Secretary
Crime, Policing, Counter
Terrorism and Delivery
Home Office



Leigh Lewis, CB
PERMANENT SECRETARY
Crime, Policing, Counter Terrorism & Delivery
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
PASS TO <i>CB</i>	FOR ACTION
11 JUL 2005	
COPY SENT TO <i>CL5</i>	
COPY TO BE SENT TO	
ACKNOWLEDGED	YES/NO

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(MADE UNDER THE VEHICLES (CRIME) ACT 2001)**

1. In February this year the Public Accounts Committee considered a National Audit Office report "Reducing Vehicle Crime" which, amongst other things, expressed concern about the limited level of implementation by local authorities of the Motor Salvage Operators Regulations made under the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001. These Regulations, which came into effect in October 2002, aim to drive criminals and criminal behaviour out of the motor salvage industry.
2. Under section 2 of 2001 Act, local authorities have an obligation to "establish and maintain a register for their area of persons carrying on business as motor salvage operators in that area". The NAO report included the results of a MORI survey which the Home Office had commissioned to measure progress in implementing the Regulations. This showed that over half of the 200 local authorities surveyed (in the spring of 2004) had either not yet set up a register or did not have any operators on the register. Members of the PAC expressed considerable concern during the Committee's hearings about these figures and urged the Home Office to take action to ensure that the regulations were being more effectively implemented.
3. The purpose of this letter is, therefore, to ask that your Authority reviews its implementation of these provisions and, where it has not already done so, takes immediate steps to set up a register as required by the Act. Where a register is in place I would be grateful if you would review whether it is being actively maintained and whether all operators known to be running motor salvage businesses in your Authority's area are on it. This will enable the police to enforce the Regulations both in terms of registered operators and, importantly, operators trading whilst unregistered. Advice to local authorities on setting up a register can be found on the Home Office website [www.crimereduction.gov.uk/mos\)\)](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/mos))).htm.

4. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has, in parallel, agreed guidance to police forces on minimum standards for police enforcement of the Regulations. This includes establishing a single point of contact in each force which should help improve communication with local authorities, and resolve any issues that might arise. Local authorities should, in the first instance, contact their local police headquarters to identify their single point of contact; if they experience any difficulty they should contact Detective Superintendent Bill Goreham of Centrex who will resolve the matter (e-mail volumecrimeproject.@centrex.pnn.police.uk, 07787 888519, National Centre for Policing Excellence, The Willows, Wyboston Lakes Business Park, Wyboston, Beds. MK44 3AL).

5. Finally, I should add that the Home Office has commissioned a follow-up survey – again by MORI – of the 200 local authorities with the highest levels of vehicle crime to establish whether the position regarding implementation of the regulations has improved. This will take place this November and the results will be published and reported to the Public Accounts Committee in due course.

6. Further advice and information about the Regulations and how they should be applied can be obtained from:

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Yours sincerely

LEIGH LEWIS

