



Business Round-up

Landmark ruling on working time

The time spent by mobile workers travelling to and from their first and last appointments should be regarded as working time, the European Court of Justice recently ruled.

Prior to this point, many employers have not factored in travelling time when calculating employees' working time.

Experts have warned that the ruling could have a significant impact on businesses, with many firms potentially in breach of EU working time regulations, including those employing sales reps, care workers and gas fitters.

The court ruling outlined: 'Requiring workers to bear the burden of their employer's choice would be contrary to the objective of protecting the safety and health of workers pursued by the directive, which includes the necessity of guaranteeing workers a minimum rest period.'

Withdrawal of ONS surveys to 'cut business costs'

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has unveiled plans to change the way it calculates economic growth estimates, cutting the time businesses need to spend on form-filling. The ONS intends to partially replace monthly business surveys, which are used to estimate growth, with data gathered from VAT returns submitted to HMRC.

45,000 surveys are currently sent out each month, which is thought to cover around 55% of the economy. However, using VAT turnover data should increase this coverage substantially.

The ONS expects that the number of surveys sent monthly could be reduced by up to a half once the transition to the new system is complete, with small and medium-sized firms expected to save the most. The ONS aims to complete the transition to VAT data by 2020.

Increase in contactless card payment limit

The limit for making contactless card payments has risen from £20 to £30, following a surge in the use of 'wave and pay' card payments. The increased limit was rolled out across retailers between 1 September and 31 October 2015.

Contactless payment cards were first introduced in the UK in 2007 for low-value transactions. However, the popularity of such payments has grown exponentially since this date. During the first half of 2015, shopping transactions totalled £2.5bn, proving to be significantly higher than the 2014 total of £2.32bn.

However, some experts have warned that contactless cards could be open to exploitation by persistent fraudsters, with some online retailers forfeiting card security at the checkout stage in favour of a speedier transaction.

Web Watch

Essential sites for business owners

www.skillsyouneed.com
Information and advice on a range of work-related and interpersonal skills.

www.economist.com
Resource for international news, politics and finance.

www.businessbanter.com
Business choices magazine run by members of the business community.

uk.businessinsider.com
Offering the latest business and financial news.



Reminders for your Winter Diary

December 2015

- 30 Last day for online submission of 2015 Tax Return for HMRC to collect tax through clients' 2016/17 PAYE code, where they owe less than £3,000.
- 31 Last day for non-EU traders to reclaim recoverable UK VAT suffered in the year to 30 June 2015.
End of relevant year for taxable distance supplies to UK for VAT registration purposes.
End of relevant year for cross-border acquisitions of taxable goods in the UK for VAT registration purposes.
End of CT61 quarterly period.
Filing date for Company Tax Return Form CT600 for period ended 31 December 2014.

January 2016

- 1 Due date for payment of Corporation Tax for period ended 31 March 2015.
- 14 Due date for income tax for the CT61 quarter to 31 December 2015.
- 19/22 Quarter 3 2015/16 PAYE remittance due.
- 31 First self assessment payment on account for 2015/16.
Capital gains tax payment for 2014/15.
Balancing payment – 2014/15 income tax/Class 4 NICs.
Last day to renew 2015/16 tax credits.
First payment due date for 2015/16 Class 2 NICs.
Last day to pay any balance of 2013/14 tax and Class 4

NICs to avoid an automatic 5% late payment penalty.

Deadline for amending 2014 Tax Return.

Last day to file the 2015 Tax Return online without incurring penalties.

February

- 1 £100 penalty if 2015 Tax Return not yet filed online. Additional penalties may apply for further delay. Interest starts to accrue on 2014/15 tax not yet paid.
- 2 Submission date of P46 (Car) for quarter to 5 January.
- 14 Last date (for practical purposes) to request NIC deferment for 2015/16.