



Jul 17, 2013 14:46 BST

Fraudster's solar panel VAT fraud not so bright

A Tottenham business consultant who fraudulently claimed £120,000 in VAT repayments has been jailed, after a crackdown on tax dodgers in London by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Ed Bossman Yeboah, director of the Universal Management Consultancy, submitted the repayment claims on the basis that he was exporting solar panels to Ghana from the UK. Investigations as part of a special fraudulent repayment tax taskforce launched in 2011 revealed that these claims were fraudulent.

Yeboah registered his company for VAT in 2008 and, although the company's turnover remained consistently low, his claims for VAT repayments rose almost every quarter. A number of early claims were processed, but officers grew suspicious, suspended payments and arranged a meeting after he submitted a claim of almost £17,000 in 2011. During this meeting Yeboah was unable to produce the required paperwork to support his claims.

Peter Millroy, Assistant Director, Criminal Investigation, HMRC, said:

“Yeboah attempted to fool HMRC officers by manufacturing false invoices. He was well aware that officers were not satisfied and would visit him again to obtain the missing invoices, and was trying to cover his tracks. When that failed, he decided to supply false evidence from a company that no longer traded.

“We discovered that Yeboah had no source of income, other than the fraudulent VAT repayments he had submitted. We believe he used the cash to buy properties in Ghana.”

Enquiries made to the solar panel suppliers confirmed Yeboah had acted as an agent to export panels on six occasions, but they had provided him with VAT-free invoices for the transactions. He also claimed he had purchased three further solar panels from another company which officers later found had stopped trading two months before the date on the invoices.

Yeboah had denied 15 counts of VAT fraud, but was found guilty of 13 after a trial at Wood Green Crown Court, London, in June. He returned to the court today (17 July 2013), where he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

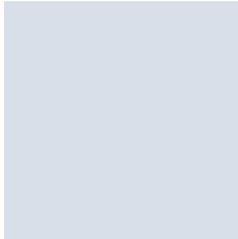
Confiscation proceedings will follow.

Issued by HM Revenue & Customs Press Office

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) is the UK's tax authority.

HMRC is responsible for making sure that the money is available to fund the UK's public services and for helping families and individuals with targeted financial support.

Contacts



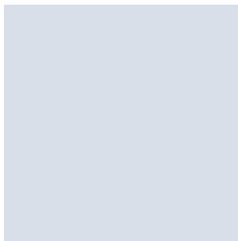
HMRC Regional Press Officer - Wales

Press Officer

Wales, contact: 07867 970437

nikki.sanders@hmrc.gov.uk

07867 970437



HMRC Regional Press Officer - London

Regional Press Officer

London

william.lyon@hmrc.gov.uk

03000 519 451

07469 023 331



HM Revenue
& Customs

HMRC Press Office

Press Contact

03000 585018