



# Home Office

Lord Henley

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME PREVENTION AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR REDUCTION**

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CTS Reference: M98/12

10<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Thank you for your letter of 4 January to the Home Secretary about metal theft. I am replying as the Minister with responsibility for Crime Prevention.

Metal theft is a serious and growing problem that this Government takes very seriously. We are working with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), other government departments and private industry on a range of initiatives to tackle the damage it causes to individuals, communities and businesses.

Discussions are taking place across Government to identify what legislative changes, primarily to the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964, are required to tackle metal theft. We are mostly looking at the point of transaction where the scrap metal dealer buys metal from the public – proof of title to the goods and seller identification in addition to removing cash from the industry are options being considered. I must stress that discussions are at an early stage and nothing has been agreed at present.

However we need to ensure that any legislative response is proportionate and does not cause businesses and members of the public unnecessary expense.

The Home Office is also currently working closely with ACPO and their multi-agency Metal Theft Working Group to take forward a plan of work to tackle all

forms of metal theft. The plan drives progress on a number of fronts, ranging from:

- making metal more difficult to steal;
- increasing the risk to the offender;
- reducing the rewards from stealing metal; and
- increasing standards across the scrap metal dealer industry.

Notable recent work from this group includes revised tactical guidance for police forces, a new central intelligence hub for all relevant organisations to better understand and respond to metal thieves and design work to find design solutions.

I hope this reassures you that the Government is taking the problem of metal theft seriously. I would like to thank you for raising this important issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lord Henley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L".

**Lord Henley**