



# HM REVENUE & CUSTOMS

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## **Somerset accountant jailed for £350,000 tax fraud**

An accountant who failed to pay VAT to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in a £358,283 tax fraud has been jailed.

Stephen Love, 63, of Somerset, admitted pocketing the VAT he charged his clients. He used the money as cash flow for his business.

Love was a director of construction company J B A Martin Ltd, of Aldershot, Hampshire and of Wessex Accountants Ltd which looked after the building firm's books.

Richard Wilkinson, Assistant Director, Fraud Investigation Service, HMRC, said:

“Stephen Love kept the VAT he charged his customers. As an accountant he should have known better, but he abused the position of trust his profession put him in to steal the money that should have been funding public services.

“Tax fraud will not be tolerated and HMRC is working to create a level playing field for legitimate local businesses who cannot compete with their criminal competitors.

“We urge anyone with information about people or businesses involved in tax fraud to contact our Hotline on 0800 788 887.”

Love pleaded guilty to the offence at Yeovil Magistrates Court on 12 July 2017 and was sentenced at Taunton Crown Court on 4 August 2017 to two years and three months in prison.

On sentencing, Judge David Ticehurst said: “You knew what you were doing as a fully-trained accountant. This was a serious offence and the criminal act has an impact on your family.”

### **Notes for editors**

1. Stephen Love (DOB 18/05/1954) of High Street, Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset, admitted the fraudulent evasion of VAT between 1 January 2011 and 31 March 2015 at Yeovil Magistrates’ Court on 12 July, 2017. He was sentenced at Taunton Crown Court on 4 August 2017 to two years and three months’ jail.

2. J B A Martin Ltd is based at Lysons Road, Aldershot, Wessex. Accountants was dissolved in February 2016.

3. Anyone with information about people or businesses involved in tax fraud can call our Fraud Hotline on 0800 788 887 or report it online at:

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/reportingfraud/online.htm>

4. Follow HMRC Press Office on Twitter @HMRCpressoffice

5. There is no photo of Love available.

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## 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.*

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