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Illegal Worker Arrested and £20,000 in Illicit Goods Seized in Carlisle Crackdown

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– Categories: *Breaking News*



A man with no legal right to work in the United Kingdom was arrested in Carlisle on Tuesday during a coordinated enforcement operation targeting the sale of illicit tobacco and vapes. The multi-agency sweep resulted in the seizure of approximately £20,000 worth of illegal products and is part of wider efforts to tackle retail crime and illegal immigration.

Officers from Immigration Enforcement, Cumbria Police, and Trading Standards visited five retail premises across the city as part of a planned operation against organised crime. During the raids, one Iraqi male was found to be working without the necessary

authorisation and was taken into custody. Authorities also uncovered a false wall and concealed compartment in one of the shops, methods commonly used by criminal networks to hide smuggled goods.

A Home Office spokesperson confirmed the arrest and seizure, stating: “We are taking robust action to tackle illegal working and the unlicensed trade in tobacco and other illicit goods, which fuels organised crime and undermines legitimate businesses. Our Immigration Enforcement teams have increased raids and arrests against illegal working by 50 per cent since this Government came to power.”

The Carlisle Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) confirmed its involvement in the operation through a statement on social media. The force also deployed detection dog Skye to assist in identifying hidden contraband.

This action forms part of a broader strategy by the Home Office to disrupt the activities of organised criminal gangs involved in the smuggling of tobacco and counterfeit products. The department highlighted that over 500 town centres will see enhanced police presence this summer as part of the Government’s Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

The Government has committed £7 million over three years to bolster police efforts against retail crime. Additionally, it has pledged to recruit 13,000 new officers by the end of this Parliament, with 3,000 of those expected by March 2026.

The latest operation in Carlisle underscores ongoing national efforts to uphold immigration law, protect high streets, and support law-abiding businesses from unfair competition.