

279.39 Couriers

R v Horton 2013 EWCA Crim 1801 D pleaded (20% credit) to importing heroin and cocaine. He picked up some frozen spinach in Belgium. At Dover 9.62 kilos of heroin (at 63% purity) and 11.39 kilos of cocaine (at purity between 72% and 88%) were found in the back of his lorry. When arrested he said, "It's £2,000 for two packages. I'm a family man." In interview he explained he had left the back of his lorry open at a rest period and the package was put in. D was aged about 43 with four handling convictions and three making off without payment convictions. The Judge said the concealment lacked sophistication and couriers were a vital part of drug importation. D was ascribed a significant role with some awareness of the operation. The Judge started at 20 years because it was over three times the Category 1 weight and reduced the sentence to 18 years before the plea discount, because it was an isolated incident and the lack of sophistication. Held. It was plainly a significant role. The starting point was beyond the Category 1 level. The high purity and the aggravating and mitigating factors made it 15 years. With plea, **12 years** not 14 years.