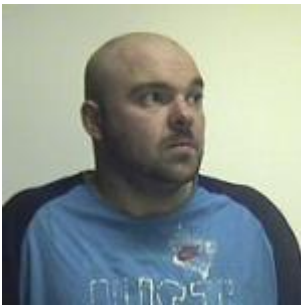


Three men convicted of drugs charges at High Court

A group of men who were caught with the largest haul of drugs ever seized by Lothian and Borders Police have been convicted.

The three men were caught with almost £2 million worth of heroin at a house in Edinburgh in December 2010. At the High Court in Edinburgh today, Kris Brown (22) was found guilty of being involved in the supply of the drug. His co-accused, Lee Knott (23) and Ian Hunter (22), had previously pled guilty on Friday, to the same charge.



All three were remanded in custody and will appear for sentence at Glasgow High Court on August 9.

The seizure, which happened at a property in Sighthill View, in the Sighthill area of the Capital, is the biggest drugs seizure ever made by Lothian and Borders Police.

The drugs were seized as part of Operation Congress, an initiative launched in April 2010, which has focused on the activities of serious and organised criminals operating in the

Lothians.

The operation has resulted in the arrest of 31 people, a number of whom have been convicted and are currently serving custodial sentences.

Approximately 30 kilos of Class A drugs with a potential street value of approximately £3.5 million have been seized as part of Operation Congress, along with firearms and £53,000 in cash.

Chief Superintendent Gill Imery, Head of CID at Lothian and Borders Police, said:

“The three men who have been convicted today were caught in the act of preparing large amounts of heroin for distribution on the streets of our local communities, however their plans were thwarted as a result of Operation Congress, which has struck a major blow against serious and organised criminals operating in the Lothians.

“Lothian and Borders Police is committed to protecting our communities from serious and organised criminality in all its forms, and we welcome any new information on criminals operating in local communities.

“The Made from Crime? Campaign has encouraged people to come forward to police with any information they have on individuals who they suspect are making money from crime, and we continue to appeal to people to contact police or Crimestoppers in confidence and anonymity with any information they have.”

Chief Constable of Lothian and Borders Police, David Strang, welcomed the conviction:

“Today’s convictions are the result of a significant operation for the Force which represents our biggest ever drugs seizure, and I am pleased the hard work and comprehensive investigation

undertaken by my officers has yielded positive results for the communities we serve.

“Drug dealers impact on all of us – whether it be directly through associated criminality, such as housebreakings and thefts, or indirectly through fear and intimidation.

“We are committed to improving the quality of life for people living in the Force area and disrupting serious and organised crime groups is just one way in which we can do this.

“By working with our partners at the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service we can continue to deliver our strategy of prevention.”