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TruckPol Annual Report 2008

Welcome to the TruckPol annual report for the period 1st January 2008 – 31st December 2008. This bulletin is not protectively marked and may be distributed freely without further reference to the originators.

TruckPol, a division of AVCIS, assists the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in sharing information on national road freight crime to deliver solutions, minimise opportunities for criminals and reduce offences. This type of crime is estimated to cost the UK economy up to £1 billion per year, with the average loss of each incident totalling over £25,000. A loss like this to any business could be devastating. In addition to a loss of profits and client trust, future contracts are also in jeopardy with over one in four of the victims losing business as a result.

Road Freight Crime by Value

Recorded values reported in this section are published subject to the following proviso: Whilst TruckPol makes every effort to ensure that values are recorded as accurately as possible, there will inevitably be discrepancies between actual trade/retail value to haulier, shipper and insurer and values given to police at the time of reporting. Because of this, the values given below must be viewed **as a minimum guide only**.

The Cost of Road Freight Crime in 2008

	Recorded Value:		
	£ Sterling	€ Euro	\$ US Dollars
Vehicle Value	£42,298,397	47,574,290	63,149,566
Load Value	£42,171,407	47,456,470	62,959,976
Combined Value	£84,469,804	95,055,845	126,097,775

Fig 1

Theft of Large Goods Vehicles

In 2008 TruckPol recorded 1895 LGV's stolen while in 2007 this figure was 1176¹.

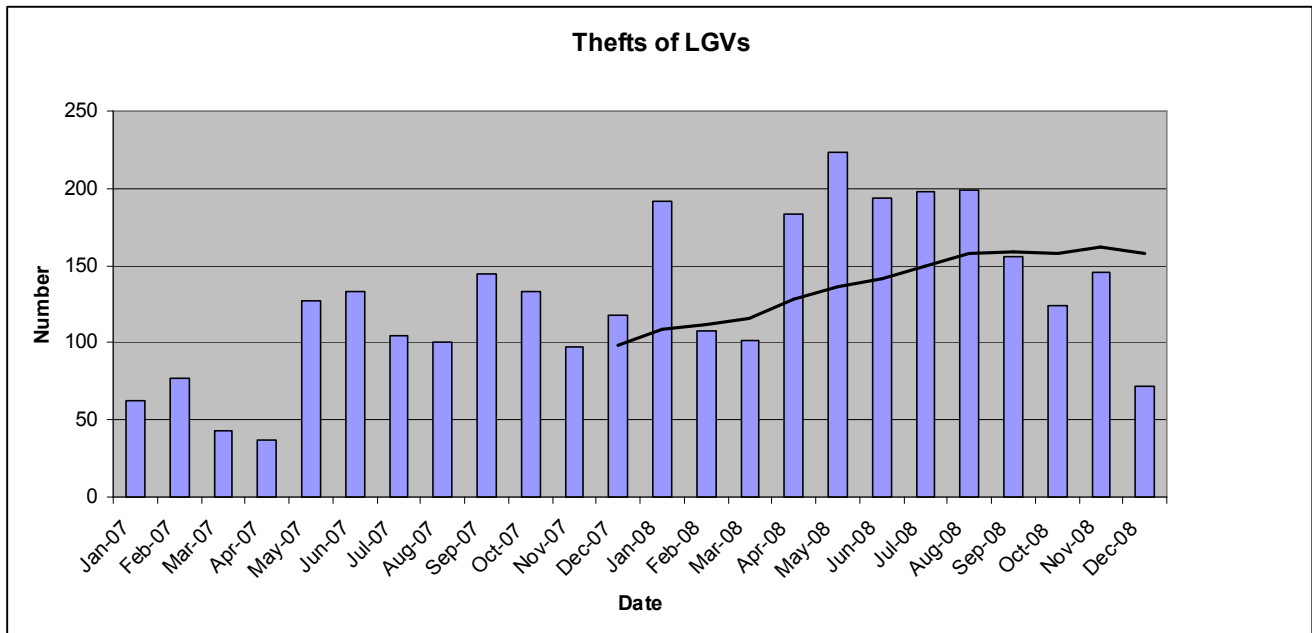


Fig 2 - Thefts by number with 12 month moving average

Thefts of vehicles by number

<u>Force</u>	<u>Theft of Vehicle</u>
Metropolitan	314
West Yorkshire	165
Kent	99
West Mercia	99
Greater Manchester	90
Essex	83
West Midlands	74
Staffordshire	59
Thames Valley	56
Lancashire	55
South Yorkshire	48
Derbyshire	43
Warwickshire	42
Nottinghamshire	39
Merseyside	34

Fig 3

¹ Data from daily PNC-VODS search.

Theft from Large Goods Vehicles

TruckPol recorded 654 thefts from vehicles in 2007 and 1362 thefts from vehicles in 2008.

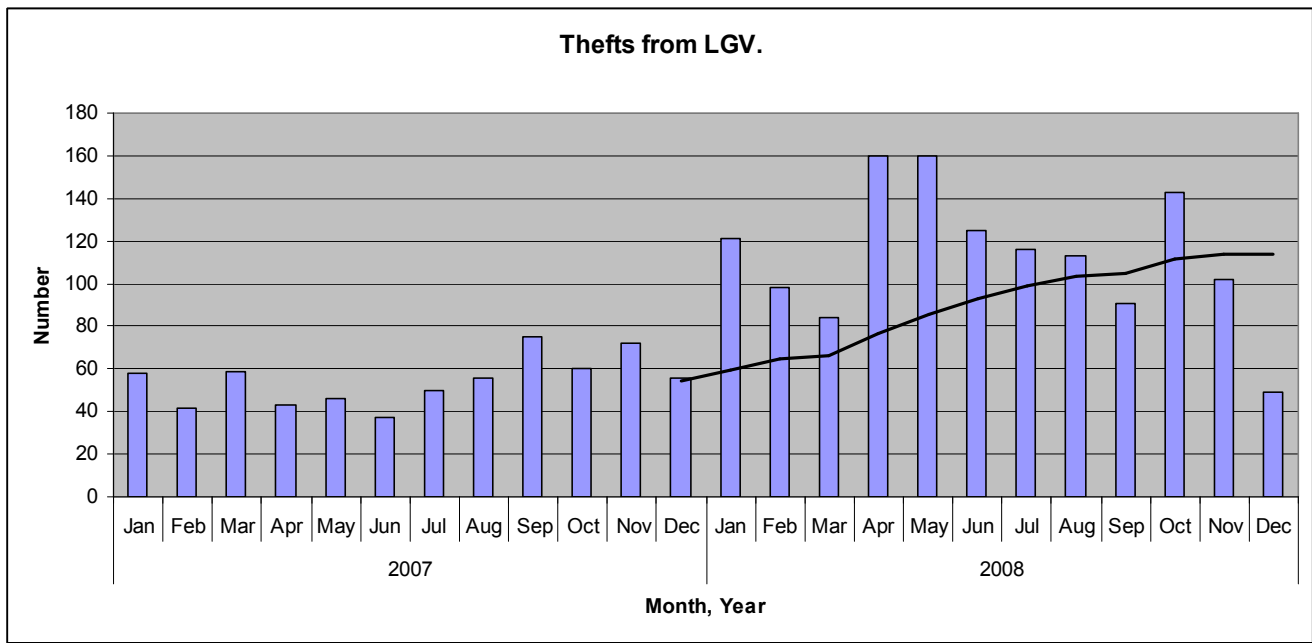


Fig 4 – Thefts from by number with 12 month moving average

TruckPol is notified of thefts from LGV's by Specific Points of contact in UK forces. The notification process in 2008 was improved enabling more incidents to be reported to TruckPol and providing a more representative picture of offending compared to previous years.

Police Force	Number of thefts from vehicle.
Metropolitan	351
West Yorkshire	201
Kent	164
Northamptonshire	91
Thames Valley	91
West Midlands	62
Warwickshire	53
Derbyshire	52
Avon & Somerset	48
Essex	46
West Mercia	39
Lancashire	38
Hampshire	23
Nottinghamshire	20
Lincolnshire	17

Fig 5

Crime by Type

<u>Crime Type</u>	<u>Number</u>
Theft of Vehicle	1894
Theft from Vehicle	1362
Theft (other)	151
Att. Theft	230
Hijack	50
Warehouse	31
Deception	26
Att. Hijack	5
Total	3749

Fig 6

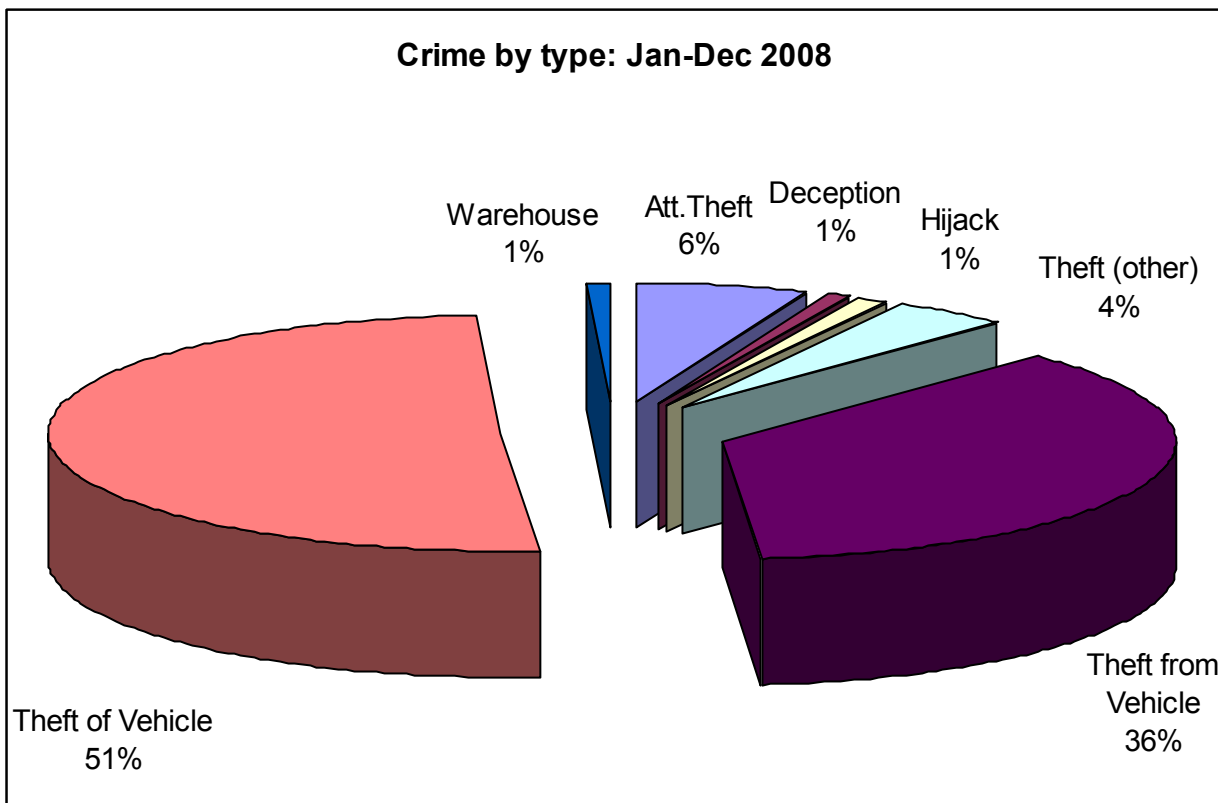


Fig 7

Breakdown by Commodity Type

Property is classified in seven primary categories in order to achieve a common EU standard in accordance with both Home Office recommendations and European Council of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) guidelines in a paper entitled 'Theft of Goods and Goods Vehicles' CEMT/CM(2001)19. They are;

A	Electronic/Electrical
B	Clothes and Shoes
C	Food / Beverages
D	Household Goods
E	Alcohol
F	Cigarettes
G	Miscellaneous/Other

In addition to these, TruckPol has the following sub-categories to assist in analysis of thefts of commodities, which are of particular interest to the UK;

A1	Computer Equipment
A2	Mobile Telephone Equipment
G1	Building / Plant / Industrial / Machinery / Automotive
G2	Art / Antiques
G3	HAZMAT / Chemicals
G4	Diesel Fuel
G5	Metals

Household Goods (D) comprise any items that can commonly be found in domestic use and includes furniture, kitchen equipment, toiletries and cleaning products amongst other things.

Buildings/Plant/Machinery (G1) comprises items that are industrial/commercial, including car and machine parts, aluminium, glass and metals.

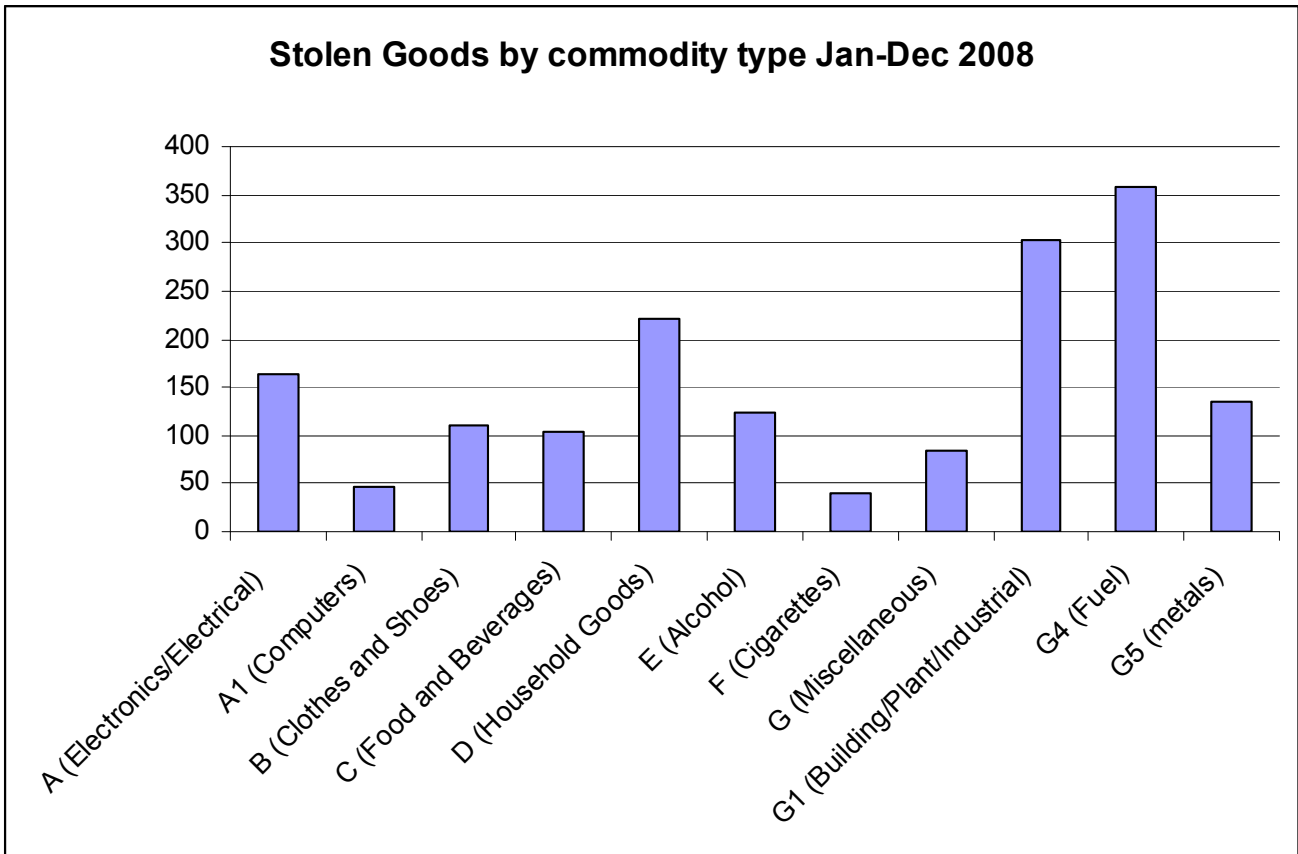


Fig 8

Road Freight Crime: An analysis of the problem

Offenders often have knowledge of the areas where valuable loads will be available based on where specific industries and distribution centres are established. They will travel vast distances to carry out their crimes. Most of these premises are close to major road networks allowing easy escape routes. Offenders will also recce an area to establish which vehicle has a profitable load. They mostly work as a team with the recce crew slashing curtains and reporting viable loads to the rest of the team. A 7.5 ton lorry, normally stolen or cloned, will be driven by offenders to the site identified and the offenders meet up to transfer the load.

Drivers are sometimes forced to park in unsuitable locations when they arrive at a delivery early and are turned away. This is a result of who will take liability for the goods prior to delivery! It is also compounded by the lack of secure parking facilities in the UK.



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Inconsistent reporting by UK and foreign drivers result in missed forensic opportunities especially when combined with lack of response by The Police Service in some areas.

Also drivers often continue with their journey before the police can attend and in some cases the drivers will not report more minor thefts thus disguising the extent of the problem.

Insider information and collusion still plays a part in some offences.

Freight crime, by its very nature, must be considered as an aspect of organised crime. To steal and to realise the cash value of stolen goods requires a network of individuals to whom goods can be passed. Intelligence suggest that prolific lorry thieves have a number of handlers to whom goods can be passed, this arrangement may be made while the goods are in transit from the scene of the crime.

Crime problems in selected force areas

In Avon and Somerset experienced a lot of thefts from vehicle fuel tanks. These are common in Bridgewater, Somerset and in Bristol and occur mainly in areas where vehicles are parked overnight such as company depots (as opposed to roadside or services station parking).

Derbyshire has several areas with distribution centres for companies handling consumer goods and electronics and as such experience thefts in the areas close to these distribution centres. There is also a service station on the M1 in Derbyshire that is often targeted and the lay-bys on the A50 experience a large share of the force area's thefts.

In Essex there are a lot of incidents of thefts from vehicles in the areas of Grays and Tilbury adjacent to the container port.

In Kent there A2 and A20 are the venue for many thefts from vehicles; these roads lead to and from Dover and contain a very high volume of freight traffic. Kent has reported 88 fuel thefts this year, one of the highest numbers of a single force.

So called 'Round the corner' deceptions are common in the London area, consignments of alcohol are the usual target. In these offences delivery drivers are stopped at delivery point by a man in a high-viz jacket and redirected to another warehouse where goods are shipped to another vehicle, this is done on the pretence that there is a problem at the receiving destination that prevents delivery.

Northamptonshire Police and Thames Valley Police are two neighbouring forces through which some of the same arterial routes pass. Both experience high instances of 'curtain slashing' offences also known as 'jump ups'. These two force areas also contain a lot of

distribution centres for retailers of consumer products. Thefts from vehicles in the form of curtain slashings occur in both areas particularly on the M1 and the A14, A43 and A34. Another issue is the vulnerability of vehicles that arrive early for delivery and are not permitted to park at the receiving warehouse. The goods that are frequently targeted are electronics such as televisions and household goods such as washing powders etc: televisions are an expensive item and losses can run into six figures for a single road-side theft. Both forces are also targeted by travelling offenders from the North West and from West Yorkshire.

The West Midlands region has been targeted by criminals who are stealing high value metal loads from parked vehicles and from business premises. There have been 47 incidents in which metals have been stolen, of these 15 have been perpetrated by means of hijacking. There were two incidents in which the value of the stolen goods was over £1 million. The victims are frequently foreign drivers who fail to use secure parking and park on the street while waiting to make their deliveries.

West Yorkshire has supplied 106 reports of fuel thefts from LGV's. The thefts from vehicles occur in the area close to the M62 between the M1 and A1, particularly in the areas of Pontefract, Castleford and Normanton. The large number of distribution centres in the region, and the extensive network of motorways and dual carriageways provide ideal conditions for lorry thieves to operate.

Police operations to reduce freight crime

TruckPol Crime Reduction Trailer





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The trailer, pictured above at Hams Hall, Warwickshire during 2008, has been operationally successful during 2008. It has been loaned by numerous police forces and helps to inform drivers and also disrupt road freight crime in UK crime hotspots.

It is currently being utilised by Lancashire Police and Derbyshire Constabulary during February 2009.



In conjunction with the trailer we have produced A1 size signs for use in 'hotspot' locations to reinforce the crime prevention message once the trailer has left.

Operation Mistletoe



During December 2008, The Central Motorway Police Group conducted an operation aimed at deterring thieves from committing offences on the major arterial routes in the West Midlands, Staffordshire and the West Mercia Police areas. The operation consisted of high visibility patrols at motorway service areas in order to deter criminals and to provide reassurance to LGV drivers and other motorists. Staff at motorway service areas were made aware of the potential for criminals to operate in the area and were encouraged to reporting

suspicious activity to the police. The police also patrolled major routes leading to the motorways where LGV's may 'wild' park at the road-side. This operation relied on intelligence from TruckPol to inform the patrolling officers of the hot spot areas for thefts. Officers were also briefed on the methods employed by criminals who target LGV's in order that they can recognise suspicious behaviour. A number of arrests were made during the operation but a proper analysis of the effect of the operation on the levels of offending will be conducted by CMPG and will help give direction to any similar operations conducted by the group in the future.

Operation Utah



Operation UTAH is an ambitious multi agency intelligence led operation which was seen as the launch pad for the ACPO Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service (AVCIS).

This was an ANPR operation which was conducted for five discontinuous days in November and December 2006 at the Dartford River Crossing.

There were three Police Forces involved, namely Kent, Essex and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Additionally there were representatives from VOSA, HM Revenue and Customs, HM Immigration Service, Environmental Health officers, Trading Standards, DVLA and the Department for Works and Pensions.



Operation Utah's now occurs regularly throughout the UK at other suitable sites on our major route network and has a knock on effect with vehicle enabled Freight Crime.

Operation 'Stammtisch'



Fig 3. Leicestershire Police Incident Vehicle at Leicester Forest East Services M1 – Stammisch January 2009

Op Stammisch is an operation aimed at building the relationship between the police and lorry drivers. Since many incidents in which police powers are not needed, such as breakdowns and 'damage only' collisions are now dealt with by the Highways Agency and safety issues are handled by VOSA, there are fewer opportunities for interaction between lorry drivers and the police.

Based on the fact that lorry drivers form a community in their own right, the need emerged for the police to engage with lorry drivers in the way that the police would do with other communities.



Fig 1. Metropolitan Police Commercial Vehicle Education Unit at Clackett Lane Services M25 – First UK Stammtisch June 2008



Fig 2. Central Motorway Police Group Incident Vehicle at Hilton Park Services M6 – Stammtisch December 2008

A key aspect of the operation is creating an atmosphere in which drivers feel that they can approach the police to put across their concerns or any information that they wish to give without feeling pressured or threatened by their presence.

The operation was originally introduced in the Metropolitan Police by Sergeant Richard Golding of the Commercial Vehicle Education Unit. Stammtisch events have since taken place in Avon & Somerset, Leicestershire, Wiltshire and Central Motorway Police Group areas, with forces such as Dorset, Sussex, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire joining soon.



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Northamptonshire Police Operations

Police in Northamptonshire are reporting a reduction in lorry crime in the county. There were 162 offences in 2007 which was reduced to 136 in 2008. A high profile campaign was carried out with a particular focus on November and December when the most offences typically occur. The operation included attempts to explain to haulage companies and drivers the need to find secure parking. Officers carried out high visibility patrols on the A14, M1 and A5 in order to deter criminals.

Northamptonshire police also have a crime prevention trailer similar to that which TruckPol has. This has been deployed across the county in hot spot areas.

Into 2009 major crime reduction strategies are being planned to further reduce LGV crime, especially around the 'Brackmills' industrial park, near Northampton.

Convictions During 2008

April 2008

In April 2008 four men were given prison terms by Lincoln Crown Court for stealing £41,000 worth of detergents, crisps and Easter eggs in March 2006 from a haulage firm in Grantham. John Kinsella, 43, of Kirkdale, Liverpool was sentenced in his absence after absconding from Lincoln crown court. The judge in case had granted Kinsella bail prior to sentencing on the condition that he remains within the court. However, Kinsella was able to walk out unopposed. Kinsella was sentenced to 14 years in jail for the robbery and for driving offences during a police pursuit. A second offender, James Muldoon, 28 from Liverpool was sentenced to 13 years; he is also on the run. Stephen McMullen 49 was jailed for 12 years. A fourth man Thomas Hodgson, 29, of Liverpool was jailed for six years.

In August 2007, Kevin Atkinson (below, D.o.b 02/08/1974) was stopped in a stolen 7.5 tonne van on the M6 Northbound. The van was carrying 131 computers that had just been stolen from a foreign registered LGV in Warwickshire. Atkinson has just been sentenced to 14 months custody by Warwick crown court in April 2008.

May 2008

Six men from Northamptonshire were jailed in May 2008 for their part in the theft of more than £590,000 of televisions from Panasonic in Northampton. James Shayler, 42, a notorious football hooligan, was one of those jailed for his role in organising the thefts. These were carried out using two LGV's stolen from Scotland in August 2006. The televisions were stolen three months later from Panasonic's warehouse.

The offenders were aided by an employee at the warehouse. Among the ten people convicted were an assistant transport manager at the firm, the man who rented the land and



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containers where the goods were stored, two men who unloaded the goods and the two individuals who drove the Lorries.

Operation Ferula – December 2008

Eleven people have been convicted for offences relating to handling stolen goods procured in freight crime following an operation carried out by lead police force Merseyside and with assistance from Lancashire and Cheshire Police.

Prison sentences were given to Francis Oakford 4 years 6 months, Lee Jones 4 years, Stephen Roberts 3 years 6 months, Barry Nelson 3 years 8 months, Anthony Welsh 2 years, Stephen Yates failed to appear, Graham Bathurst 12 months, Jazz Ahmed 12 months suspended for two years, John Sharkey 12 months suspended for 2 years, David Cotton cautioned, James Doyle adjourned pending the production of a financial circumstances report.

Judge David Aubrey highlighted the impact that the group had on the freight industry in his summing up and referred to an impact assessment provided by the prosecution that used data produced by TruckPol. Since this team were stealing goods from across the UK the impact of their activities could be felt across the country.

TruckPol is in a unique position which enables it to highlight the impact of freight crime across police force and ACPO regional borders. Being able to assist the prosecution in this case, highlights the value that TruckPol adds to UK Policing.

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Appendix

Theft from Vehicle

Goods stolen from an LGV or from a semi-trailer. This applies only to lorry loads and not to personal items belonging to the driver such as wallets and mobile telephones

Theft of Vehicle

Theft of an LGV over 7.7 tonnes.

Deception

Goods stolen typically through impersonation or forged papers allowing offenders to take possession of goods.

Hijack

The use of force or threats of force to steal property.

Warehouse

Goods stolen using an LGV from company premises, usually where goods are loaded onto an LGV by offenders before being stolen.

Theft (other)

The theft of a semi trailer but not of a cab unit.

Att. Theft

Attempts to steal property or evidence of attempt to steal from an LGV.