



TRUCKPOL QUARTERLY REPORT October – December 2007

Welcome to the TruckPol quarterly report for the period October to December 2007. This report is not protectively marked and may be distributed freely without further reference to the originators.

Introduction

From January 2007 TruckPol became part of the ACPO Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service, based at Ryton on Dunsmore, Warwickshire, although its role remains as before. In this way it is able to deliver a national perspective in its strategic overview of road freight criminality whilst at the same time providing a national database of stolen freight. TruckPol is still jointly funded with private sector sponsorship contributions and a Home Office matched fund grant.

This document relies on data extracted from the databases maintained by TruckPol. It should be noted at the outset that the database on which this report is based is not a definitive list of all road freight crime as not all crime is reported to police and not all police forces report all crime to TruckPol. Additionally, information is received every day; data received late will appear in the annual report at the end of 2007 but may have been omitted from this report. Figures in this report may also therefore be at variance with data held by individual forces.

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 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**.

	Recorded Value Oct to Dec 2007		
	£ Sterling	€ Euro	\$ US Dollar
Vehicle Value	10,050,200	13,479,670	19,807,887
Load Value	10,957,548	14,696,636	21,596,174
Combined Value	21,007,748	28,175,861	41,404,062

The average loss per incident is **£29,714**

Road Freight Crime by Incident Type

Incident Type	No. of incidents (Apr - Jun 2007)	No. of incidents (Jul - Sep 2007)	No. of incidents (Oct - Dec 2007)
Hijack	21	19	22
Theft of vehicle	301	356	350
Theft from vehicle	124	152	217
Theft (other)	50	19	56
Attempted Theft	43	21	52
Deception	5	7	9
Warehouse	12	2	6
Miscellaneous	0	0	0
Total	556	576	712

An explanation of Incident Type categories can be found at Appendix A

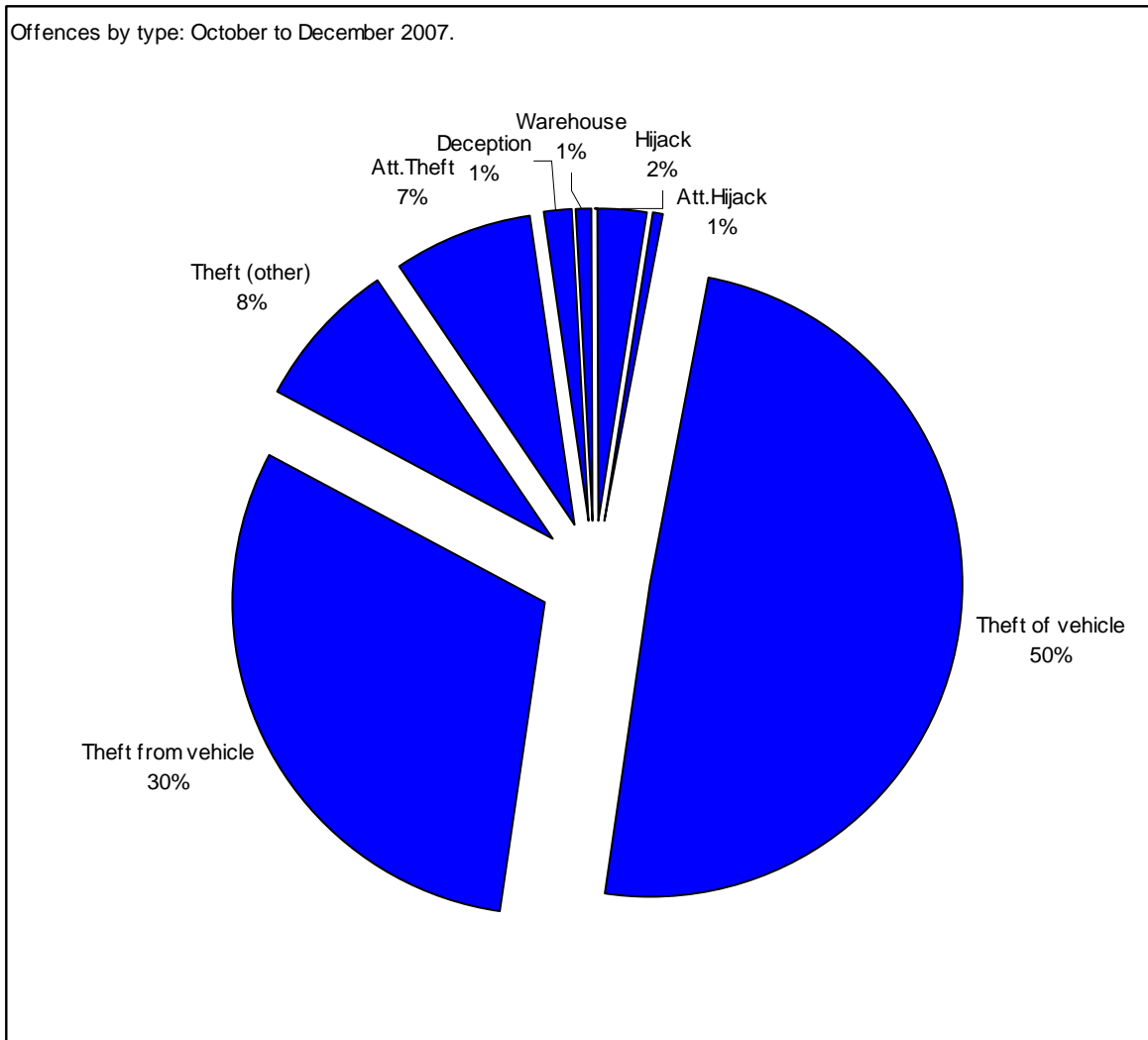


Fig. 1

Road Freight Crime by Property 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

OFFENCE BY PROPERTY TYPE

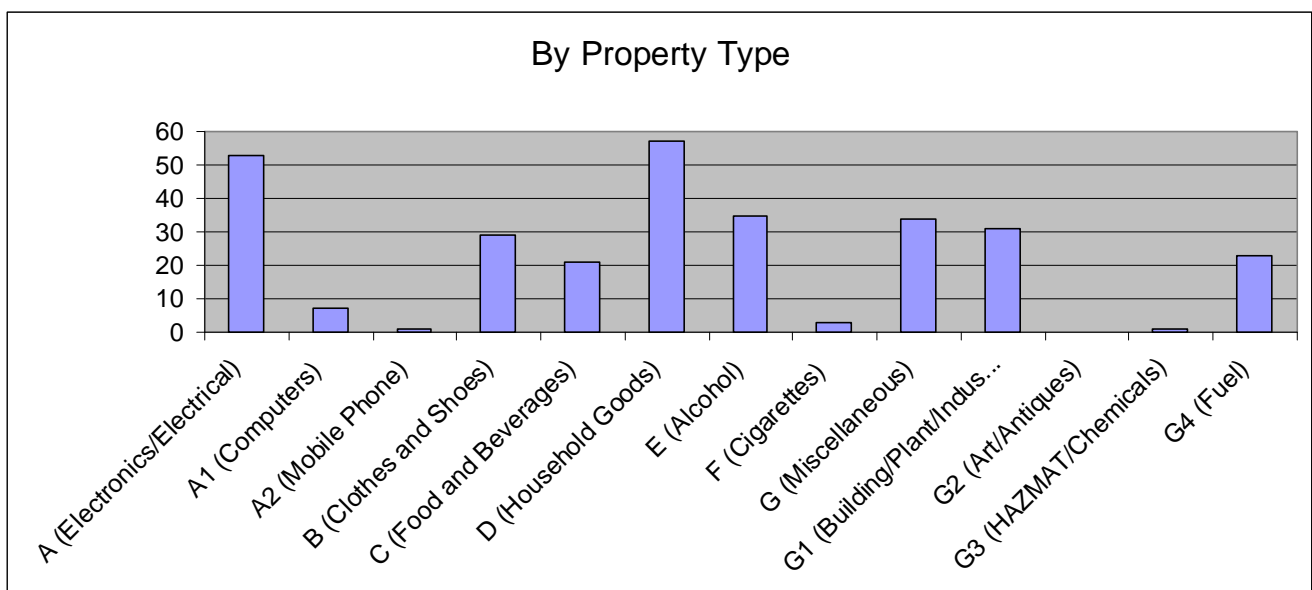


Fig. 2

Crime Reports by Police Force Area

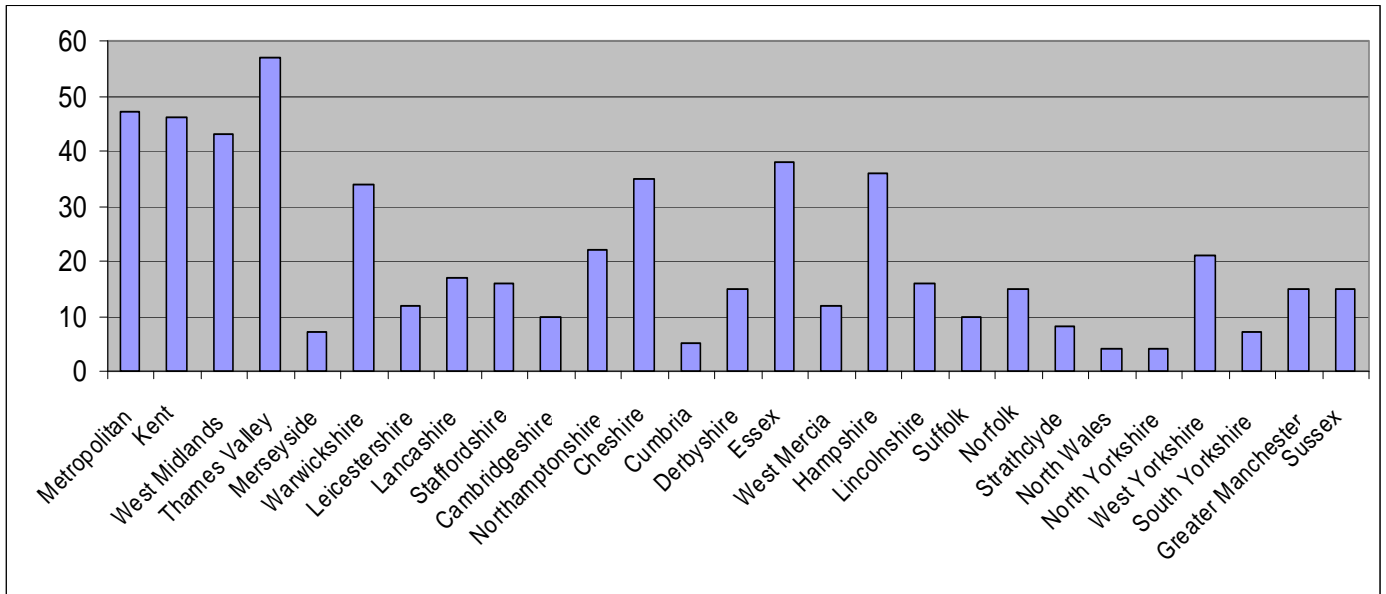


Fig. 3

Mapping by Incident Type

The third party who produces the TruckPol crime risk maps and incident type maps has been unable to deliver them for this quarter. We are actively looking at other ways to present you the information in future reports.

Emerging Trends

Over the past three months we have seen certain areas being targeted frequently. Areas in Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire on the M3 and on the A34 between Bicester to Winchester have seen numerous offences. These offences are generally limited to curtain sided crimes although one offence on the A34 was a hijack.

November was a peak period for hijacking offences. Of the **13** Hijacks **4** were in the West Midlands and **2** reported by Thames Valley Police. Metal thefts are common in the West Midlands and hijacking is frequently employed as a method by offenders as vehicles prove an easy target. Trans-shipping to another vehicle frequently occurs or at least the goods are removed from the vehicle. This is clear, as hijacked cabs and trailers are almost always recovered, without their loads, and within 24 - 72 hours of the offence being reported.

In November £250,000 of goods were in a vehicle that was hijacked in Oxfordshire, it appears that the trans-shipping of these goods was interrupted after the offenders saw a passing patrol car in an isolated area on Merseyside. The full value was recorded on our data sheet; hence the value of the actual loss may come down as will November's figures accordingly. This notwithstanding, **£523,720** of goods was taken in hijacks in **November** while in **October** the figure was **£556,000**. Unsurprisingly the prospect of obtaining a valuable cargo is leading to desperate criminals using weapons to intimidate drivers.

On the subject of hijacks, the BBC Midlands today program showed an interview with the victim of a kidnaping in Warwickshire back in October. The driver, who appeared anonymously, stated that he has been unable to return to work as a result of his ordeal.

From the above chart it is clear that electrical goods are at high risk. Of the thefts in this category, twenty-three thefts were of televisions; frequently LCD televisions. Many of these incidents occur in lay-bys although

it is quite common that the theft occurs close to the distribution centre to which the delivery was to have been made: It is clear that there is a security gap here that needs to be addressed, as often it is warehouse staff that turn vehicles away who arrive early, thus further exposing the risk to driver and cargo.

A series of elaborate deceptions have taken place during the last three months of the year. It appears that well organised groups have been able to obtain, through consensual means, entire lorry loads from ports or distribution centres. Although the precise means by which these thefts have been carried out is unclear, bogus haulage firms have in the past been responsible for thefts through a use of either insider knowledge or by going as far as raising a false order in the name of a known consignee.

The number of offences in the final quarter of 2007 was clearly higher than in the first three quarters of the year. This is largely due to an increase in the number of thefts from vehicles, typically in the form of a 'jump up'. The peak period for these offences actually started in September, as indeed the peak period for distributors in retail, begins at this time.

Conclusion

The final quarter of 2007 was the busiest of the year with 712 crimes reported to TruckPol, compared with 577 in Quarter 3; 556 in Quarter 2 and 440 in Quarter 1. This is a 22.9% increase in crimes from Q3 to Q4 2007.

Thefts from HGV's (mainly curtain slashings) increased by 47.2%, when compared to Quarter 3.

Theft Others' (mainly thefts of semi-trailers) have increased by 147%, when compared to Quarter 3.

**The above increases are partly due to our policy of gleaning more crime information from UK Police Forces.*

Where Were the Hotspots?

West Midlands

9 thefts of HGV carrying metal loads occurred in this area with 4 of those being hijacks. Most hijack offences were committed either early evening or early morning between 04.00 – 06.00hrs.

Thames Valley Police Area

The many lay bys on the A34 near Bicester and the M40 have been mentioned in our monthly alerts to sponsors as a high crime area. Typically they are theft from/curtain slash type offences although there was a hijack offence in November of a HGV carrying power tools. Offenders took the lorry to Merseyside and the driver was also dumped nearby.

Thames Valley Police have stepped up patrols along the main arterial routes but drivers are strongly advised to avoid 'wild parking' in this area.

Northamptonshire

Curtain slash offences are occurring on the main arterial routes close to the M1 and also on the A14. There have also been several 'round the corner' type diversion/deception offences targeting Lorries arriving at distribution centres in and around the Brackmills industrial estates. HGV's are also being targeted after arriving early for delivery slots but being turned away until a later time/date. Alcohol and electrical goods are the main loads being targeted.

Other notable high risk areas are the A14 in Cambridgeshire; and the A1 in the East Midlands. Mainly being effected by theft from Trailers/curtain slash offences. Again 'wild parking' in lay-bys is fuelling the problem.

Police Activity

West Midlands Police ran their Operation MISELTOE throughout December on the motorway system and it's associated 'A' roads, including the Motorway Service areas. They report that they arrested 8 offenders for HGV crime. Offenders were from the midlands region as well as Merseyside.

FOUR Liverpool men face a total of 24 years in prison for their part in a £85,000 cognac raid near Winchester, two years ago.

Sentencing at Winchester Crown Court today (December 6), Judge Patrick Hooton handed out jail terms to all four, after they had earlier admitted being involved in the crime.

Dean Swanson, 24, of Mottram Close, Kirkby, and Michael Slinger, 43, of Orchards Farm, Thornton, both received six-year jail terms, while Barry Adams, 29, of Northway, Maghull, got five and a half years, after all admitted theft charges. Swanson was also charged with possessing a class A drug with intent to supply. Meanwhile, John Moorcroft, 29, was imprisoned for seven years after he pleaded guilty to robbery charges.

Richard Onslow, prosecuting, said the charges related to an incident at Sutton Scotney services on the A34 early on November 29, 2005, when three balaclava-clad men smashed their way into the cab of a French lorry driver, Patrick Pledron.

Mr Pledron was kidnapped and his consignment of Courvoisier cognac - which was en-route from France to Leicester - stolen. The Frenchman was driven about 10km north of the service area before being bundled into the back of a Ford transit van. He was released around 7am, after being held for five hours at the Bradley Wood underpass of the A34.

The stolen lorry was discovered later the same morning in Warrington, Cheshire, minus its load, following a collision with a van. Police raided a nearby warehouse in early December and found barcodes and packaging associated with the brandy.

Mr Onslow added the men had come down from the north to scout for targets in the Hampshire, Berkshire and Dorset areas, two days before the incident near Winchester.

David Lederman QC, mitigating for Slinger, said his client was just the link between the two teams involved in the theft and that there was no evidence linking him to the distribution of the goods. He added: "This is not the high, high level crime. It's not Premier League, its more Championship."

The judge was told Adams was not involved in the kidnapping of Mr Pledron, while it Swanson's first offence. It was also mentioned that Moorcroft's young family and business had suffered since he had been in custody.

Judge Hooton, in sentencing, said that although the robbery was not in the top league of offending' it was nevertheless highly planned and of high value'.

North Yorkshire Police arrested three Merseyside offenders for their part in a violent hijack back in October 2007. Enquiries are continuing.

Essex Police have also today (8/11/07) arrested a known handler of stolen freight crime property with links to the above offenders and recovered a significant amount of suspected stolen goods from freight crime around the UK.

Other News

The TruckPol crime prevention semi-trailer has been utilised by several UK Police Forces in the fight against freight crime.

It has been in Warwickshire, Thames Valley and Nottingham Police areas in the last few months and is due in Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Hampshire soon.

We remain very grateful for the continued support of our industry supporters and would encourage any readers who might be thinking about joining this unique partnership, which has proved so beneficial to both police and industry, to contact TruckPol. These sponsors have enabled TruckPol to supply you with trends and information over the years, a service for which you have not been charged. Please consider thanking them by supporting us! Details on subscription/sponsorship/partnership are available from Stacy Taylor below.

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## Appendix A

Road Freight Crime is recorded in the following categories:

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Hijack</b>           | occasions where force or violence is used or threatened against a driver and the vehicle is stolen with/without the load. This includes theft by ROBBERY            |
| <b>Attempted Hijack</b> | attempts to carry out the above                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Theft of</b>         | where an unattended vehicle and/or load/trailer are stolen                                                                                                          |
| <b>Theft from</b>       | thefts of load from stationary vehicles e.g. Curtain slash or delivery vehicle left unlocked/unattended                                                             |
| <b>Theft (other)</b>    | Thefts of trailers and other miscellaneous offences not within the above categories                                                                                 |
| <b>Attempted Theft</b>  | relates to attempts to steal the vehicle and/or load but where suspects are unable due to complete the theft                                                        |
| <b>Deception</b>        | relates to deceptions where drivers/companies are deceived into delivering elsewhere than to the intended destination. (Commonly referred to as 'Round the Corner') |
| <b>Warehouse</b>        | burglaries of commercial premises where LGV is used to facilitate offence                                                                                           |
| <b>Other</b>            | Miscellaneous notifications that fall outside the above categories                                                                                                  |