



INTERPOL

## FACT SHEET

# Vehicle crime

Vehicle crime is a highly organized criminal activity, affecting all regions of the world. In most cases, it is linked to other organized crime operations, ranging from drug trafficking and arms dealing to international terrorism. While vehicles are rarely stolen for personal uses, they are frequently trafficked for gaining the financial and logistical means to finance other criminal activities. Therefore, it is safe to say that in any every sophisticated organized crime operation, vehicle crime plays a significant role.

### ► GLOBAL VEHICLE SEARCH DATABASE

The INTERPOL General Secretariat manages the Automated Search Facility-Stolen Motor Vehicles (ASF-SMV) database to support police in its 192 member countries in the fight against international vehicle theft and trafficking.

At the end of 2017, the database held more than 7.1 million records of reported stolen vehicles from 128 countries. A total of 162 countries use the database regularly, conducting more than 256 million searches in 2017. About 118,000 of these searches resulted in a positive hit. The expansion of access to INTERPOL's tools to more locations in member countries has resulted in greater usage of the ASF-SMV database.

### ► VEHICLE CRIME PROJECTS

- **Project INVEX** brings together the car manufacturing industry and INTERPOL member countries to establish new means for detecting stolen motor vehicles and to increase the quality of the data in the ASF-SMV database. Initiated by INTERPOL's National Central Bureau in Germany in 2009, the project currently involves 16 countries as well as car manufacturers Audi, BMW, Porsche and Volkswagen and their sub-brands.

Since its inception, INVEX has contributed to the detection of stolen cars and components in about 70 member countries, leading to more than 500 seizures and various follow-up investigations. In 2018, INVEX will expand to even more countries as the project continues to evolve.

- **Project Formatrain** brings together vehicle experts from law enforcement agencies and private entities to create standardized training material to support international investigations of vehicle theft. It is designed to assist police officers with information on vehicle and document identification, investigative strategies, techniques and tools, databases, and legal preconditions. At the end of 2017, more than 30 regional training courses had been conducted, most of them directly followed by field operations.

Recognizing the need for training in specific areas of vehicle crime, INTERPOL has recently begun to offer specialized training in the identification of heavy equipment and construction machines. For these activities, the support of external parties with expertise in the area is frequently sought.

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### ► OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

The **INTERPOL Task Force on Stolen Motor Vehicles** is supported by 11 member countries and brings together police officers as well as private investigators, who are all experts in the field of vehicle crime investigations. The task force is deployed at the request of a member country to provide support for major vehicle operations, typically at border crossings or sea ports. Since 2009, it has supported more than 20 operations around the world.

Through its activities, the task force enhances the effectiveness of operations by providing access to an increased number of identification and search tools as well as expertise. It also serves as a networking platform for vehicle crime experts to share skills and expertise internationally.

### ► INFORMATION PLATFORM

INTERPOL maintains an information platform on issues related to vehicle crime which contains analytical documents on global vehicle crime as well as an extensive resource section. Identification guides and training material are also available to authorized users.



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#### ► CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact us via our web site. For matters relating to specific crime cases, please contact your local police or the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in your country.

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