NEW YORK STATE

Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Board

2014 Annual Report

Issued September 2015

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I. Introduction

The impact of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud on insurance rates in New York State and across the country cannot be understated. These crimes are highly sophisticated and cost law-abiding motor vehicle owners and insurance policy holders hundreds of millions of dollars in increased business expenses and higher insurance rates annually.

Created in 1994 by state Executive Law Article 36-A, the *New York Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Demonstration Program* (MVTIFP) is designed to reduce the overall cost of motor vehicle insurance in the state by targeting theft and fraud. A 12-member *Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board* (board), including representatives of law enforcement, consumers of motor vehicle insurance, insurance carriers and relevant state agency representatives selected by the Governor and the Legislature, is responsible for overseeing the program. The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services provides staff support to the board and the program.

This annual report details the activities of the board and the program and is published as required under Executive Law §846-1(3)(h).

The program is funded by a statutorily required fee assessed on each motor vehicle insurance policy issued in New York State. The 2014-15 state budget appropriated $3.7 million for the program, which provided grants to combat theft and fraud to law enforcement agencies and other entities during the calendar year 2014.

A. Motor Vehicle Theft

Overall, great strides have been made in reducing motor vehicle theft in New York. From 1997 through 2014, reported thefts were down 80.3 percent. In 2014 however, there were 15,680 motor vehicles stolen in New York State, representing a slight increase over the previous year.
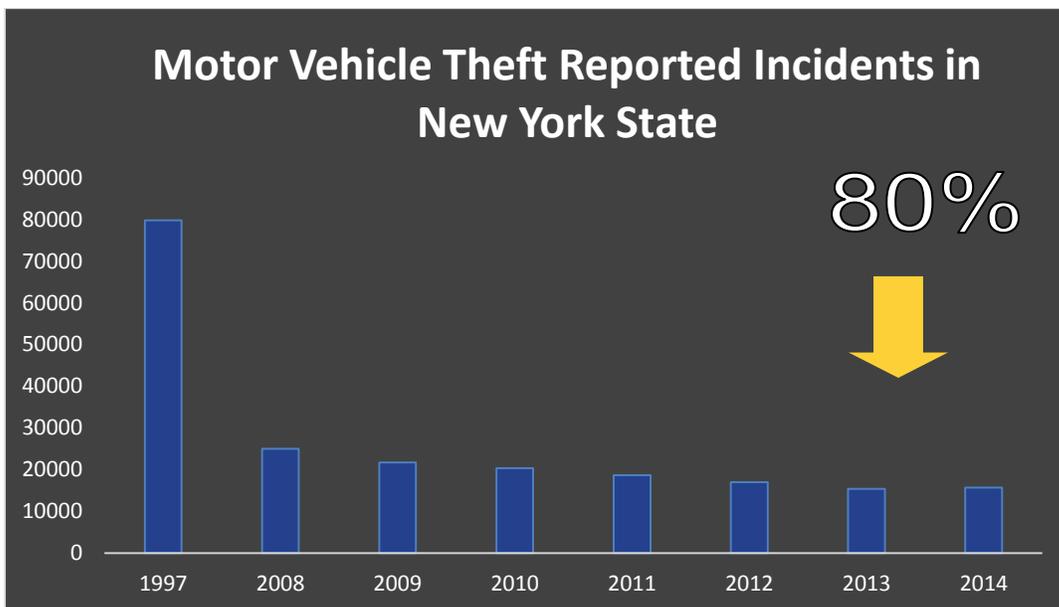
While a preponderance of motor vehicle theft continues to occur in the New York City region, six non-New York City counties – Erie, Monroe, Nassau, Onondaga, Suffolk and Westchester – rank among the top 10 counties for reported motor vehicle thefts. Of the top 10 counties, seven of them – Bronx, Erie, Kings, Monroe, New York, Queens and Suffolk – experienced increases in incidents of motor vehicle theft in 2014, reversing a prolonged decline in annual theft reports.

Motor Vehicle Theft 2013 vs. 2014 Top Ten Counties			
County	2013	2014	% Change
Kings	2,606	2,655	.019
Queens	2,411	2,605	8.0
Bronx	1,449	1,474	.017
Erie	1,256	1,302	3.7
Suffolk	1,176	1,230	4.6
Monroe	886	974	10.0
Nassau	888	865	(2.6)
New York	742	770	3.7
Onondaga	542	500	(8.0)
Westchester	613	472	(23)

B. Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud

The New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) Insurance Fraud Bureau has seen an alarming increase in the number of reports of suspected insurance fraud from insurers across the state. Overall reports of motor vehicle insurance fraud have increased 16 percent over a seven-year period, from 17,185 in 2008 to 19,912 in 2014. No-fault insurance fraud reports also rose during this time period, from 12,339 in 2008 to 15,439 in 2014, accounting for nearly a 25 percent increase in the number of suspected incidents of no-fault motor vehicle insurance fraud.

Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud
Suspected Incidence in New York State

Year	All Fraud	No-Fault
2008	17,185	12,339
2009	18,368	13,433
2010	18,108	12,807
2011	17,121	11,974
2012	18,677	13,944
2013	17,576	13,198
2014	19,912	15,439
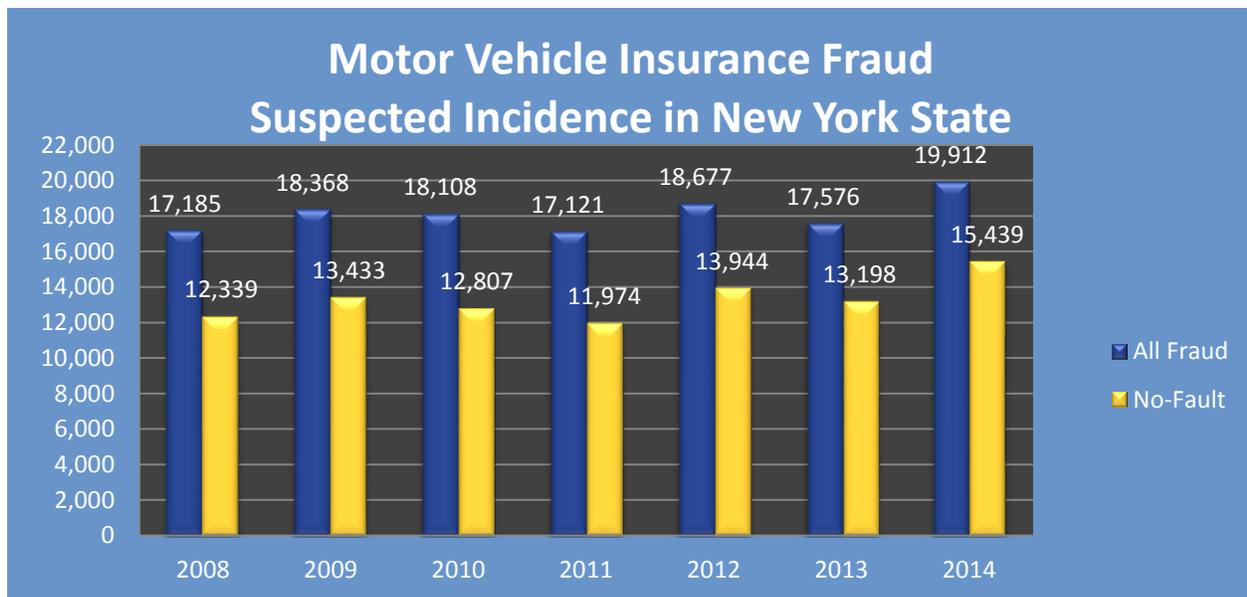
While recent annual reports of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud remain below historic highs, they have consistently exceeded 2008 levels, warranting a continued focus on reducing the incidence of these offenses.

II. Statewide Statistics

New York State drivers are statutorily required to have automobile insurance that includes coverage for:

- **No-Fault Personal Injury Protection:** To pay medical expenses, lost earnings and other reasonable and necessary expenses for a driver or passenger injured in, or a pedestrian injured by, their vehicle;

- **Liability:** To protect against the harm their vehicle, or any vehicle they drive with the owner's permission, might do to other people and their property; and

- **Uninsured Motorists:** To protect against the injuries that they, their family or their passengers might suffer in a hit-and-run accident or in an accident with an uninsured vehicle.

According to the DFS statistics, in 2014 the total of all suspected insurance fraud reports for all types of insurance coverage was 24,758, representing an increase of approximately 9 percent from 2013. Of the suspected fraud reports received, 15,439 involved no-fault motor vehicle insurance fraud, accounting for 62 percent of the total insurance fraud reports documented.

Insurance carriers reported 19,912 incidents of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud to the DFS Insurance Frauds Bureau in 2014, including motor vehicle theft, motor vehicle arson, larceny from motor vehicles, motor vehicle vandalism, motor vehicle collision damage, falsified motor vehicle invoices and fraudulent motor vehicle insurance cards. Based on this data, no-fault insurance fraud accounts for approximately 78 percent of all reported suspected incidents of motor vehicle insurance fraud reported in 2014.

2014 Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Suspected Incidence in New York State
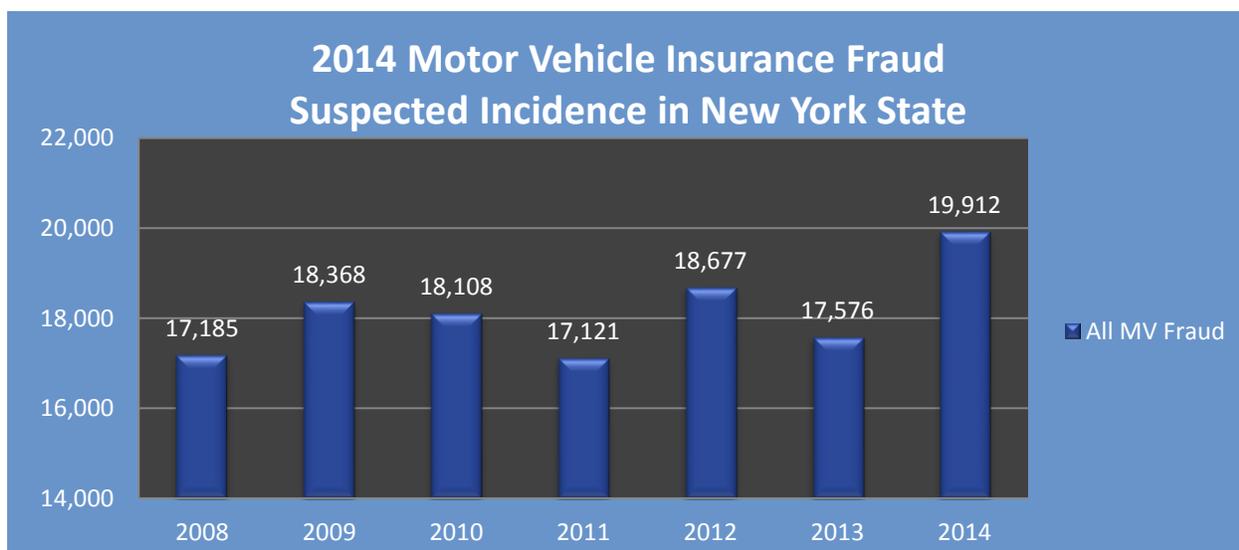
2014 Motor Vehicle No-Fault Insurance Fraud Suspected Incidence in New York State

Year	No-Fault
2008	12,339
2009	13,433
2010	12,807
2011	11,974
2012	13,944
2013	13,198
2014	15,439
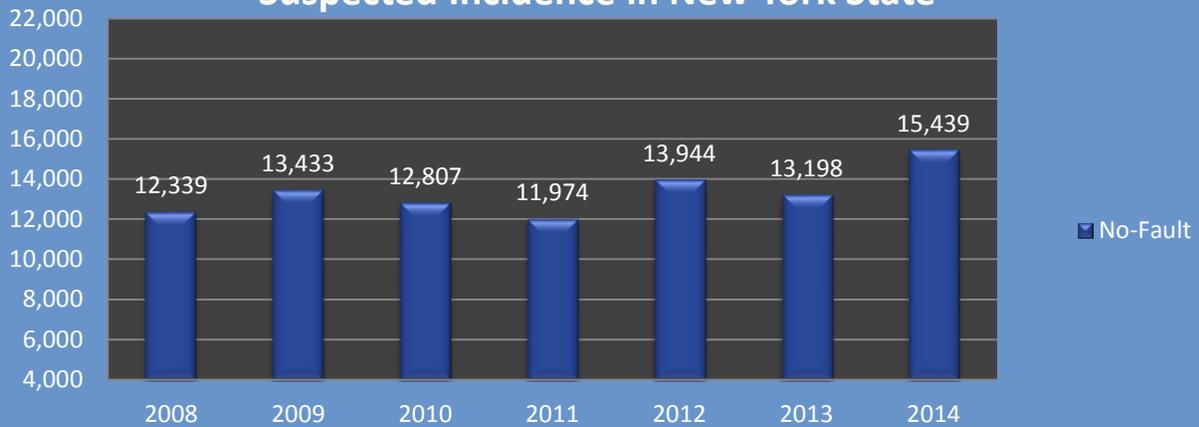
III. Program Goals

The goals of the MVTIFP program are to provide an integrated means to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud by developing and providing funding for demonstration programs that include education on theft and fraud prevention, and the establishment and maintenance of specialized law enforcement units to combat motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Eligible applicants include local law enforcement agencies and not-for-profit organizations that administer one or more motor vehicle theft or insurance fraud prevention or driver safety programs conforming to a plan approved by the board.

As required by Executive Law Article 36-A, statewide Motor Vehicle Theft and Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Plans of Operation are updated annually upon the recommendations of the board. These separate plans of operation include, but are not limited to: assessments of the scope of the respective problems of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud, including a regional analysis of the incidence of motor vehicle theft and/or motor vehicle insurance fraud and related activities; and analyses of various methods of combating the problems associated with motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

Both plans of operation are available on the DCJS website (www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ofpa/mvtifpmain.htm) and provide guidance on the types of projects that will be supported with MVTIFP program funding. Following the recommended format for the statewide plan, this annual report provides information on the dimensions of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud in two separate sections.

IV. Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board

The Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention program is administered by a 12-member board chaired by the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) commissioner, or his or her designee. All board members are appointed by the Governor: three recommended by the speaker of the state Assembly; three by the temporary president of the state Senate; and the remaining five by the Governor. The members, who are not considered public officials, serve four-year terms. The board is to be representative of consumers of motor vehicle insurance, motor vehicle insurance companies, law enforcement agencies and the judicial system. The board must meet a minimum of four times a year.

The board is charged with developing and recommending coordinated plans of operation that provide for the statewide reduction of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Elements of the plans must include:

1. Assessments of the magnitude and scope of the problems, including an analysis of theft and fraud by region;
2. Methods for combating the problems; and
3. Development of a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process to fund local programs to combat both problems.

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Board, Executive Law Article 36-Aauthorizes the DCJS commissioner to:

1. Execute contracts;
2. Accept grants and other contributions;
3. Make grants through an RFP process;
4. Appoint employees and affix compensation;
5. Request assistance and information from the New York State Police, police departments throughout the state, State Department of Financial Services, State Department of Motor Vehicles, State Office of Court Administration, or any New York state agency or from any insurer;
6. Assist municipalities in the development of local programs;
7. Advise and assist the Superintendent of Insurance pursuant to Insurance Law §2348. (This section now requires that rate filings reflect insurers' savings resulting from the program); and,
8. Annually submit to the governor and chairs of Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees a report on the Board's activities, activities of grant recipients and the results or impact of those activities.

A. Board Activity

Board meetings were conducted on March 25, 2014; July 30, 2014; October 16, 2014; and December 16, 2014.

B. Programs Funded by the Board

New York City Agencies

Applicant	Award
Bronx County District Attorney	$273,000
Kings County District Attorney	$210,900
New York County District Attorney	$250,900
Queens County District Attorney	$556,000
Richmond County District Attorney	$76,700
New York City PD – Auto Crime Unit	$180,000
New York City PD – FCIS	$97,000
Fire Department of New York City	$104,000

New York City Suburbs Agencies

Applicant	Award
Nassau County District Attorney	$128,500
Nassau County Police Department	$126,500
Suffolk County District Attorney	$312,500
Suffolk County Police Department	$143,000
Westchester County District Attorney	$316,000
Yonkers City Police Department	$134,000

Capital Region/Hudson Valley

Applicant	Award
Albany City Police Department	$36,000
Albany County District Attorney	$69,000

Western Region

Applicant	Award
Buffalo City Police Department	$97,700
Cheektowaga Town Police Department	$47,000
Erie County District Attorney	$121,500
Monroe County District Attorney	$127,000
Monroe County Sheriff Office	$31,000
Rochester City Police Department	$41,500
Niagara County District Attorney	$114,000
Niagara County Sheriff Department	$21,000
Niagara Falls City Police Department	$33,500

Statewide

Applicant	Award
New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association	$62,000
New York Prosecutor Training Institute	$38,800

V. 2014 Grant Program Descriptions

New York City Region

Bronx County District Attorney's Office
Kings County District Attorney's Office
New York County District Attorney's Office
Queens County District Attorney's Office
Richmond County District Attorney's Office
New York City Police Department Auto Crime Division and Fraudulent
Collision investigation Squad
Fire Department of New York

Bronx District Attorney's Office

The Bronx District Attorney's Office Anti-Auto Theft Unit, in collaboration with individual New York Police Department precincts, has investigated both auto crime and insurance fraud matters since 1995, the first year it received grant funding. The Bronx Anti-Auto Theft program receives a grant of $273,000 which pays for the partial salaries of five assistant district attorneys and six investigators. This grant is designed to increase the number of successful prosecutions of defendants charged with grand larceny of a motor vehicle, criminal possession of stolen property, motor vehicle fraud, auto stripping and/or unauthorized use of a vehicle.

MVTIF Activity in 2014

The Bronx District Attorney's Office owns five bait cars used to enhance undercover operations. Working jointly with the precincts experiencing an increase in auto theft, the bait cars are positioned in high crime areas with plainclothes police officers stationed nearby. In 2014 the office worked with Bronx police precincts to conduct bait car operations using the two license plate readers in its possession. In 2014, joint operations between the NYPD and the district attorney's Auto Crime Unit led to the recovery of 116 vehicles valued at approximately $2,210,355.

Detective investigators and assistant district attorneys at the Bronx District Attorney's Office have developed and maintain relationships and communications with collaborating partners in the fields of auto theft and insurance fraud. Partner agencies that investigators and prosecutors conferred with in 2014 are the National Insurance Crime Bureau, the New York City Auto Crime Squad, Auto Larceny Unit and NYPD precinct commands, adjacent and remote local police commands, the New York State Police, the New York State Department of Financial Services, New York State and out of state prosecutors' offices, the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, and Special Investigations Units of major motor vehicle insurance carriers.

The Bronx District Attorney's Office dedicated five assistant district attorneys and six detectives to the investigation and prosecution of auto theft and insurance fraud cases as part of this project.

In one instance, a Bronx motorcyclist whose 2008 Honda motorcycle was outfitted with a LoJack tracking unit, secured the bike in a U-Haul storage locker equipped with surveillance video. This owner reported the bike stolen and filed an insurance claim. Detectives from the NYPD Auto Crime Unit activated the bike's LoJack and located the bike secured in the storage unit. By watching the surveillance video of the storage unit, detectives determined that the owner had placed the bike in the unit and did not remove it before the purported theft. A search warrant revealed the motorcycle inside

the unit. Upon his arrest, the bike owner, in a stroke of understatement, told the police, "I did something stupid." He pleaded guilty to fourth-degree insurance fraud on January 17, 2014.

In another case, a man called 911 on March 6, 2013 and subsequently filed a written report with the New York City Police Department indicating his 2009 Jeep Wrangler had been stolen from where he parked and locked it the previous night. He and his wife filed a claim for the total loss. In recorded interviews, they insisted they had been together in the car on March 5. The Jeep was seized by Pennsylvania State Police following a search on February 21, 2013, meaning the vehicle was still in custody when the claim was submitted. The man pleaded guilty to fourth-degree insurance fraud on July 17, 2014, while his wife admitted to a lesser charge.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	11	Indictments	61
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	96	Misdemeanor Convictions	170
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	335	Felony Convictions	42
Number of MVT Cases Taken to	2	Number of MVT Cases Plea	76

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	5	Indictments	3
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	0
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	7	Felony Convictions	3
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to	3	Number of MVIF Cases Plea	6
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$ 0	

Kings County District Attorney's Office

The Kings County (Brooklyn) District Attorney's Office received a $210,900 grant. This pays for nine part-time assistant district attorneys, two part-time supervisors and one part-time paralegal, in addition to necessary training on advances in the field. In order to more efficiently prosecute crimes within the county, the district attorney's office implemented a five zone program dividing Kings County's 23 police precincts into five trial zones. This allows each zone staff to establish communications with precinct commanders and community leaders, while also establishing priorities for reducing criminal activity. The five-zone program allows staff to identify, investigate and prosecute perpetrators of motor vehicle theft, insurance fraud and no-fault fraud.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The district attorney's office continues to use the five-zone program, which has proven highly effective in reducing theft and fraud-related crimes. In order to achieve greater impact, the district attorney's office implemented a three-pronged approach to fight motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The first focuses resources on the prosecution of street level motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The second requires the district attorney's office to investigate all of the motor vehicle and insurance fraud crimes occurring in any of the zones. The third prong focuses on increasing the number of prosecutions for violations of the New York State Organized Crime Control Act.

The district attorney also partnered with the NYPD Auto Crimes Division and Fraudulent Accident Investigations Squad to reduce the incidence of stolen rims, van thefts, fraudulent enhanced damage claims, and fraudulent claims by pedestrians purportedly struck by cars. There are 11 assistant district attorneys dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases and several non-grant funded assistant district attorneys to assist on cases as needed.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	6	Indictments	82
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	453	Misdemeanor Convictions	189
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	402	Felony Convictions	40
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	57	Number of MVT Cases Plea	1,108

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	1	Indictments	4
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	3	Misdemeanor Convictions	3
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	15	Felony Convictions	1
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	1	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	28
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$1,050	

New York County District Attorney's Office

The New York County (Manhattan) District Attorney's Office received a $250,900 grant, which funds two part-time assistant district attorneys, two part-time investigative analysts, a part-time investigator and a part-time paralegal. This bolsters the district attorney's ability to investigate and prosecute crimes such as motor vehicle theft, unlicensed operation of motor vehicles, automobile-part theft rings, insurance fraud and lost wage fraud associated with medical mills, and to combat the production, possession, and use of counterfeit auto insurance and motor vehicle related documents. The program is overseen by the bureau chief of the Financial Frauds Bureau – formerly the Special Prosecutions Bureau – with investigation and prosecution assistance from assistant district attorneys and support staff in the Rackets Bureau, Major Economic Crimes Bureau and Trial Division.

MVTIF Activity in 2014

The Financial Frauds Bureau indicted 24 individuals for their involvement in a sophisticated Department of Motor Vehicle test cheating ring. The perpetrators paid other individuals to fraudulently provide them with answers to the written tests for commercial licenses. All 24 pleaded guilty, while an additional 10 individuals previously arrested in connection with the case also pleaded guilty.

Assistant district attorneys in the Rackets Bureau and detectives from the New York City Police Department's Auto Crime Division are investigating a group of individuals suspected of trafficking stolen auto parts in New York City. Specifically, the ring is targeting the catalytic converter--a vehicle emissions control device that converts toxic pollutants in exhaust gas to nontoxic emissions. Catalytic converters contain certain precious metals, including platinum, palladium and rhodium, all of which can be re-sold at a high premium. The primary objective of the investigation is to identify all of the participants in the scheme and the locations where the proceeds and other evidence of the schemes are stored.

Prosecutors and analysts in the Major Economic Crimes Bureau and the Rackets Bureau continue to investigate "medical mills," corrupt clinics controlled in many cases by non-physicians that exist solely to fraudulently bill insurance carriers for unnecessary treatment of non-existent injuries which occurred from minor or, in some cases, staged automobile accidents.

The Trial Division of the district attorney's office prosecutes numerous defendants in stand-alone cases where they are charged with crimes pertaining to motor vehicle and insurance fraud. Trial division assistants handled dozens of fraudulent document cases, many arising from routine car stops by NYPD patrol officers. Others were arrested while driving stolen cars or vehicles they were not authorized to use while committing credit card fraud, identity theft, and other offences. In several cases, car stops led to the recovery of forged documents such as licenses, insurance cards, vehicle registrations, titles, sales receipts, inspection stickers, vehicle identification number plates, license plates, NYPD parking plaques, Department of Transportation parking plaques, credit cards, skimming devices, and checks. Many of the false documents--particularly driver's licenses--were used to commit identity theft and other financial frauds.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	80
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	230	Misdemeanor Convictions	149
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	184	Felony Convictions	122
Number of MVT Cases Taken to	3	Number of MVT Cases Plea	268

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	42
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	207	Misdemeanor Convictions	138
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	95	Felony Convictions	103
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea	241
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$ not available	

Queens County District Attorney's Office

The Queens County District Attorney's Office received a $556,000 grant that pays for three full-time assistant district attorneys, two part-time assistants and three full-time investigators assigned to the Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit. This unit is comprised of attorneys, investigators and paralegals with special expertise in the area of auto theft and insurance fraud. The unit focuses on long-term investigations and the handling of specially selected cases for trial that target organized auto theft and insurance fraud activity. A major emphasis is placed on building enterprise corruption cases to ensure that the foundations of criminal activity are uprooted and to obtain the maximum sentencing possible.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

In 2014, the district attorney continued its comprehensive approach to combating auto crimes and insurance fraud through long-term investigative activity and targeting cases for specialized handling with stiff dispositions and sentencing. The district attorney's Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit handled 75 new cases – 64 motor vehicle theft-related and 11 insurance fraud-related – resulting in 38 convictions. Among these, 24 were felony convictions, with 22 for motor vehicle theft-related crimes and two related to insurance fraud. Excluding the cases of the Specialized Auto Crime

and Insurance Fraud Unit, there were 944 new MVTIF cases: 939 motor vehicle theft-related and five insurance fraud-related. These resulted in 623 convictions, including 110 felony pleas. The following are examples of successful investigations and prosecutorial efforts in both the auto crime and insurance fraud areas in 2014.

- In December 2014, a Queens man was indicted for selling stolen vehicles, weapons and marijuana over the Internet. He advertised stolen auto parts for sale on Craigslist.com and had set up meetings with buyers dating back to October 2012. He then progressed into selling whole vehicles – many stolen from Queens and Long Island. In total, the stolen vehicles and the auto parts were valued at approximately $500,000. Charges are pending.

- A Bronx man was sentenced to serve up to four years in prison after admitting to a scheme in which he illegally obtained vehicles by enrolling online in the Hertz Gold Plus Rewards program using different aliases and false identification. Once enrolled in the program, he reserved high-end luxury vehicles at Hertz offices at New York City's two major airports, picked up the vehicles and never returned them.

- A Flushing, Queens physician was charged with defrauding six insurance companies out of more than $25,000 by billing for medical services he never provided. Charges are pending.

- A Georgia man was charged with allegedly stealing more than two dozen catalytic converters from trucks parked overnight at five commercial locations in Queens and the Bronx, as well as from three private vehicles in Queens. He sold them – and dozens more – to a Long Island recycling facility for cash. Charges are pending.

- A Queens physician operating a medical clinic in South Richmond Hill pleaded guilty to defrauding insurance companies and the New York State Worker's Compensation Board by fraudulently billing for medical tests never performed. He was ordered to pay more than $65,000 in restitution.

- A man was convicted of selling 12 stolen vehicles to Long Island scrap yards where they were sold as scrap metal and expected to be crushed. The defendant was paid $600 to $750 per vehicle. The defendant received a sentence of six months in jail and five years of probation.

- In one scheme the defendants stole the personal information of four legitimate car buyers and used it to purchase seven luxury automobiles. The case is pending.

- Ten individuals were charged with multiple counts of fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property for selling stolen cars to scrap yards. More than 30 vehicles were identified and recovered prior to being scrapped. Two defendants received sentences of up to three years in prison, while others were ordered to serve probation or given a conditional discharge. Charges remain pending for some of the defendants.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	5	Indictments	22
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	9
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	64	Felony Convictions	22
Number of MVT Cases Taken to	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea	17

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:				
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*		*Total*
Investigations Initiated	7	Indictments		0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions		5
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	11	Felony Convictions		2
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained		12
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			$65,849	

Richmond County District Attorney's Office

The Richmond County (Staten Island) District Attorney's Office received a $76,700 grant, which pays for five part-time assistant district attorneys and one part -time investigator. The specialized MVTIF Program Unit within the office is able to draw upon the resources from three separate bureaus and the detective investigators squad. The Investigations Bureau handles the cases that involve criminal activities of organized groups involved in auto theft and insurance fraud related crimes. The Supreme Court Bureau prosecutes all program felony cases; and the Criminal Court Bureau prosecutes misdemeanor cases, and on occasion cases with felony charges that have the potential to be pleaded down to a misdemeanor.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The district attorney has several key partners in its strategy to address insurance fraud-related crimes, including the New York State Department of Financial Services Insurance Frauds Bureau, the New York City Fire Department Bureau of Fire Investigation Auto Fraud Squad, the New York Police Department - Auto Crime Division, and the NYPD Highway 5-Collision Investigation Squad. Insurance companies also play important roles in combating insurance fraud-related crimes and work cooperatively with our MVTIF team.

A notable case of collaboration between the state fraud bureau and the district attorney's Investigations Bureau resulted in the indictments of nine individuals following a 20-month investigation into insurance fraud, fraudulent drug prescriptions, the possession and sale of oxycodone, and illegal gambling. This investigation was a success due to the high level of cooperation between multiple law enforcement agencies and the use of high-tech cameras and listening devices.

The district attorney continues to work in a joint manner with other law enforcement and governmental agencies on insurance fraud. One such agency is the New York City Fire Department). The FDNY's Bureau of Fire Investigation and Auto Fraud Squad was established to specifically investigate motor vehicle fires and gather evidence to aid in prosecuting criminals linked to vehicle arsons in attempted insurance fraud schemes. In 2014, the fraud squad reported there were 30 vehicle fires investigated by fire marshals in Richmond County. These enhanced investigations resulted in one denied insurance claim and one suspect being charged with falsifying business records. Of those fires, 22 were categorized as deliberate incendiary and eight as accidental. The district attorney will continue to work with the city fire officials on all suspected vehicle arsons, including those cases involving suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud. Richmond County's rate of suspected insurance fraud remains among the highest in the state. The approach, however, of prosecuting these crimes along with a continued effort to highlight these cases in the media is serving as a deterrent for people considering vehicular insurance fraud as an easy means of financial gain.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	85	Misdemeanor Convictions	30
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	53	Felony Convictions	8
Number of MVT Cases Taken to	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea	37

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	19	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	1
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	7	Felony Convictions	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	1
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$0	

New York City Police Department Auto Crime Division

The Auto Crime Division is part of the Organized Crime Control Bureau of the New York City Police Department. The division is a citywide investigative unit focusing primarily on chop shops, auto salvage yards, organized theft rings, and auto theft exports. The division received a $180,000 grant, which funds overtime for investigations, rental vehicles to use in the investigations, and training. The division works in the same geographic areas covered by police patrols and investigates all forms of auto related theft. The division reviews all reports of stolen vehicles for possible insurance fraud indicators in the New York City area.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The Auto Crime Division utilizes several different strategies to combat auto crime within New York City. These methods include sting operations, mobile surveillance, "Get Legit or Quit" operations, multi-agency response community hot spots operations, the deployment of license plate readers, analysis of complaint reports for the purpose of investigating insurance fraud, development of confidential informants, search warrants, and debriefing suspects arrested for automobile grand larcenies, training and conferring with surrounding police agencies to combat auto theft.

The Auto Crime School offers law enforcement up-to-date training in both auto theft and insurance fraud. "Fundamentals of Auto Theft" is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement and certified by the DCJS for two college credits and is taught by instructors in the Auto Crime Division. The division instructed 911 students in 2014 through 19 different classes. With the increased sophistication of both vehicles and criminals, instructors regularly attend motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud program meetings, the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators meetings, and the New York Anti-Car Theft & Fraud Association meetings to keep up with the latest trends in the field. As issues in auto theft become more sophisticated, the division sends its members to the most advanced training available to keep pace with this constantly changing field.

In 2014, there were 7,476 reported auto thefts in New York City, a 4 percent increase over 2013. Perpetrators continued to use contacts in the automotive industry to have duplicate sets of coded keys

produced, while older vehicles were stolen for scrap. Insurance fraud was committed by individuals falsely reporting vehicles stolen, motorcycles were stolen to be stripped and exported, and bogus credit cards and driver licenses were used to rent vehicles to be exported for sale abroad. As an ongoing practice, the division continues to review reports of stolen vehicles for possible insurance fraud indicators.

In 2014, several long-term cases from 2012 were investigated by the division. Some cases were brought to resolution while others were started as a result of investigations.
In January 2013, the division investigated late model vehicles thefts perpetrated with a mobile locksmith that could reproduce vehicle keys to circumvent factory alarm systems. Once alarms were deactivated, the thieves were able to steal the vehicle at any time of the day without raising suspicions. The offenders then altered the vehicle identification numbers to resell the cars.

The division investigated a 2012 case involving the sale of stolen parts including engines, transmissions, airbags and firearms taken from stolen vehicles. In November 2014, more than 60 arrests were made in the case and large amounts of contraband was recovered. As the case progresses, additional arrests are expected.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	24	Reported MV Thefts	7,505
Misdemeanor Arrests	56	Recovered Stolen MVs	2,879
Felony Arrests	442	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	106

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	24	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	56	Number of Accident Claims	
Felony Arrests	442	Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	106

New York Police Department Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad

The Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad received a $97,000 grant which pays for training, overtime for 12 uniformed members and costs incurred in investigations. The squad, along with the department's Health Care Fraud Task Force, is charged with investigating all aspects of no-fault fraud and health care insurance fraud city-wide, and sending cases forward for prosecution at the local, state and federal levels.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

Operation "Queens Mass" began in April 2013 when the Plymouth Rock Insurance Company contacted the Massachusetts Insurance Fraud Bureau regarding a number of motor vehicles registered and insured in Massachusetts which had been involved in automobile collisions in New York City considered fraudulent. The bureau contacted the Massachusetts State Police, which began an investigation. Troopers in Massachusetts partnered with the federal Department of Homeland Security investigators due to the questionable immigration status of some of the suspects. In June 2014, Homeland Security contacted the squad for assistance in locating and conducting surveillance of suspects tied to both the collisions and fraudulent insurance claims. On Aug. 12, 2014, the squad

arrested the two primary conspirators and executed a search warrant at their residence in Flushing, Queens. As a result, authorities charged nine people in Brooklyn and Queens.

Operation "Rent- a-Truck" investigated a criminal ring organizing fraudulent motor vehicle collisions to commit health insurance fraud. The conspirators would rent a U-Haul van or truck and stage a collision with another vehicle that was under their control. As a result of the staged accident, the occupants of both the rented U-Haul and the secondary vehicle would submit claims for injuries and vehicular damage. To date, Republican Western Insurance Company, the insurance carrier for U-Haul, along with Allstate, Travelers and GEICO have incurred more than $1,000,000 in losses due to these fraudulent claims. In May 2013, the squad arrested nine people who participated in this scheme, including a New York City corrections officer. On December 11, 2014, the squad worked with the federal Postal Inspection Service to file a federal complaint calling for the arrest of four people on mail and healthcare fraud charges.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	28	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	40
Misdemeanor Arrests	1	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	N/A
Felony Arrests	45		

Fire Department of New York

The Fire Department of New York (FDNY) received a $104,000 grant to fund fire marshals assigned to the Auto Fraud Squad, which consists of four investigators, one supervisor and is supported by crime scene specialists, intelligence analysts, and technical services operators. Fire marshals possess expertise in both forensic fire scene examination and arson-for-profit criminal investigation. Specialized fire marshal skills include detection, recognition, and collection of specific evidence associated with arson, staged vehicle theft, and insurance fraud.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

In 2014, FDNY responded to 2,464 motor vehicle fires. Since receiving grant funding, all motor vehicle fires are now pre-screened by fire marshals and other FDNY analysts for indicators of arson or fraud. This pre-screening resulted in 478 motor vehicle fires being identified for further investigation last year. As a result of these investigations, a total of $280,520 in insurance claims were denied by the covering insurance company or withdrawn by the insured to avoid prosecution.

During the years of our grant-funded operations, the squad has realized a significant decrease in vehicular fires around the city, and a corollary decrease in firefighter injuries. The squad's crime analysis strategy and action plan includes pre-screening of all motor vehicle fires, identifying priority incidents and areas in order to ensure a rapid response.

Also the strategy focuses on evidence recognition, recovery and development; targeting the "torch-for-hire" incidents through informant development, and maximizing multi-agency collaborations. This strategy has proven highly effective.

For instance, FDNY units responded to a report of fire in a 2011 Nissan Altima on Aug. 27, 2014. Fire marshals determined the fire was incendiary and recovered evidence from the scene. The vehicle was photographed and the exterior body damage on the vehicle was noted. Fire marshals determined the vehicle had been parked at the fire scene since Aug. 7, which was 20 days prior to the fire. Data searches revealed the vehicle was reported stolen 10 days before the fire. Records also showed a previous accident claim on this car paid out by the insurance company. Fire marshals also secured license plate reader records and subpoenaed EZ Pass records for the vehicle. On November 20, 2014 fire marshals interviewed the owner. Faced with mounting evidence, the owner admitted having someone else make the vehicle "disappear" for a fee of $500. The owner explained the lease was about to expire, the mileage was over the limit, and the accident claim payment was spent, but the damage had not been repaired. The owner refused to provide further information, but efforts are underway to identify co-conspirators. The owner was charged with insurance fraud, falsely reporting an incident, making a false statement, filing false business records and conspiracy. The insurance company denied the $19,106 claim.

Another example began as a suspicious motor vehicle fire in September 2012 and led to a long term multi-jurisdictional investigation. Working jointly, the fire marshals, the Nassau County Police Department and the Nassau County District Attorney's Office uncovered a conspiracy between an automobile dealership salesman and a dissatisfied vehicle owner.

The initial investigation started with a 2009 Land Rover set ablaze. Fire marshals responded to the scene of the fire, collected, documented and processed evidence which indicated both arson and insurance fraud. When confronted with the overwhelming evidence gathered at the scene, the vehicle owner made incriminating admissions leading to a full confession. The owner admitted he tried to return the vehicle to a Nassau County dealership when he could no longer manage the monthly payments. The dealer refused to negotiate the return, and instead offered to torch the vehicle for a fee of $2,000. Fire marshals then initiated an undercover electronic surveillance operation to both identify the torch for hire and to gather the necessary evidence for an additional arrest.

Two individuals were later prosecuted for submitting a fraudulent insurance claim valued at $52,000.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	478	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	**n/a**
Misdemeanor Arrests	27	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	**n/a**
Felony Arrests	20		

NYC Suburban Region

New York City Suburban Region

Nassau County District Attorney's Office
Nassau County Police Department
Suffolk County District Attorney's Office
Suffolk County Police Department
Westchester County's District Attorney's Office
Yonkers Police Department

Nassau County District Attorney's Office

The Nassau County District Attorney's Office received a $128,500 grant that funds four part-time assistant district attorneys and an assistant dedicated to prosecuting theft and fraud cases. The office's Auto Theft and Fraud Unit was created in 2008 to prosecute motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases, while working closely with members of the Nassau County Police Department, and National Insurance Crime Board, and other law enforcement and insurance agencies in an effort to detect and reduce the incidence of these crimes.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The unit uses enhanced computer programs and statistics to improve the detection of motor vehicle related thefts and insurance frauds within Nassau County. The unit also works closely with detectives in the Nassau County Police Department's Crimes against Property Squad and outside agencies to create an improved vertical prosecution system. Under this system, the squad or other outside agencies contact the unit at an early stage of any investigation to enhance collaboration. The result has been successful prosecutions against people charged with taking motor vehicles into New York City from Nassau County and setting them ablaze in order to file fraudulent insurance claims. In one case, an individual took a vehicle to Queens County where it was torched, and then the registered owner filed a fraudulent insurance claim in Nassau County. Two individuals were arrested following an investigation and as a result the individual transporting the vehicle was sentenced to serve up to four years jail. The second defendant died shortly after the arrest.

In another case, an individual is being prosecuted for taking his vehicle into New York City and giving it to a third person, who brought it to Bronx County and then had it burned for the purpose of filing a fraudulent insurance claim. This insurance fraud case is pending and the defendant is expected to plead guilty to a felony in the near future.

Another case involves a large-scale staged accident ring the unit is investigating. We anticipate this will result in arrests being made soon. In another case under investigation, individuals are being probed for creating fraudulent motor vehicle ownership documents that are being used to scrap late-model vans across the county.

The grant allows for assistant district attorneys, investigators, and other support personnel to be assigned to the unit, which has resulted in successful investigations and prosecutions of motor vehicle related crime and insurance fraud. The result of these investigations and prosecutions has been a reduction in motor vehicle-related thefts across the county, which may ultimately reduce the overall cost of motor vehicle insurance rates for the average consumers.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:

Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	24
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	82	Misdemeanor Convictions	23
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	81	Felony Convictions	51
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea	54

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:

Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	1
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	3	Felony Convictions	5
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea	6
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$10,016.00	

Nassau County Police Department

The Nassau County Police Department received a grant totaling $126,500, which pays for overtime and training. This award allows police to conduct numerous operations designed to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County.

Nassau County uses these funds to operate the Search Apprehension Vehicle Enforcement program utilizing a two-fold strategy. The first prong focuses on enforcement of motor vehicle theft laws, and the second on investigations of both motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The program is coordinated by the department's Crimes against Property Squad, which is led by a detective sergeant assisted by another detective. The unit specializes in motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud and has extensive training and experience in the field.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The squad has recently trained detectives in each of the department's precinct squads to act as liaisons to identify and investigate these types of crimes. Officers from each of the precincts conduct enhanced investigations, including covert probes aimed at identifying and arresting subjects attempting to steal vehicles, as well as property from inside the vehicles. The department also conducts investigations designed to provide a police presence to discourage potential thieves from committing such crimes. The department continues to utilize grant funds to supplement the normal investigative process to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County.

In 2014, police officers on patrol targeted enforcement activities in high incidence areas such as railroad stations, malls, shopping centers, and junkyards where recent larcenies from vehicles have been occurring. During these operations, officers conducted hundreds of car stops, resulting in the issuance of more than 600 summonses. At the end of each enforcement patrol, officers provided an accounting of any actions taken, including arrests, vehicle traffic law enforcement efforts, and other activities. This information was relayed to precinct intelligence analysts for review, and converted to actionable intelligence to guide future patrols and follow-ups by precinct and squad vehicle theft detectives.

In addition to the enforcement component of this program, grant funds were used to conduct a wide variety of investigations related to motor vehicle theft. Detectives regularly review motor vehicle theft activity, including examining stolen vehicle reports and field interviews, as well as checking national databases for intelligence on theft and scrap issues. Detectives also perform site visits to scrap yards where they conduct more in-depth investigations to determine whether vehicles are being disposed of legally.

Detectives undertook a major investigation involving the possession of 12 stolen Ford Econoline vans. On June 27, 2014, they arrested a man on 24 felonies relating to the stolen vans and his intent to scrap them for cash. Another successful case involved an identified pattern of high end vehicles being stolen. Detectives located a stolen 2011 Land Rover left legally parked on a roadway and were able to set up covert surveillance on the vehicle. After continuous observation, squad detectives and members of the department's Bureau of Special Operations arrested two individuals when they attempted to drive the vehicle away from the scene. One of the suspects was also found in possession of a second key for a stolen 2014 Lexus recently recovered in close proximity to the Land Rover.

In another investigation, vehicle theft and forgery squad detectives investigated and arrested two suspects on two counts of third-degree grand larceny, two counts of second-degree possession of a forged instrument, one count of first-degree identity theft and one count of first-degree defraud for their involvement in an ongoing crime spree. The suspects had been purchasing new motorcycles from dealerships using forged identification documents and personal information from identify theft victims throughout the tri-state area.

In addition to investigating motor vehicle theft, squad detectives investigate situations related to motor vehicle insurance fraud. Precinct detectives are trained to detect, identify and combat false insurance claims by re-examining stolen vehicle report cases and related reports taken within their command. Upon suspicion of wrong-doing, detectives partner with investigators from the relevant insurance companies to conduct probes. They also conduct searches and incorporate data garnered from relevant database searches into their investigations.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	43	Reported MV Thefts	575
Misdemeanor Arrests	7	Recovered Stolen MVs	14
Felony Arrests	9	Value of Recovered Stolen	$209,000.00
Confidential Informants	0	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	2

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	6	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded	38,09
Misdemeanor Arrests	1	Number of Accident Claims	1
Felony Arrests	0	Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement	
Confidential Informants	0	Investigation Initiation	

Suffolk County District Attorney's Office

The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office has a Labor, Insurance and Revenue Crimes Bureau that targets white collar crimes, including insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft. The district attorney received a $312,500 grant to fund four full-time positions, two senior assistant district attorneys, a detective investigator and a paralegal, in the bureau. The unit is supervised by a division chief overseeing the entire bureau, one bureau chief, one deputy bureau chief, and ten prosecutors dealing with motor vehicle theft, motor vehicle insurance fraud, and labor crimes.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The district attorney successfully concluded numerous long and short-term investigations and prosecutions in 2014. As a result of one investigation, six defendants plead guilty to felonies in the thefts of tires and rims from 20 vehicles stolen throughout Suffolk County from individuals and auto dealerships over a 10-month period.

Two defendants were initially caught in the act of stealing tires and rims by the owner of a private residence who telephoned Suffolk County Police. The defendants implicated each other in written statements, which broadened the investigation to other unsolved tire and rim thefts and one home burglary. Four of the six defendants pleaded guilty to the full indictment for a sentence negotiated directly with the court. The court awarded restitution totaling $117,747.09 to be paid by the defendants to the victims and their respective insurance companies.

The office also had a successful year combatting motor vehicle insurance fraud. An investigation revealed a mobile diagnostic company was billing both private and government insurance policies to pay for diagnostic testing that was either not performed, performed on one date yet billed for separate dates, or not reviewed by a physician. Yet in each case, the insurance companies were paying for the testing under codes submitted by the company. The diagnostic company had a doctor who owned one of the billing corporations and also performed no-fault reviews. The doctor is believed to be a part of the fraudulent scheme.

A search warrant was executed at the mobile diagnostic testing facility office, yielding more than 400 patient files, 13 doctors' files, log sheets, computer and server equipment, and other paperwork related to the insurance fraud scheme. At the time of the search warrant, the diagnostic facility owner was charged with five counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument.

Based on the evidence seized and with the cooperation of individuals cultivated as a result of the indictment, it is believed the mobile diagnostic facility owner was also involved in illegal fee-splitting and rental contracts entered into between numerous doctors and the corporate owner of one of the billing entities. A radiologist who owned one of the billing corporations utilized by the mobile diagnostic company also performed no-fault reviews. This radiologist is also believed to be a part of the fraudulent scheme. A superseding indictment was issued for scheme to defraud, 52 counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument, seven counts of insurance fraud, and three counts of conspiracy.

The diagnostic company owner and the three corporations utilized in the fraudulent billing were charged. Unfortunately, the diagnostic company owner committed suicide the day before the hearing date was set. Based, however, on strong evidence that the defendant corporations recklessly allowed the mobile diagnostic company owner to engage in fraudulent billing, prosecutors were able to negotiate plea offers including restitution to the victimized insurance companies with the remaining sum to be forfeited to the district attorney's office.

As a result of the successful investigations and prosecutions in 2014, the district attorney recovered approximately $276,930 to reimburse insurance companies for costs associated with motor vehicle theft and another $104,639 used to reimburse insurance companies that were the victims of motor vehicle insurance fraud. This figure includes $30,000 of forfeiture funds received by this office as the result of these investigations.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: SCDAO Snapshot			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	20	Indictments	51
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	73	Misdemeanor Convictions	44
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	193	Felony Convictions	44
Confidential Informants Developed	2	Warrants Issued	3
# of MVT Cases Taken To Trial	0	# of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	48

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: SCDAO Snapshot			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	24	Indictments	15
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	18	Misdemeanor Convictions	13
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	64	Felony Convictions	8
Confidential Informants Developed	6	Warrants Issued	1
# of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	# of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	16
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$104,639.07	

Suffolk County Police Department

The Suffolk County Police Department received a $143,000 grant, which pays for the overtime needed to operate the program and for training. The department employs an intelligence-based and data-driven approach to investigating motor vehicle and insurance fraud crime. The Property Recovery Section of the department is staffed by a detective sergeant and six detectives who coordinate vehicle theft and insurance fraud investigations along with a detective sergeant assigned to the county District Attorney's Office.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

In 2014, 1,298 vehicles were reported stolen, 25 more than in 2013. The vehicle recovery rate for 2014 was 74 percent, which is nominally lower than the 75 percent rate realized in 2013. The department continued its model of intelligence-based policing, with field intelligence officers assigned to each detective squad to conduct debriefings on each individual arrested. These debriefings contain general questions related to the subject's knowledge of criminal activity, and can be directed to any specific area of interest based on crime trends and geographical areas of concern. The results of these debriefings are transmitted to the respective unit for follow up on actionable intelligence.

In 2014, 72 insurance fraud-related investigations and 163 auto theft-related investigations were initiated, 87 of which were cleared by arrest. Training sessions were conducted in several precincts to allow uniformed officers to better recognize indications of possible insurance fraud or suspicious reports of vehicular theft, and as a result, drive down the number of false insurance claims within the county. The training facilitated the interception of two insurance fraud cases by detectives resulting in an arrest.

To enhance a vertical prosecution strategy, detectives assigned to the district attorney's office set up an undercover location and initiated an investigation into the purchase of stolen vehicles using a confidential informant. To date, the investigation has resulted in the purchase of four stolen vehicles, some of which are suspected of being reported in furtherance of insurance fraud. Working in conjunction with investigators from the state Department of Motor Vehicles, property recovery detectives conducted an investigation into the use and possession of fraudulent New York State drivers' licenses. These investigations resulted in the arrest of two subjects on 20 counts of second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument. Additionally, state investigators are collaborating with property recovery detectives on cases involving fraudulent applications for drivers' licenses.

Through debriefings submitted by the 7th precinct gang officers, property recovery squad detectives identified several individuals using fraudulent Alabama dealer/transporter license plates and inspection certificates. With the assistance of these uniformed officers, four people were charged with second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument. One of these individuals is cooperating in an ongoing-investigation into another believed to be selling these fraudulent license plates.

An analysis of crime data revealed a rash of older model vehicle thefts reported in three eastern precincts within Suffolk County. Detectives from the property recovery squad conducted reviews of vehicles sold for scrap in various locations around the county, which resulted in a suspect being identified. This individual stole six vehicles over the course of several weeks, fraudulently filled out motor vehicle forms, and then sold the vehicles for scrap.

County police use a web-based program to track transactions conducted in pawn shops throughout Suffolk and Nassau counties. As a result of queries into this database and a review of departmental crime reports, recovery detectives conducted audits of GPS units, laptop computers, i-Pads, portable tools, etc. in an effort to locate and identify stolen property. These audits resulted in the arrest of seven people on charges of larceny or criminal possession of stolen property based on material they were stealing from parked motor vehicles.

Detectives concluded a long term investigation with the arrest of three family members involved in multiple insurance fraud cases. They were charged with eight counts of insurance fraud and eight counts of grand larceny or attempted grand larceny. Additionally, detectives from the district attorney's office and property recovery section recovered 17 stolen motor vehicles and heavy equipment vehicles. In total, county police recovered 967 stolen vehicles in 2014.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	163	Reported MV Thefts	1,298
Misdemeanor Arrests	12	Recovered Stolen MVs	967
Felony Arrests	56	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	2

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	72	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	Statistics not kept
Misdemeanor Arrests	1	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	
Felony Arrests	24		

Westchester County District Attorney's Office

The Westchester County District Attorney's Office received a $316,000 grant to fund an Auto Crimes Unit with a senior assistant prosecutor and two police investigators. Starting in 2015, a full-time crime analyst was added to the unit and will work in partnership with a similar squad at the Yonkers Police Department. While the unit's primary focus is auto-related insurance fraud investigations, it also assists local police departments with investigations into auto theft throughout the county. The senior assistant district attorney coordinates and reviews all auto crime-related cases coming from each of the eight local court branches in Westchester County and vertically prosecutes most felony cases.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The unit has made a demonstrable impact in reducing auto theft through aggressive investigation and prosecution. Since the unit's creation in 1998, auto theft in Westchester County has declined by 87.8 percent, from 4,130 vehicles stolen in 1997 to 502 thefts recorded in 2014. The unit targets high-theft areas and uses confidential informants or surveillance to assist in identifying theft rings and arresting the perpetrators.

Last year, the Harrison Police Department received a report of an excavation truck stolen from a worksite. While collecting evidence and following leads, investigators identified two suspects living in Brooklyn. A third suspect was identified shortly after through the use of cell site orders, search warrants, GPS orders and traditional police surveillance. As a result, the two suspects were charged in connection with the stolen truck recovered in a construction yard of a New Jersey business. Another heavy-duty machine, a Bobcat stolen from Queens, also was recovered.

While the unit tracks all data regarding auto theft and conducts auto-theft investigations, its focus is to conduct probes into suspected insurance fraud. The unit had two major investigations into insurance fraud in 2014. One on-going investigation involves a suspected medical mill operating in southern Westchester County for the sole purpose of fraudulently billing no-fault insurance. The joint investigation with the National Insurance Crime Bureau, state police and state Department of Financial Services is analyzing the billing records of the clinic and other affiliated medical providers. For months, the investigative team has analyzed thousands of pages of cellular telephone records, conducted extensive surveillance of various suspects, analyzed past claims of motor vehicle accidents, obtained videos of suspected "staged accidents" and analyzed billing records from the clinic.

In 2014, Pelham Manor police requested assistance from the unit for investigation into the suspected arson of a vehicle torched in the parking lot at the police department. After obtaining extensive investigation, it was determined the registered owner had lied to police and the insurance company about the theft of his vehicle. Scientific evidence confirmed fire investigation findings that the vehicle was set ablaze using gasoline. The case resulted in one arrest, with several more anticipated.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	7	Indictments	2
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	21	Misdemeanor Convictions	44
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	89	Felony Convictions	13
Number of MVT Cases Taken to	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea	47

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	3	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	1
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	4	Felony Convictions	2
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	0
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$6,592.00	

Yonkers Police Department

The Yonkers Police Department received a $134,000 grant that pays for a full-time detective and overtime to support additional hours needed for complex investigations. The funding also goes toward training. The department investigates reports of cars with stolen parts, altered VINs, bogus registration and inspection stickers, and out-of-state dealer plates or other suspicious tags. Also, it probes fraudulent items like bad checks or counterfeit licenses and other documents.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The Yonkers Police Department has one detective dedicated to a unit funded through the grant. This detective trains uniformed police officers in Yonkers and state troopers on motor vehicle theft and fraud issues. In addition, the detective presented on the subject at West Point, the Westchester Police Academy and Westchester Community College.

In the past year, the motor vehicle theft and fraud detective worked more than 260 overtime hours with various jurisdictional agencies such as the New York City Police Department, the New York State Police, U.S. Postal Service, National Insurance Crime Bureau, the state Department of Motor Vehicles, the New Jersey Department of Motor Vehicles, Tennessee State Police, Bergen County Police, Sayerville Police, Wayne County Police, Harrison Police and several other local jurisdictions.

Examples of this unit's work include two compelling cases in 2014. In the first, the office worked with the NY Insurance Plan and the NYPD to investigate a used-car dealership that was selling bogus temporary tags and insurance cards. In the other case, a car dealership was stealing the deposits and tax money of more than 200 unsuspecting victims. Working jointly with NYPD and the crime bureau, the unit detective developed an informant and purchased two stolen retake vehicles. These investigations are on-going. The office continues to use the Intel Center to gather information and collaborate on theft and fraud investigations occurring within other jurisdictions in Westchester County.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	260	Reported MV Thefts	141
Misdemeanor Arrests	5	Recovered Stolen MVs	20
Felony Arrests	14	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	22	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	4	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	0
Felony Arrests	2		
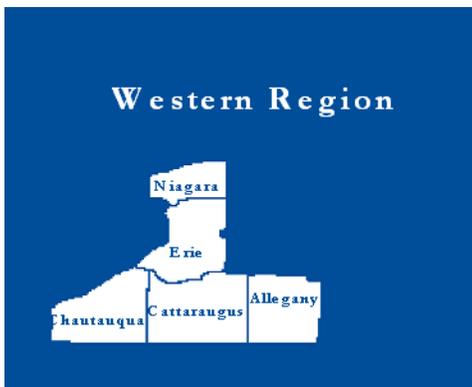
Western Region

Buffalo Police Department
Cheektowaga Police Department
Erie County District Attorney's Office
Niagara County District Attorney's Office
Niagara County Sheriff's Office
Niagara Falls Police Department

Buffalo Police Department

The Buffalo Police Department's General Investigation Unit is part of the Detective Division and dedicated to investigating complaints related to motor vehicle theft, arson and fraud. This unit received a $97,700 grant which pays for a full-time detective, overtime, and travel and training costs to enhance the program's effectiveness.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

Buffalo shares an international border with Canada and its close proximity makes automobile theft between the two countries an ongoing issue. Thefts contribute to the additional problem of perpetrators trying to illegally enter or leave the country. In order to address this problem, the department works closely with federal agencies assigned to protect the border. In one recent case investigated jointly with several other agencies, an unlicensed auto dismantler at a facility located in the South Buffalo area was found to be scrapping 30 vehicles earmarked for shipment to Bagdad, Iraq. The individual, who was on a Class B visa and had no authorization to work in the United States, claimed he was responsible for the facility.

As a result of this successful law enforcement collaboration, the suspect was charged with a felony and misdemeanor for operating as an unlicensed dismantler. The suspect, who was in partnership with another family member, purchased and shipped auto parts from Buffalo to an overseas facility. The suspect claimed he worked for an auto and used spare parts business located in the United Arab Emirates. This overseas business contracted with the suspect to establish a local business in the Buffalo area. The suspect also faced several charges lodged by the U.S. Border Patrol. This particular dismantling facility is part of an ongoing investigation, as well as others in the past that lead to the issue of search warrants and ultimately arrests.

The investigation unit detective also works in concert with analysts from the Erie Crime Analysis Center housed at police headquarters. The center provides real-time analysis for motor vehicle theft and arson hotspots in Buffalo's five police districts. It also supplies information on related crime trends and developing patterns that might impact vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

Highlighting this collaborative effort is a case in which crime data was reviewed and analyzed by the center in Buffalo's northwest district last summer. Three vehicles were stolen within a 24-hour period in one district. The center began watching other police districts to see if the pattern repeated and if a common thread linked them to other car thefts. In early September, police and the investigation unit detective were called to one of Buffalo's college campuses in the northeast district to investigate a carjacking. A female victim was pushed to the ground by two suspects who took her car along with other property. The detective worked with officers assigned to monitor the camera surveillance system. This collaboration lead to the arrest of two suspects involved with the college student carjacking, as well as two men who stole a car at knifepoint in the northeast district.

Auto theft facilitated with fraudulent DMV documents continues to be a problem in Buffalo. As the value of metal has increased, thieves have begun stealing vehicles to be sold for scrap. If the vehicle is more than 8 years old, it can be scrapped without a title by using an MV-35 form, which is filled out at the scrapyard and then presented to DMV. One case investigated by police involved an individual who enlisted others to use their personal identification to scrap stolen vehicles. Investigators worked closely with both DMV and the Erie County District Attorney's Office to prosecute those involved in the illegal scrapping of vehicles. Four individuals were arrested and one was recently sentenced to serve two years in jail.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	26	Reported MV Thefts	1,030
Misdemeanor Arrests	9/370	Recovered Stolen MVs	870
Felony Arrests	8/35	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	1

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	14	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	N/A
Misdemeanor Arrests	8	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	15
Felony Arrests	4		

Cheektowaga Police Department

The Cheektowaga Police Department received a $47,000 grant for police overtime and training. Ten of the agency's 19 detectives handle motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

The police department has one detective assigned to lead the Auto Theft Squad. This detective coordinates motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud investigations for the bureau and assigns cases to other detectives. This strategy has been in place for several years and has successfully reduced motor vehicle theft and fraud cases in Cheektowaga.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The department's grant activities have two primary goals: to focus on investigations related to motor vehicle thefts, including larcenies of both property and auto parts; and to focus on fraudulent activities, including insurance fraud, forged vehicle identification numbers, and forged motor vehicle titles. Grant funds have provided overtime for detectives to work on these investigations and help reduce crimes related to motor vehicle theft and fraud. The annual police budget is insufficient to cover these costs and making strides against the incidence of theft and fraud would not be possible without this grant funding.

The department has a strong commitment to inter-agency cooperation and intelligence sharing with other law enforcement agencies in the region. The department has developed a close working relationship with the Buffalo Police Auto Theft Squad and the Buffalo Fire Marshall's Office. These relationships are beneficial for both Cheektowaga and Buffalo. One joint insurance fraud investigation led to the direct withdrawal of a claim which saved GEICO Insurance Company $7,000.

In another instance, detectives responding to an auto stripping ring operating around Erie County hosted a meeting with all police agencies impacted by the criminal activities of this group. Intelligence was shared with collaborating agencies, which allowed law enforcement to put an end to the ring's operation. In another example, detectives assisted Canisius College's Public Safety officers with a carjacking investigation. Detectives located the stolen vehicle and were able to gather needed intelligence on the possible suspects involved.

The department continues to work with the Erie County Crime Analysis Center, which provides information on trends and patterns. This enables the department to direct resources to areas where they will have the most impact.

Detectives were able to examine vehicle identification numbers from 1,451 automobiles and motorcycles by assisting the patrol division at traffic checkpoints throughout the region and attending public events such as the Juneteenth Festival in Buffalo and activities at the Lancaster Speedway. Intelligence gathered from these inspections is passed on to appropriate regional police agencies for follow up. The resources of this grant have also allowed crime scene detectives to photograph and process every recovered motor vehicle and provide evidence to the Central Police Services Laboratory which processed 45 vehicles last year.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	88	Reported MV Thefts	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	24	Recovered Stolen MVs	0
Felony Arrests	22	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	4	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	2	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	0
Felony Arrests	4		

Erie County District Attorney's Office

The Erie County District Attorney's Office received a $121,500 grant to pay for a full-time assistant district attorney and for training. The assistant district attorney assigned to handle motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases is supported by the staff of the Financial Crimes Bureau. The prosecutor works closely with detectives from the Buffalo and Cheektowaga police departments, while also meeting with other law enforcement agencies throughout the area to collaborate with ongoing investigations. The prosecutor vertically prosecutes the more serious motor vehicle theft crimes as well as all of the insurance fraud cases in Erie County.

MVTIF Activity in 2014

In addition to handling vehicle theft and fraud cases, this prosecutor acts as a resource for others handing related cases in Erie County's lower courts and around the state.

In 2014, the assistant district attorney presented at the New York State Prosecutors Training Institute Summer College at Syracuse University on Grand Theft Auto as part of a multi-day training. The presentation entitled "The Rules" instructed assistant district attorneys on various auto crimes, the applicable statutes, and how to successfully prosecute these cases.

A significant percentage of Erie County's motor vehicle fraud cases are so-called owner give ups. In these cases, the owner fraudulently reports the vehicle stolen in order to file a false insurance claim. Most of the time, the vehicle is disposed of through arson. In order to strengthen these cases, the prosecutor works closely with fire marshals from the Buffalo Fire Department investigating these cases and also interviews the vehicle owners.

Close cooperation between the prosecutor and fire marshals has resulted in improved interviewing strategies, which have resulted in an increase in successful felony prosecutions. For instance, they have found it advantageous to delay an initial interview until after the vehicle owner has had an opportunity to make a false insurance claim. In these cases, the claim is not paid because the fire marshals and the New York State Department of Financial Services are already aware an investigation is underway. The defendant is therefore held criminally liable for the full measure of the intended fraud. A premature interview could alert the individual that the scheme is known to law enforcement and could result in much lower possible charges.

Expertise obtained from the fire marshals also enables this prosecutor to convey to the sentencing court the danger of car arsons to fire personnel and others, thereby resulting in sentences reflecting the gravity of the crime. Stronger sentences also serve to deter others from committing similar crimes.

In one case, a woman who arranged to have her 2001 Chevy taken filed a false stolen car report with the Buffalo police. The defendant filed a false affidavit of theft with her insurance company and was interviewed several weeks after the claim was filed. During the interview, the defendant initially gave a signed statement narrating the false theft story to the fire marshals. During further questioning, the woman confessed to arranging to have her car taken. Most perpetrators of owner give-ups are not veterans of the criminal justice system and are unprepared to withstand questioning on their false narrative. Had this interview been conducted immediately after the vehicle fire, the defendant would have known she had not fooled law enforcement and would have withheld her insurance claim. In this case, however, the defendant was convicted of both insurance fraud and offering a false instrument for filing due to the strategy developed through cooperation between fire marshals and the prosecutor. Without this coordinated effort, the case would have likely concluded with only an arrest for falsely reporting an incident, thereby providing less of a deterrent for owner give-ups.

The grant was instrumental in prosecuting a tire theft ring targeting vehicle overflow lots at car dealerships and car carriers in railroad yards around Erie County. Through the cooperation between the prosecutor, relevant police agencies and in conjunction with crime mapping provided by the Erie Crime Analysis Center, informants were developed and convictions obtained against four individuals.

As a result, these thefts dropped dramatically.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	17	Indictments	1
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	313	Misdemeanor Convictions	40
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	3	Felony Convictions	11
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases	51

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	13	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	9
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	8	Felony Convictions	6
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	15
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$4,994.71	

Niagara County District Attorney's Office

The Niagara County District Attorney's Office received a $114,000 grant, which supports a Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit consisting of a full-time assistant district attorney and a full-time investigator.

The assistant prosecutor and investigator collaborate with all law enforcement agencies operating within the county as well as other insurance fraud investigators. Investigations by law enforcement agencies are referred to the assistant district attorney for vertical prosecution to ensure all cases are prosecuted to the fullest extent possible.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The unit has been extremely successful in its efforts to identify, combat and deter motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud since the inception of the program. The dedicated assistant prosecutor and criminal investigator focus on target crimes, identify repeat offenders and prosecute them vigorously. The district attorney's office publicizes all successful cases in an effort to deter future crimes. As a result, thefts and insurance fraud have continued to decrease over the years specifically due to the incarceration of several prolific offenders. The office has also focused on developing relationships with law enforcement agencies countywide in an effort to improve both communications and investigations crossing jurisdictional lines.

In 2014, the unit focused on repeat offenders. One such case involved a defendant previously convicted of third-degree auto stripping. Due to the prior conviction, each of the defendant's six new arrests for breaking into cars to steal personal property were upgraded to a felony-level prosecution. The goal of the district attorney's office is to resolve this case with both restitution to the auto insurance companies and with state prison time for the offender. This information will be publicized to make the public aware of the aggressive stance taken against motor vehicle related crimes.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	152	Indictments	8
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	159	Misdemeanor Convictions	99
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	145	Felony Convictions	23
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	6	Number of MVT Cases Plea	100

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	2	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	2	Misdemeanor Convictions	0
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	2	Felony Convictions	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	0
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$54,677	

Niagara County Sheriff's Office

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office received a $21,000 grant that pays for staff overtime and necessary training. The Stolen Vehicle Task Force within the sheriff's office includes deputies, supervisors, and investigators tasked with reviewing cases, trends, and field intelligence to combat theft and fraud. The sheriff's office continues to collaborate with other law enforcement agencies in order to reduce theft and fraud throughout Western New York.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office uses specific strategies to deal with the crimes of vehicular theft, larceny from within motor vehicles, and vehicular insurance fraud. For motor vehicle theft, reports are analyzed to determine where and when the thefts have occurred, what types of vehicles are taken, and what is the apparent motive for the thefts. For example, pick-up trucks were a popular steal in the towns of Wheatfield and Pendleton in 2014. Through analysis and field intelligence, it was determined some of these stolen trucks were being used to transport stolen all-terrain vehicles, while others were

being used in residential burglaries. Still others were being stolen for parts such as tires, rims and catalytic converters. The sheriff's office worked with several other law enforcement agencies on these investigations, including the New York State Police, Amherst Police, and the Genesee County Sheriff's Office. The approximately 400 hours of overtime was a necessary tool to help conclude on-going investigations and provide additional targeted road patrols.

Follow-up investigations were done regarding incidents of larceny from motor vehicles where these crimes were occurring in clusters. Field intelligence was used to map crimes, and extra patrols using both marked and unmarked vehicles were funded with grant money. This major crime spree was resolved in Newfane with the arrest of several juveniles. In insurance fraud investigations, all theft reports are analyzed for possible false claims, and these claims along with suspicious accident reports are passed on by the road patrol division to investigators. The investigators are assigned to follow up on these cases as needed

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	169	Reported MV Thefts	60
Misdemeanor Arrests	15	Recovered Stolen MVs	41
Felony Arrests	17	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	4	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	2
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	1
Felony Arrests	0		

Niagara Falls Police Department

The Niagara Falls Police Department received a $33,500 grant that pays for staff overtime and training. The project is managed as a special operation by the captain of the Criminal Investigation Division with emphasis on investigations and appropriate follow-up. As warranted, the department operates surveillance in locations identified as high auto theft crime areas as determined through crime analysis data which is collected and analyzed. Stings and undercover operations are planned and scheduled based on the result of the data analysis.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

In 2014, there was a 5 percent decrease in reported motor vehicle theft in Niagara Falls when compared to figures reported in 2013. Felony arrests for grand larceny of a motor vehicle, however, increased by more than 60 percent in 2014 as compared to 2013. This is a result of the quality of the investigations along with the follow-up component of the program paid with DCJS grant funding. Overtime funding affords investigators the ability to follow-up and thoroughly investigate incidents making it possible to gather enough information and evidence to make arrests. In addition, auto stripping arrests increased 36 percent in 2014 compared to 2013. This is due to a concerted effort by the department's Auto Theft Unit to reduce the number of stolen motor vehicles and larcenies from within motor vehicles in Niagara Falls.

For example, officers were dispatched to 717 Pine Ave. for a report of a stolen Chrysler Town & Country minivan on Jan. 23, 2014. While investigating this incident, an armed robbery was reported at a check cashing business down the street. Police determined the stolen vehicle from the Pine Avenue incident was the getaway vehicle in the robbery attempt. Witnesses observed two males fleeing the area in the white minivan. Auto theft investigators pulled security video footage of the incident, which revealed the suspects driving the stolen minivan into a parked vehicle. Detectives were able to collect clear images from the video surveillance and develop a photo array. The two men were subsequently arrested.

In another notable case, officers were investigating an incident where a man kicked in the passenger side window of a vehicle and took several items. The incident was captured on a surveillance video. Officers at the scene were able to recover blood and possible fingerprints from inside the vehicle. The unit collected this evidence for analysis in order to identify the suspect and attempt to link him with a rash of similar car break-ins in the downtown tourist area. Using the results of the blood analysis, officers were able to positively identify the suspect and make an arrest. The suspect was also positively linked to numerous prior vehicular break-ins and larcenies and charged accordingly.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	148	Reported MV Thefts	105
Misdemeanor Arrests	57	Recovered Stolen MVs	90
Felony Arrests	34	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	5	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	4
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	2
Felony Arrests	2		

Finger Lakes Region

Finger Lakes Region

Monroe County District Attorney's Office
Monroe County Sheriff's Office
Rochester Police Department

Orleans
Monroe Wayne
Genesee
Ontario Seneca
Wyoming
Livingston Yates

Monroe County District Attorney's Office

The Monroe County District Attorney's Office has a Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Bureau staffed by an assistant district attorney and an investigator, both funded through the $127,000 grant. The assistant district attorney evaluates and prosecutes cases referred by police, advises police on procedures, and meets with officers to discuss programmatic issues. The investigator enhances the prosecution of cases by interviewing witnesses, evaluating evidence, serving subpoenas, checking prior criminal histories to identify repeat offenders, and works closely with police agencies to investigate the target crimes. The bureau remains a vital component of Monroe County's efforts to reduce automobile theft and insurance fraud.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The bureau works closely with task force agencies to continue the downward trend in auto theft within the county. In 2006, the number of motor vehicle thefts reported in Monroe County was 3,030. The number of thefts reported in 2013 was 886, representing a 71 percent decrease. Key to this success has been the continued collaboration with our law enforcement partners to identify trends, hot spots, and techniques employed by car thieves and those committing insurance fraud. Members of the task force meet once a month, but also have the opportunity to collaborate at weekly law enforcement meetings not directly related to the theft and fraud program. The task force utilizes intelligence to initiate investigations into chop shop locations, retagging operations and MV theft rings. All of the local police agencies and district attorney's office already share a common offender database further streamlining the sharing of information.

 The district attorney, in conjunction with the Auto Theft Task Force, continues to educate law enforcement in the county about the auto stripping statute of the state's Penal Law. In addition, when dealing with stolen auto cases, the district attorney has asked law enforcement agencies to charge the driver with third-degree unauthorized use of a vehicle in addition to the appropriate felony charge, such as criminal possession of stolen property, to provide a predicate element enhancing prosecution penalties or plea offers. The office continues to use the vertical prosecution model for all theft and fraud prosecutions and continues its policy of severely restricting plea reductions for serious felony cases or repeat offenders in order to ensure the best prosecutorial outcomes.

Early in the year, there was a spike in the number of thefts involving state Department of Motor Vehicle forms MV-35 and MV-37. Individuals claiming to be the owners of vehicles reported having misplaced the titles. These individuals then prepared the forms in order to facilitate the transaction to a vehicle dismantler or scrapper. Once done, the salvage yard retains the form, and the person who presented the DMV document to the salvage yard is paid for the vehicle. There are some unscrupulous tow truck operators who have also been directly involved in the theft of these vehicles.

After years of decline, cases of joyriding rose in 2014. One such instance began as a fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property case. The defendant was picked up by state troopers for riding in a stolen vehicle. Weeks later, a fingerprint taken from a burglarized home came back as the man who stole the vehicle. He is now being prosecuted on a count of second-degree burglary in addition to a count of fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property.

The primary auto insurance fraud issue remains defendants reporting their cars stolen to collect insurance money, but really abandoning the vehicles. Often a perpetrator's automobile will be damaged in a way that is not covered by their policy. To avoid the cost of the repair, they will 'dump' their car in another part of the county and report the car stolen. When the car is ultimately recovered, they claim the damage occurred following the theft.

The strategy used to combat auto insurance fraud utilizes the state Department of Financial Services Criminal Investigation Unit as the primary source for cases. At each regular monthly task force meeting, new referrals received by the unit are reviewed and assigned to the investigator working under the grant. This close working relationship with unit investigators is essential when conducting these investigations. As the referrals come from insurance special investigation units, some investigation has already been conducted. This allows the district attorney's office and the specific local law enforcement agency to review cases and determine which ones have the best solvability factors. This ensures that time, program money and effort are expended wisely. As in the auto theft cases, inter-agency collaboration will continue to be a cornerstone upon which the continued success of the anti-fraud program rests.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	4	Indictments	27
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	117	Misdemeanor Convictions	129
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	140	Felony Convictions	27
Number of MVT Cases Taken to	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea	216

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	1	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	5
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	3	Felony Convictions	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	3
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			$45,000

Monroe County Sheriff's Office

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office received a $31,000 grant that pays for overtime needed to investigate theft and fraud cases and fund necessary training. The sheriff's program collaborates with

other members of the law enforcement community in Monroe County, including the Monroe County District Attorney's Office, the Rochester Police Department, the New York State Police, the state Department of Financial Services, and the state Department of Motor Vehicles to reduce motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within the county.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The sheriff's office utilizes the grant funds to conduct proactive undercover surveillance/enforcement details as part of its strategy to reduce the incidence of both motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The sheriff's strategy in reducing stolen vehicles is to conduct investigations in a manner that facilitates the arrest of offenders while they are in the act of trying to steal cars, commit larcenies from within the car, and/or stripping motor vehicles of their parts.

The sheriff uses a coordinated departmental effort when tracking and identifying pattern crimes such as motor vehicle theft. The sheriff uses a computer statistics program to identify pattern crimes and then addresses these crimes with targeted law enforcement strategies. The Monroe Crime Analysis Center assists the sheriff's office with tracking and mapping crime patterns within the sheriff's office's jurisdiction. The center also informs the sheriff of emerging crime trends that may soon have an impact in the area. Once a pattern is identified, the sheriff's office coordinates its resources in an attempt to effectively target the identified problem.

The sheriff's theft and fraud task force targets motor vehicle crimes by utilizing center information and GPS technology. Using these resources, the sheriff initiated a surveillance investigation into an increasing number of catalytic converter thefts from commercial vehicles. Investigators identified a pattern by using the center's pin mapping software. The pattern revealed that commercial vehicles parked near railroad tracks were being targeted for converter theft. Investigators were able to develop a suspect through the use of an informant. The suspect was subsequently arrested on traffic charges and his vehicle was impounded. A search warrant executed on the suspect's vehicle revealed evidence of converter thefts, including a reciprocating saw with multiple blades and scrap yard receipts for catalytic converters scrapped in the Bronx, New York.

Prior to the release of the suspect's vehicle from impound, investigators obtained a court order and installed a GPS unit on the vehicle. The investigators monitored the suspect's movements for several days. By coordinating with the state police, a stop was initiated on the suspect's vehicle as it was traveling on the state Thruway en route to New York City to scrap stolen converters. When investigators interviewed two suspects, both admitted their involvement in six separate catalytic converter thefts occurring in Monroe County and several catalytic converter thefts from surrounding counties. As part of the investigation, investigators executed a search warrant at the main suspect's residence, which led to the additional recovery of $18,000 worth of all-terrain vehicles stolen within Monroe County. At the conclusion of the investigation, both suspects were charged with multiple felonies.

In 2014, members of the sheriff's task force also investigated seven cases of possible fraud referred by the state Department of Financial Services.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	176	Reported MV Thefts	176
Misdemeanor Arrests	18	Recovered Stolen MVs	115
Felony Arrests	7	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	7	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	1
Felony Arrests	1		

Rochester Police Department

The Rochester Police Department received a $41,500 grant, which pays for overtime to conduct investigations and training in the latest trends. The Auto Theft Unit under the command of the department's Special Operations Division is responsible for coordinating investigations into motor vehicle related crime initiatives within the department and utilizes personnel from other divisions within the department as needed.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The department's Auto Theft Unit investigator is assigned full-time to the multi-agency Auto Crimes Task Force, which also consists of investigators from the Monroe County District Attorney's Office, the state Department of Motor Vehicles-Field Investigations Division and the state Department of Financial Services Criminal Investigations Unit. Maintaining state-of-the art knowledge is done through training. One member attended the DCJS statewide annual meeting on theft and fraud in Saratoga Springs, and three members attended the 2014 International Association of Auto Theft Investigators Joint Annual Training in Ohio. In March, the department presented auto theft training to 29 local police recruits representing four different law enforcement agencies. Members also attended 12 Auto Theft Task Force meetings held throughout the year. The meetings were open to all local law enforcement agencies that are involved in motor vehicle related investigations.

In 2014, the department conducted 20 investigations into vehicles stolen and then sold to local scrap processors by using various state Department of Motor Vehicle forms. Ten vehicles sold for scrap had already been crushed or severely damaged when located and had no value on recovery. The pre-theft aggregate value of these crushed vehicles was more than $20,862. Officers recovered fourteen additional vehicles through the investigatory process with an aggregate value of $63,861.

Joyriding thefts continue to be investigated. Most of these are crimes of opportunity made possible when a vehicle is left running or when spare keys are left inside. Analysis revealed at least 64 percent of all vehicles stolen during the first three quarters of 2014 involved keys being left in the vehicle. To combat this problem, the department conducted four enforcement details and issued 32 citations for unattended vehicle. Motorists were given brochures with information on auto theft statistics and theft prevention measures.

There was a noticeable increase in the thefts of motor vehicles for parts during 2014. Members identified a pattern involving thefts of 1990s vintage Honda and Acura vehicles. Many of the vehicles were recovered stripped of engines, transmissions, hoods, doors, and other major components. At least 45 thefts were linked to this pattern. Several suspects were identified as the perpetrators, and two locations were identified where the vehicles were being stripped. Physical surveillance of chop shop locations was conducted and supplemented by evidence gleaned from a pole camera installed nearby.

A confidential informant was developed who corroborated much of what police discovered during the investigation. Members examined and photographed every stolen Honda and Acura recovered in Rochester to determine if the theft was part of this pattern and to document missing components and collect evidence. The confidential informant indicated the suspects were using master keys to steal the vehicles.

Task force members executed search warrants at both suspected locations and were assisted by members of the New York State Police, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, Monroe County District Attorney's Office, and the National Insurance Crimes Bureau. During execution of the search warrants, law enforcement recovered a stolen retagged Honda, a stolen retagged Acura, five stolen automobile engines and transmissions, and 16 major body parts from stolen Hondas and Acuras with an aggregate value of $6,675. Two truckloads of smaller unidentifiable parts were also seized as evidence of the ongoing auto stripping activity. Two additional stolen engines and transmissions the suspects had installed in their vehicles were subsequently recovered. As a result of the investigation, three suspects were charged with felony possession of stolen property. The investigation into this case continues and additional charges are possible.

Investigations for a variety of suspected insurance frauds continued through 2014, including claims for prior unreported damage and false reports of thefts. In one investigation, the insured filed a claim for the theft of his 2012 Honda Accord from his residence. Working with the state Department of Financial Services, investigators learned the insured individual recently lost his job and was having financial difficulties. The circumstances surrounding the theft were highly suspicious. The vehicle was transponder-equipped, and the insured claimed to have the only key issued to him when he purchased the vehicle. Members were able to determine that two keys were provided at the time the vehicle was sold. During the course of the investigation, the vehicle was recovered after being involved in a rollover accident. The driver fled the scene but left the key inside. The key was on a tag issued by the auto dealer when the vehicle was sold to the insured individual. The insured individual then moved to Washington and his claim for $15,000 was denied by the insurance company.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	72	Reported MV Thefts	492
Misdemeanor Arrests	2	Recovered Stolen MVs	24
Felony Arrests	25	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	2

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	10	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	0
Felony Arrests	2		

Capital District Region

Capital District Region

Albany Police Department
Albany County District Attorney's Office

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| Albany Police Department |

The Albany Police Department received a $36,000 grant that pays for police overtime and training for officers assigned to its Auto Crimes Task Force. The task force continues to work with the Albany County District Attorney's Office and the New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc., a trade organization comprised of representatives from most major insurance companies, law enforcement agencies, the National Insurance Crime Bureau, the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, New York State Department of Financial Services, the New York State Police, and other state regulatory agencies in an effort to reduce motor vehicle theft- and insurance fraud-related crimes and the escalating cost of vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

MVTIF Activity for 2014

In 2014, the department recorded a 15.5 percent decrease in stolen motor vehicles from figures recorded in 2013. The police recovery rate last year was 78 percent for stolen vehicles. Most of the vehicles stolen were a result of victims leaving their vehicles running unattended or leaving spare keys in an unlocked vehicle, along with shell vehicles being stolen for scrap. Most of the recovered vehicles show no signs of forced entry (broken windows/ door handles, etc.). Less than 1 percent of vehicles recovered showed any damage to the steering column or ignition. The top two locations for motor vehicle theft, West Hill and South End, are also the areas where Albany police receive the most calls for service and where most motor vehicles are recovered. These areas have a higher incidence of criminal activity such as assaults, robberies, drug sales/possessions, and weapons possession, and are generally lower income areas. Additionally, a majority of the city's population live and work in these areas, so vehicles are in abundance.

Although Albany experienced a decrease in motor vehicle theft, the number of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle charges for 2014 were up by 26 percent over 2013. The recovery rate for unauthorized use cases was 72 percent, with 42 of the 58 vehicles recovered in 2014. The areas for the highest reported incidents of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle were approximately the same as the locations of thefts. Most of these incidents were due to domestic incidents, drug-addicted victims lending their vehicle out to obtain drugs from a third party, or in some cases as a form of payment for drugs.

Vehicle theft in Albany is largely a crime of convenience and most of the vehicles stolen in the city are not used in committing crimes. As in the prior three years, Albany is still experiencing a comparable number of thefts of non-working vehicles parked in lots, yards and other properties. They appear to be

stolen and sold for scrap since metal prices have remained high.

In 2014, the department's Auto Crimes Task Force ran several details aimed at reducing thefts of motor vehicles and thefts from motor vehicles. The task force ran a two-week information campaign called "Take Your Keys with You" in December to educate the public on the importance of not leaving vehicles running unattended. This was followed by a two-week zero-tolerance enforcement phase. In addition, the task force ran several details to address the increasing number of thefts from motor vehicles. The details were run during concerts or special public events, which bring more people and cars into the city. Detail locations were based upon information supplied by the Albany Crime Analysis Center. These details operated in areas of the city with higher instances of vehicular theft, and on specific days and times identified by the center as having a higher incidence of thefts related to motor vehicles. The task force also ran a detail with state motor vehicle investigators checking unregistered repair shops for stolen vehicles and vehicle parts.

Law Enforcement Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	216	Reported MV Thefts	216
Misdemeanor Arrests	37	Recovered Stolen MVs	164
Felony Arrests	67	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	0	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded	4,732
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims	0
Felony Arrests	0	Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement	
		Investigation Initiation	

Albany County District Attorney's Office

The Albany County District Attorney received a $69,000 grant from DCJS, which pays for a part time assistant district attorney and a part-time supervisory prosecutor. This enables the office to address appropriate cases through the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit. This unit coordinates with law enforcement agencies in the areas of education, training, detection, investigation and the prosecution of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

MVTIF Activity in 2014

The Albany County District Attorney's Office established a task force with the goal of making all county law enforcement agencies aware of criminal activity by known individuals throughout the county. The task force conducted its first meeting in September 2014 and the group will continue to meet quarterly to facilitate the sharing of information.

The primary focus of the program throughout 2014 was to continue the effective prosecution of all theft and fraud cases referred to the office. The Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit identifies, tracks, and reviews files related to auto theft and related insurance fraud, and targets cases for further review or disposition. The unit prosecutes charges such as grand larceny of a motor vehicle, criminal possession of stolen property, motor vehicle fraud, auto stripping, illegal possession

of a VIN, and/or unauthorized use of a vehicle. The auto stripping and unauthorized use statutes are predicate charges, meaning a previous conviction can be used to upgrade the charge in a second offense. The crime victim advocates in the office ensure that in each instance of theft or fraud, the victims, including insurance companies, are provided with and complete the necessary paperwork to be considered for restitution by the Court. In instances where restitution cannot be recovered during the court case, attempts to recover restitution through the corrections process or probation continue.

In collaboration with the office's partners in law enforcement, the county has continued to experience a decrease in instances of motor vehicle theft in Albany County.

Prosecutorial Office Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	2	Indictments	13
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	40	Misdemeanor Convictions	40
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	32	Felony Convictions	18
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	21

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Investigations Initiated	4	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	0
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	1	Felony Convictions	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	0
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		$ unknown at this time	

The New York Anti-Car Theft & Fraud Association, Inc.

The New York Anti-Car Theft & Fraud Association, Inc. is a statewide not-for-profit educational organization whose mission is to reduce auto crime and insurance fraud in New York. The association received a $62,000 Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud grant from DCJS, which pays for the production of training webinars, seminars and conferences The association also offers educational and training programs, collaborative sharing opportunities, and online resources for law enforcement personnel and for insurance special investigation units and claims personnel. The association provides information to consumers in the areas of motor vehicle theft and fraud, and continues to sponsor and manage training events, meetings and outreach efforts in auto crime prevention and insurance fraud detection and investigations throughout the year.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

The association's training efforts in 2014 concentrated on both vehicular crime and insurance fraud, providing effective professional and hands-on training in theft and fraud investigation and deterrence. In 2014, an increase of nearly 500 professionals took advantage of the training offered by the association. The association continues to expand its reach using live education, technology and other channels which include:

- Training and Education – Recognizing that the most effective efforts to combat motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud come when both law enforcement and insurance investigation personnel are aware of the latest techniques and information. The association focused on providing innovative hands-on training through its seminars, meetings and conferences.

- Collaborative Planning – Using the wealth of knowledge and experience within its membership and through affiliated agencies, the association taps into this professional community for joint planning of training seminars, for speakers and courses, and in sharing its organizational capabilities. This collaborative community includes auto crime experts, experienced law enforcement leaders and other knowledgeable professionals from the state Department of Insurance Frauds Bureau, Attorney General's Office, FBI, Department of Motor Vehicles, National Insurance Crime Bureau, Office of Medical Misconduct, NYPD Auto Crime, State Police and state prosecutors.

- Expanded and Improved Communication – Facilitated through an operational transition, the association expanded its communication outreach to law enforcement agencies and affiliate organizations across the state through a more robust web presence and greater electronic communications. Law enforcement feedback about online needs and interests was solicited at every training session. Recognizing that many law enforcement agencies still utilize facsimile technology in communicating with their personnel and other agencies, the association used increased mailings to inform these agencies about changes and to inform them of training opportunities available to their staff.

- Building Greater Connectivity and Networking – As an umbrella organization that includes law enforcement, insurance carriers, the state Department of Financial Services Frauds Bureau, the state Department of Motor Vehicles, and many other state agency fraud units, the association creates an effective networking arena, forum for sharing information, opportunity for effective communications between agencies, and a spirit of cooperation and helpfulness that permeates all of the training programs. The association also cooperates with other not-for-profit organizations such as North East Association of Auto Theft Investigators, New York State Chapter of Special Investigations Units and New York Prosecutors Training Institute to foster a strong networking relationship among them.

An example of these factors coming together successfully is at the association's annual state education conferences, where law enforcement and special investigations personnel come together to learn from many outstanding law enforcement, legal, state government and insurance company sources. The best among these professionals are celebrated at the annual awards presentation.

The spirit of cooperation fostered at the annual education conferences and all association training events continues through the communications networks that were established among law enforcement investigators long after the program concludes, and in some cases establishes strong connections of interagency cooperation for years to come. The association's training classes offer attendees the ability to access many different agencies they may not have contact with during the normal course of duty. The association's training seminars have opened new information resources to law enforcement that will aid in their investigations of insurance fraud crimes and other crimes due to the sharing of information and expertise.

The association continues to use the vast network of interagency communication opportunities to enhance its efforts.

Training Organization Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Number of	14	Number of Webinar Trainings	6
Number of Verified Attendees Number of Agencies Represented	1,502 438	Number of Verified Webinar	118
Number of MVT Articles Published	0	Number of MVIF Articles Published	0
Number of Webinars Available for Law	6	Number of Webinars Available for	6

New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc.

The New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc. received a $38,800 grant that enhances training for prosecutors and law enforcement professionals in the areas of motor vehicle theft and fraud without cost to participants. Each year, the institute hosts approximately 30 conferences attended by more than 2,500 prosecutors.

MVTIF Activities in 2014

In addition to conducting a webinar and two-day course on vehicle theft and insurance fraud, the institute initiated training on technological advances by inviting the National Domestic Communications Assistance Center to participate in a two-day course on theft and fraud investigations. The center is a unit of the FBI that assists local and state law enforcement agencies in the use and understanding of advanced communication and technology. The course, "Supercharging Investigations," included presentations by local prosecutors and members of the state police, and was the first training in the nation by the center directed specifically at local and state prosecutors.

Through "Online CLE," the institute maintains an extensive video library available to provide continuing legal education and training for New York prosecutors. There are more than 120 lectures available in the categories of insurance fraud and auto crimes, including lectures presented at training seminars in 2014.

The institute continues to partner with other agencies involved in combatting motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. For instance, the institute made a presentation at the Motor Vehicle Statewide Annual Meeting sponsored by DCJS and the New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, and has invited representatives from the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the New York Crime Analysis Centers to lecture at institute events.

Prosecutors throughout the state are made aware of resources through regular group e-mails containing summaries of state decisions on ethical issues and articles in the institute's quarterly magazine, *The Empire State Prosecutor*.

The institute also makes available numerous articles and webinars covered by other grants relevant to vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The institute attorneys are continuously available to respond to requests for technical and legal assistance and to direct prosecutors to other resources that assist district attorneys to dismantle auto crime rings and prosecute auto larcenies, insurance frauds and related crimes.

Training Organization Statistics

2014 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity:			
Performance Measure	*Total*	*Performance Measure*	*Total*
Number of Seminars/Trainings/Conferences	2	Number of Webinar Trainings Produced	1
Number of Verified Attendees	75	Number of Verified Webinar Training Viewers	16
Number of Agencies Represented	21		
Number of MVT Articles Published	0	Number of MV-IF Articles Published	0
Number of Webinars Available for Law Enforcement Agencies	0	Number of Webinars Available for Prosecutorial Offices	1

Reported Incidents of Motor Vehicle Theft - 2014

Rank	COUNTY	MV Theft		Rank	COUNTY	MV Theft
1	Kings	2,655		32	Cayuga	33
2	Queens	2,605		33	St. Lawrence	31
3	Bronx	1,474		34	Fulton	30
4	Erie	1,302		35	Ontario	29
5	Suffolk	1,230		36	Genesee	27
6	Monroe	974		37	Montgomery	24
7	Nassau	865		38	Clinton	22
8	New York	770			Cortland	22
9	Onondaga	500			Franklin	22
10	Westchester	472		41	Orleans	21
11	Niagara	253		42	Columbia	20
12	Albany	232		43	Washington	19
13	Richmond	220		44	Delaware	18
14	Rensselaer	199			Herkimer	18
15	Orange	189		46	Livingston	17
16	Oneida	172			Seneca	17
17	Schenectady	168		48	Greene	16
18	Broome	135			Madison	16
19	Chautauqua	100		50	Allegany	15
20	Rockland	82			Putnam	15
21	Dutchess	72		52	Essex	14
22	Saratoga	70			Otsego	14
23	Oswego	59			Warren	14
24	Cattaraugus	49		55	Tioga	13
25	Wayne	45		56	Schoharie	12
26	Chemung	44		57	Chenango	11
	Ulster	44		58	Lewis	10
28	Steuben	42			Wyoming	10
29	Sullivan	40		60	Yates	7
30	Jefferson	39		61	Schuyler	4
31	Tompkins	36		62	Hamilton	2

Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Suspected Incidents - 2014

Rank	COUNTY	MV INSURANCE FRAUD	Rank	COUNTY	MV INSURANCE FRAUD
1	New York	5,268	32	Tompkins	12
2	Kings	4,326	33	Allegany	11
3	Queens	2,977		Greene	11
4	Bronx	2,359		Oswego	11
5	Nassau	1,431	36	Clinton	9
6	Suffolk	895		Wayne	9
7	Westchester	465	38	Columbia	8
8	Erie	414		Cortland	8
9	Richmond	292		Seneca	8
10	Monroe	222	41	Delaware	7
11	Orange	114		Essex	7
12	Onondaga	98		Franklin	7
13	Rockland	85		Genesee	7
14	Albany	84		Madison	7
15	Oneida	59	46	Chenango	6
16	Niagara	51		Sullivan	6
17	Dutchess	43	48	Livingston	5
18	Ulster	35		Otsego	5
19	Schenectady	31		St Lawrence	5
20	Broome	26		Washington	5
21	Cayuga	23		Lewis	5
22	Putnam	21	53	Chemung	4
23	Rensselaer	19		Schoharie	4
24	Saratoga	18		Schuyler	4
25	Fulton	15		Warren	4
26	Montgomery	14		Wyoming	4
27	Jefferson	13	58	Tioga	3
	Steuben	13	59	Herkimer	2
29	Cattaraugus	12		Orleans	2
	Chautauqua	12	61	Hamilton	1
	Ontario	12	62	Yates	1