



**Motor Vehicle Theft and  
Insurance Fraud Board**

# **2015 Annual Report**

**New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services**  
*80 South Swan Street, Albany, New York 12210*

[www.criminaljustice.ny.gov](http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov)

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Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance  
Fraud Prevention  
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<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>I. Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
A. Motor Vehicle Theft	
B. Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud	
<b>II. Statewide Statistics.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>III. Program Goals.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>IV. Motor Vehicle Board.....</b>	<b>8</b>
A. Board Activity	
B. Programs Funded	
<b>V. Grant Program     Descriptions.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>VI. Appendix - 2015 Statistics</b>	

## 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.

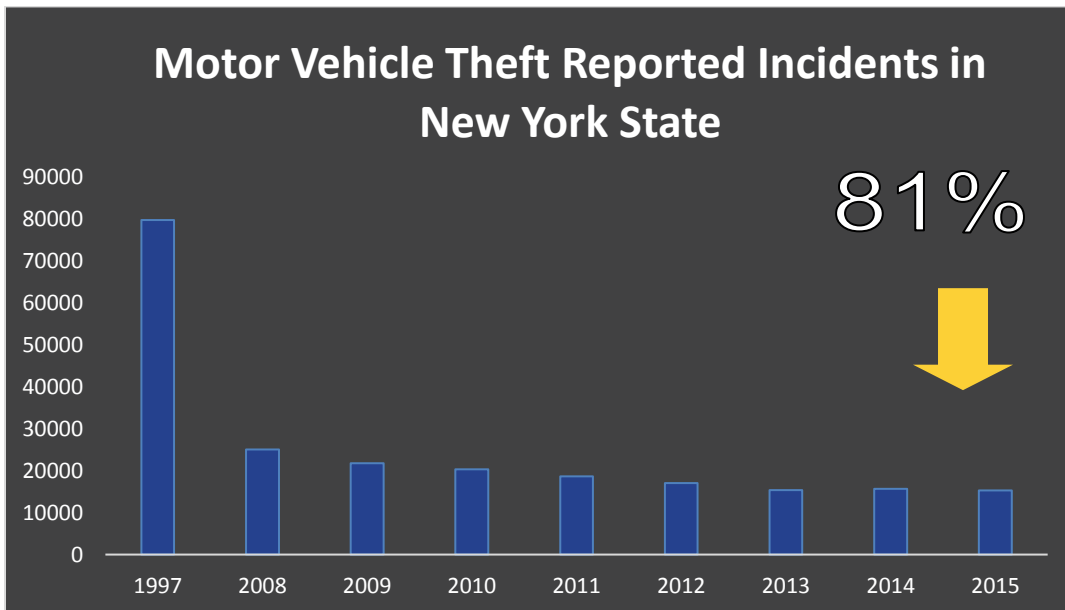
Created in 1994 by state Executive Law Article 36-A, the *New York Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Demonstration Program* (MVTIFP) is designed to reduce the overall cost of motor vehicle insurance in the state by targeting theft and fraud. A 12-member *Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board*, 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 2015-16 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 2015.

### A. Motor Vehicle Theft

Great strides have been made in reducing motor vehicle theft in New York. From 1997 through 2015, reported thefts were down 81 percent. In 2015, there were 15,269 motor vehicles stolen in New York State, representing a slight decrease from the previous year.

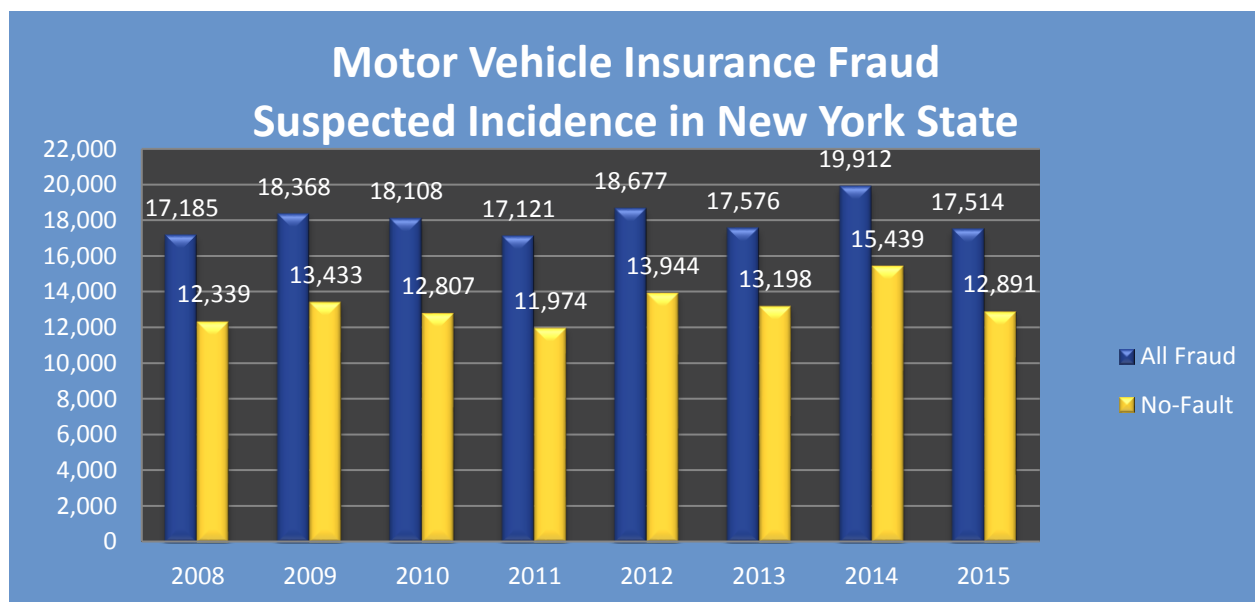


While a majority of motor vehicle theft continues to occur in the New York City region, six non-New York City counties – Erie, Monroe, Nassau, Onondaga, Suffolk and Westchester – also rank among the top 10 counties for reported motor vehicle thefts. Of the top 10 counties, four of them – Bronx, Monroe, New York, and Westchester – experienced increases in incidents of motor vehicle theft from 2014 to 2015.

Motor Vehicle Theft 2014 vs. 2015 Top Ten Counties			
County	2014	2015	% Change
Kings	2,655	2,480	(7)
Queens	2,605	2,270	(13)
Bronx	1,474	1,593	8
Erie	1,302	1,302	0
Suffolk	1,230	1,219	0
Monroe	974	1,067	10
New York	770	824	7.0
Nassau	865	683	(21)
Westchester	472	679	44
Onondaga	500	439	(12)

## B. Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud

Following a spike in the number of reports of suspected insurance fraud from insurers across the state in 2014, the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) Insurance Fraud Bureau has seen a decrease in such reports in 2015. Overall reports of motor vehicle insurance fraud increased 16 percent over a seven-year period, from 17,185 in 2008 to 19,912 in 2014, before dropping to 17,514 in 2015. No-fault insurance fraud reports mirrored this trend, rising from 12,339 in 2008 to 15,439 in 2014, a 25-percent increase, before decreasing to 12,891 in 2015.



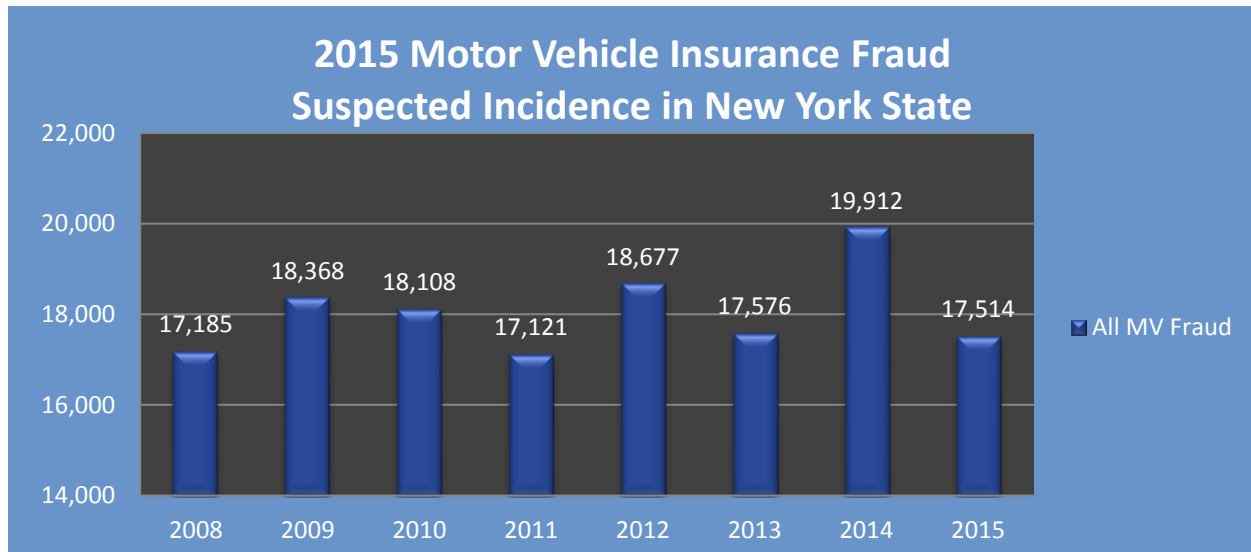
While recent annual reports of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud remain below historic highs, they have consistently exceeded 2008 levels, warranting a continued focus on reducing the incidence of these offenses.

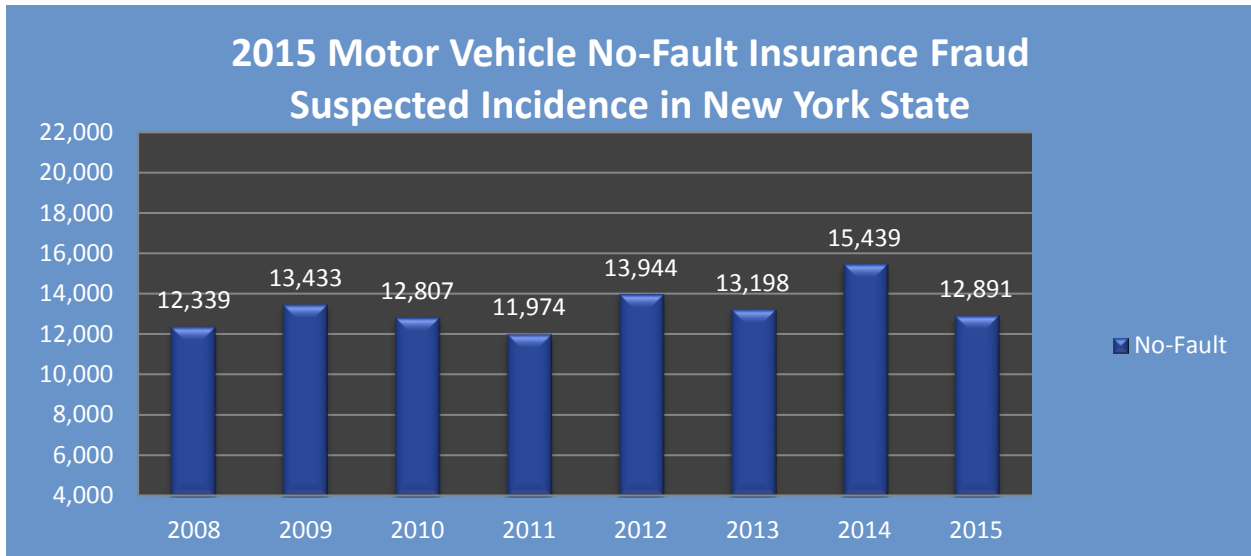
## II. Statewide Statistics

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

- **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.
- **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.

No-fault motor vehicle insurance fraud accounted for 57 percent of the total insurance fraud reports documented. Insurance carriers reported 17,514 incidents of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud to the DFS Insurance Frauds Bureau in 2015, 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 accounted for approximately 74 percent of all suspected incidents of motor vehicle insurance fraud reported in 2015.





## II. Program Goals

The goal of the MVTIFP program is to provide an integrated means to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. The program provides funding for initiatives that include theft and fraud prevention education; and the establishment and maintenance of specialized law enforcement units to combat motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Eligible applicants for funding include local law enforcement agencies and not-for-profit organizations that administer one or more motor vehicle theft or insurance fraud prevention programs 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 on recommendations from the board. These separate plans of operation include: assessing the scope of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud problems; including a regional analysis of motor vehicle theft and/or motor vehicle insurance fraud incidents and related activities; and analyses of various methods of combating 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](http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ofpa/mvtifpmain.htm)) and provide guidance on the types of projects supported by 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.

### **III. Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board**

The Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention program is administered by a 12-member Board with the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) commissioner or his or her designee as its chairman. All board members are appointed by the governor; three are recommended by the speaker of the state Assembly; three by the temporary president of the state Senate; and the remaining five by the governor. Members serve four-year terms and are not considered public officials. 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 annually.

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
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-A authorizes 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)
8. Annually submit to the governor and chairs of Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees a report on the board's activities, the activities of grant recipients and the results or impact of those activities

#### **A. Board Activity**

Board meetings in 2015 were conducted on March 24, June 16, Nov. 4, and Dec. 15.



## B. Programs Funded by the Board for Calendar Year 2016

### *New York City Agencies*

Applicant	Award
Bronx County District Attorney	\$321,918
Kings County District Attorney	\$238,926
New York County District Attorney	\$250,900
Queens County District Attorney	\$556,000
Richmond County District Attorney	\$50,190
New York City PD – Auto Crime Unit	\$199,000
New York City PD – FCIS	\$100,000
Fire Department of New York City	\$124,800

### *New York City Suburbs Agencies*

Applicant	Award
Nassau County District Attorney	\$114,217
Nassau County Police Department	\$145,783
Suffolk County District Attorney	\$293,010
Suffolk County Police Department	\$133,233
Westchester County District Attorney	\$288,500
Yonkers City Police Department	\$132,950

### *Capital Region/Hudson Valley*

Applicant	Award
Albany City Police Department	\$33,775
Albany County District Attorney	\$65,825

### *Western Region*

Applicant	Award
Buffalo City Police Department	\$107,400
Cheektowaga Town Police Department	\$38,542
Erie County District Attorney	\$105,258
Monroe County District Attorney	\$111,001
Monroe County Sheriff Office	\$34,720
Rochester City Police Department	\$44,336
Niagara County District Attorney	\$109,966
Niagara County Sheriff Department	\$19,050
Niagara Falls City Police Department	\$28,900

### *Statewide*

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

## V. 2015 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 (NYPD) 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 received a grant of \$273,000, which funded partial salaries of five assistant district attorneys and five 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.

### **MVTIFP Activity in 2015**

The Bronx District Attorney's Office owns three bait cars used to enhance undercover operations. Working jointly with police precincts throughout Bronx County that have experienced an increase in car theft, the bait cars are positioned in high crime areas with plainclothes police officers stationed nearby. In 2015, prosecutors worked with Bronx precincts to conduct 43 bait car operations and to use the license plate reader owned by the department. Joint operations between the NYPD and the district attorney's Auto Crime Unit led to the recovery of 122 vehicles valued at approximately \$1,801,010 last year.

Investigators and assistant prosecutors at the Bronx District Attorney's Office have maintained relationships and communications with collaborating partners in the fields of auto theft and insurance fraud. In 2015, investigators and prosecutors conferred with the following partner agencies: 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 state Department of Financial Services; New York State and out-of-state prosecutors' offices, the state Department of Motor Vehicles, and special investigations units of major motor vehicle insurance carriers. The district attorney's office dedicated five assistants and five investigators to work auto theft and insurance fraud cases as part of this project.

In one case, a 2007 Yamaha motorcycle was involved in a street accident on Sept. 27, 2014 and was taken to the impound unclaimed. Three days after the motorcycle was destroyed, the owner increased his insurance from liability-only coverage to comprehensive coverage. On Nov. 17, the owner reported to police and his insurer that he had parked the bike in flawless condition on Nov. 11 and that it had mysteriously disappeared overnight, even though it was in police impound at the time. In April 2015, the owner was arrested and charged with insurance fraud, attempted grand larceny, and other crimes. The defendant was subsequently indicted and now awaits trial.

Another case involved a man who fell behind on payments for his 2006 BMW 330i. The car was reported stolen in the Bronx sometime between 6 p.m. on Sept. 13, 2015, and 3:30 p.m. September 14, 2015, according to police and insurance reports the owner submitted. The car was then reported on fire on September 14, 2015 at 3:31 a.m. To allay any suspicion of complicity, the defendant submitted his key to the car to his insurer, while reporting that the key had been in his possession at all times. Unbeknownst to the defendant, the insurer forwarded the key to the New York City Fire Department (NYFD) fire marshals, who then submitted the key to BMW for inspection. The information retrieved from the key revealed that the key had been used to start the BMW at 3:22 a.m. on Sept. 14, 2015 –nine minutes before the fire was reported. A license plate reader tracked the car traveling across the Macombs Dam Bridge into the Bronx at approximately 6:50 p.m. on Sept. 13, 2015. The vehicle was next tracked traveling into New Jersey on the George Washington Bridge at 7:45 p.m. on Sept. 13, 2015. On Oct. 22, 2015 a grand jury returned an indictment against the defendant charging him with third-degree insurance fraud, third-degree attempted grand larceny, first-degree falsifying business records, and third-degree falsely reporting an Incident.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	1	Indictments	46
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	63	Misdemeanor Convictions	127
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	254	Felony Convictions	32
MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	MVT Cases Plea Bargained	301

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	14	Indictments	2
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	1
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	5	Felony Convictions	2
MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	2
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 in 2015, paying for eight part-time assistant prosecutors, three 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 operates a five-zone program dividing Kings County's 23 police precincts into five trial zones. This allows staff in each zone 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.

#### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

The district attorney's office continued 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 prong of the approach 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

motor vehicle and insurance fraud crimes occurring in any of the zones. The third prong focuses on identifying those who fund and benefit from organized motor vehicle crime in order to increase the number of prosecutions under the state Organized Crime Control Act, which allows authorities to pursue asset forfeiture and financial penalties.

The district attorney’s office continued to work closely with other agencies, including the state Department of Motor Vehicles; state Department of Financial Services; State Police; NYPD (including its Auto Crimes Unit, Fraudulent Accident Investigation Squad, Organized Crime Control Bureau, Legal Bureau, Civil Enforcements, Padlock Unit, and Internal Affairs Bureau); FDNY; the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission; the New York City Department of Sanitation; the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB); the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the U.S. Secret Service; and the U.S. Postal Service. In addition, the district attorney’s office utilizes the Crime Strategies Unit to gather, verify, analyze and distribute data throughout the office to enhance investigations and prosecutions. Designated prosecutors also work with precinct officers to inform the public of emerging crime patterns and trends so that residents can take proactive steps to reduce criminal activity in the community.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	81
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	451	Misdemeanor Convictions	180
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	469	Felony Convictions	28
MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	MVT Cases Plea Bargained	1401

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	2	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	3
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	11	Felony Convictions	1
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	40
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			\$4,927.23

### New York County District Attorney’s Office

The New York County (Manhattan) District Attorney's Office received a \$250,900 grant in 2015, funding 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 and the deputy chief of the Rackets Bureau, with investigation and prosecution assistance from assistant district attorneys and support staff in the Rackets Bureau, Major Economic Crimes Bureau and Trial Division.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2015**

Members of the Financial Frauds Bureau, the Major Economic Crimes Bureau, and the Rackets Bureau conduct long-term investigations into sophisticated criminal schemes pertaining to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. Assistant prosecutors and support staff investigated and prosecuted a number of

significant cases in 2015.

The Financial Frauds Bureau prosecuted a Manhattan individual who falsely reported his vehicle stolen. The vehicle was recovered from another borough with severe fire damage. The individual had his motor vehicle torched so he could file a false claim with his insurance company. In September 2015, he pled guilty to first-degree offering a false instrument for filing, a class E felony.

Assistant prosecutors in the Rackets Bureau, along with NYPD detectives and investigators from the state Department of Financial Services have been data-mining the complaints filed in the Insurance Frauds Bureau data base. In February 2015, the collaboration led to the arrest of 10 individuals coordinating a series of staged motor vehicle accidents and then falsifying accident reports and insurance claims.

The defendants were charged in multiple indictments in state Supreme Court with third- and fourth-degree insurance fraud and first-degree falsifying business records. To date, seven defendants have pleaded guilty to a felony, one defendant pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor, and two defendants' cases are pending. The investigation also identified several medical mills and additional individuals engaged in insurance fraud. This investigation is ongoing. Prosecutors and analysts continue to investigate medical mills –corrupt clinics controlled by non-physicians that exist solely to fraudulently bill insurance carriers for unnecessary treatment of non-existent injuries occurring from minor or staged automobile accidents.

The Trial Division of the district attorney's office 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

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i><b>Performance Measure</b></i>	<i><b>Total</b></i>	<i><b>Performance Measure</b></i>	<i><b>Total</b></i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	35
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	89	Misdemeanor Convictions	167
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	86	Felony Convictions	60
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	4	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	225

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i><b>Performance Measure</b></i>	<i><b>Total</b></i>	<i><b>Performance Measure</b></i>	<i><b>Total</b></i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	22
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	98	Misdemeanor Convictions	126
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	58	Felony Convictions	34
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	1	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	182
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 in 2015, paying 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.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

In 2015, the district attorney continued its comprehensive approach toward 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 67 new cases – 59 motor vehicle theft-related and eight insurance fraud-related – resulting in 56 convictions. Among these, 30 were felony convictions, with 29 for motor vehicle theft-related crimes and one related to insurance fraud. Excluding the cases of the Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit, there were 917 new MVTIF cases: 913 motor vehicle theft-related and four insurance fraud-related. These resulted in 693 convictions, including 136 felony convictions. The following are examples of successful investigations and prosecutorial efforts in both the auto crime and insurance fraud areas in 2015.

- As a result of an investigation that concluded in November 2015, a licensed insurance broker operating out of an office in the Forest Hills area of Queens was charged with grand larceny, insurance fraud and other crimes for allegedly writing policies for “dollar vans,” but claiming the high-risk vehicles were used for other purposes to get discounted rates. The defendant also allegedly put the insurance policies in the names of mystery “friends” instead of the actual drivers. Charges remain pending at this time.
- A Dominican national residing in the Bronx was charged with allegedly possessing more than 900 fraudulent 2016 New York State Safety/Emission Inspection stickers after being screened by U.S. Customs officers at John F. Kennedy International Airport following a flight from the Dominican Republic. Charges remain pending at this time.
- Eight Brooklyn men – ranging in age from 21 to 27 – were indicted for their participation in a theft ring operating in Queens County and elsewhere between April 2014 and June 2015. This ring specialized in selling stolen vehicles, as well as firearms, narcotics, counterfeit cash and fake license plates. To date, two defendants have received jail sentences in the case. Charges for the remaining defendants are pending at this time.
- A New York City police officer was charged with insurance fraud, perjury and other crimes in connection with the alleged disappearance of his 2010 Acura vehicle, which he reported stolen and was found burning in New Jersey in August 2014. Charges remain pending at this time.
- Seventeen individuals were indicted for their alleged participation in a large-scale auto theft and ‘title washing’ ring between February 2013 and November 2014. The defendants were accused of stealing scores of luxury vehicles from city streets and car dealerships and ‘washing’ the vehicles’ titles by changing the VINs before selling them with ‘clean’ papers through a black market broker. To date, three jail sentences, two probation sentences and one conditional discharge have been imposed in relation to the case. In addition, three defendants have pled guilty and are awaiting

sentencing. Charges for the remaining defendants are pending at this time.

- The owner of a Queens auto-body shop pleaded guilty to bilking the city and state of New York out of collectible tax revenue and agreed to make \$451,848.82 in criminal and civil restitution, including interest and penalties.
- A 48-year-old Astoria, Queens resident was charged with grand larceny and other charges for breaking into several cars and stealing airbags and a hybrid vehicle battery pack. The defendant received a one-year jail sentence on the case.
- A Jamaica, Queens man pleaded guilty to a weapon possession and other charges arising from his participation in a scheme that included selling stolen vehicles over the Internet. The defendant was sentenced to 12 years in prison on one indictment and concurrent terms of up to three years on three additional indictments.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	5	Indictments	31
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	22
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	59	Felony Convictions	29
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	36

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	2	Indictments	1
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	4
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	8	Felony Convictions	1
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	4
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$0	

### Richmond County District Attorney's Office

The Richmond County (Staten Island) District Attorney's Office received a \$76,700 grant in 2015, paying for five part-time assistant district attorneys and one part-time investigator. The Supreme Court Bureau investigates and 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 pled down to a misdemeanor. The senior detective investigator collaborates with other law enforcement and criminal investigating agencies.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

The primary goal of the MVTIFP program is to provide an integrated means to prevent, deter and reduce the incidences of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud in Richmond County. The district attorney's approach to case reviews includes interviews of suspects and witnesses to gain intelligence about defendants' modus operandi and to learn about the latest technologies employed by criminals. The district attorney's office works closely with its key partners to address

insurance fraud-related crimes.

In 2015, there were 123 cases prosecuted for motor vehicle theft-related activities: 72 misdemeanor arrests and 51 felony arrests. Many of the felony defendants faced multiple counts; some involved illegal drugs and other cases included homicides.

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. Through August 2015, Fire Marshals had investigated 14 vehicle fires in Richmond County, eight of which were categorized as incendiary. 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.

In one notable case, a Supreme Court assistant district attorney is prosecuting a carjacking suspect accused of committing two homicides in Richmond County. In July 2014, the 25-year-old male defendant allegedly killed two men in shootings: one victim was a 40-year-old man shot in the Concord neighborhood and the other victim was a 23-year-old man shot in the head while waiting at a bus stop on the west shore in the Mariners Harbor area. Just a few blocks away, the defendant waved a gun and demanded money from a 29-year-old and carjacked his 2006 Hummer with an estimated resale value of \$20,750.00. This case is pending.

In an insurance fraud case, a 2014 investigation resulted in the arrest of a 32-year-old suspect with a D felony as his top charge. He pleaded guilty in 2015 to fifth-degree insurance fraud and was sentenced to a conditional discharge and restitution payment to the auto insurance company in the amount of \$33,000.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	3
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	72	Misdemeanor Convictions	36
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	51	Felony Convictions	16
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	63

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	3
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	4	Felony Convictions	1
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	4
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$36,600	

### New York City Police Department Auto Crime Division

The Auto Crime Division is part of the Organized Crime Control Bureau of the NYPD. It is the largest law enforcement unit in the country dedicated to the detection and apprehension of those involved in motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud, with 102 staff members currently assigned to the unit. The



division cooperates with other law enforcement agencies and district attorneys' offices to fulfill the mission of the MVTIFP program by providing the means to detect, prevent, deter, and reduce motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within its jurisdiction.

### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

The Auto Crime Division strategy in combatting motor vehicle related crime involves the analysis of trends and causes of auto crimes to inform targeted investigations in those areas. The unit has an analyst team that develops statistics on reported auto theft and insurance fraud-related crimes within New York City. The information is disseminated throughout the police department and to other jurisdictions to identify trends and locations to be targeted for enforcement. The Auto Crime Division's Borough Teams and Special Operations Teams use the information to develop investigation strategies.

Monitoring social media and internet sales of motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts has cultivated leads into organized theft rings, resulting in the recovery of numerous stolen vehicles and parts through buy and bust operations. These investigations have been enhanced by the use of undercover officers and informants. In addition, collaboration with interstate and federal law enforcement contacts has allowed unit investigators to develop information to prosecute individuals or groups using the internet to conduct motor vehicle-related illegal activity in other states.

The division continues to use technology, including wire taps, tracking devices, license plate readers, cameras, clandestine identification, and smart phones in its investigations. Investigators are able to access important records from the Department of Motor Vehicles, National Insurance Crime Bureau, e-Justice, and other sources on department issued smart phones, allowing access to immediate and accurate field information.

In one long term investigation involving the theft of numerous late-model vehicles throughout New York City, investigators utilized wire taps, GPS tracking devices, covert surveillance cameras, and numerous surveillance operations. The investigation resulted in the arrest of 17 people responsible for the theft of at least 88 vehicles, 70 of which were stolen within New York City. Of these vehicles, 61 were recovered in various states and some were recovered prior to export out of the country.

Another investigation included the theft and export of high end rental vehicles. The suspects would rent vehicles using fraudulent identification and then export the vehicles before the rental companies were aware of the theft. The vehicles were shipped to locations in Africa using altered titles from junked and salvaged vehicles. The case involved a collaboration between multiple state, federal, and international agencies. The case involved the theft of approximately 90 vehicles and resulted in the prosecution of 18 individuals for various auto-related crimes and criminal enterprise.

In order to conduct long term investigations, both investigators and supervisors often work extended hours or report to work on scheduled days off. In 2015, investigators worked a total of 1,363 hours of overtime and supervisors worked a total of 171 hours of overtime on grant-related activities.

In addition, the Auto Crime Division operates one of only two college accredited courses on Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud in the country. The four day course is offered twice a month, and in 2015 the course, along with the auto crime section of the NYPD Criminal Investigators Course, resulted in the training of 2,079 attendees in the fundamentals of auto theft and insurance fraud.

In 2015, the number of vehicles reported stolen in New York City reached an all-time low of 7,332, suggesting the effectiveness of the Auto Crime Divisions strategies.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	70	Reported MV Thefts	7,332
Misdemeanor Arrests	104	Recovered Stolen MVs	4,606
Felony Arrests	314	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	17

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	61	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	104	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	42
Felony Arrests	314		

### New York Police Department Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad

The Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad received a \$97,000 grant in 2015. The grant paid for training, overtime for 12 uniformed members and costs incurred during 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.

#### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

In January 2015, the squad initiated a joint investigation with the state Department of Financial Services. Investigators received information regarding a suspicious collision involving a limousine and another vehicle. Subsequent investigation and interviews conducted by the squad and DFS determined that the collision was deliberate and probable cause was developed on five people involved in the collision. On April 23, 2015 the squad and DFS arrested the five individuals.

In late 2014, the squad initiated an investigation regarding a staged/caused collision ring operating in northern New York County. This ring was using rented U-Haul trucks to hit livery vehicles occupied by co-conspirators. Commencing in January and continuing through March, the squad made 12 felony arrests related to this ring. The squad has since identified the suspected ring leader/stager of these collisions and is developing probable cause to charge this individual with approximately 15 caused/staged collisions.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	15	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	25
Misdemeanor Arrests	4	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	23
Felony Arrests	19		

The Fire Department of New York (FDNY) received a \$104,000 grant in 2015 to fund fire marshals

assigned to the Auto Fraud Squad, which consists of four investigators and one supervisor, and is also 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.

### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

In 2015, FDNY responded to 2,521 motor vehicle fires. As a result of the grant funding, all motor vehicle fires are pre-screened by fire marshals and other FDNY analysts for indicators of arson or fraud. This pre-screening resulted in 489 motor vehicle fires being identified for further investigation last year. The resulting investigations helped insurance companies deny or avoid paying a total of \$478,830 in fraudulent claims.

Since the squad was funded, there has been 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.

The strategy also 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.

In October 2015, Fire Marshals of the Auto Fraud Squad noted unusual circumstances associated with a blaze in a late model Toyota and initiated a response plan. Forensic examination determined the fire was intentionally set and accelerated with a flammable liquid. Evidence of arson, fraud and staged theft was recovered at the scene. Searches were conducted in several databases, including: FDNY records, NYPD records, state eJustice, state Department of Motor Vehicles, LexisNexus, Accurint, and NICB/ISO Claim Search. The eJustice search showed the vehicle was reported stolen. To ensure safety and deconfliction, the motor vehicle owner was entered into SAFETNet.

Evidence recovered during the investigative canvas included security camera images that captured the Toyota and a second vehicle – a Ford Escape – drive onto the block where the fire occurred. A female was observed exiting the Toyota as a male exited the second car. Both subjects donned blue medical gloves, set fire to the Toyota, and then ran to the Ford Escape. The video also showed the lights of the Toyota flashing as the female used the key fob to lock the doors prior to driving away in the Ford.

Surveillance of the area surrounding the residence of the vehicle owner led to the discovery of a Ford Escape that fit the description of the second vehicle at the crime scene. Further investigation determined that it was rented under the name of the vehicle owner's boyfriend. When Fire Marshals checked NYPD accident reports it was determined that the torched vehicle had been involved in a hit and run incident just prior to the fire and staged theft. The hit and run resulted in the injury of a pedestrian.

Fire Marshals conducted an investigative interview of both the motor vehicle owner and the boyfriend, resulting in full confessions that the fire was set to conceal their involvement in the hit and run incident. Arrest charges included insurance fraud, arson, conspiracy, and falsely reporting an incident. Prosecution is underway.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i><b>Performance Measure</b></i>	<i><b>Total</b></i>	<i><b>Performance Measure</b></i>	<i><b>Total</b></i>
Investigations Initiated	325	Motor Vehicle Fires Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	489
Misdemeanor Arrests	8	Number of Fire Insurance Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	31
Felony Arrests	21		



## ***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 in 2015, funding two assistant district attorneys, two investigators, and an assistant dedicated to investigating and prosecuting theft and fraud cases. The office's Auto Theft and Fraud Unit - now Vehicle 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, the National Insurance Crime Board, and other law enforcement and insurance agencies in an effort to detect and reduce the incidence of these crimes.

#### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

In 2015, the district attorney's office installed the JustWare Case Management System, which includes specific data analysis in tracking vehicle theft and insurance fraud arrests and prosecutions to facilitate following and reporting these cases, analyzing the types of offenses seen, and tracking the dispositions. In addition, the office continued to work with law enforcement, NICB investigators, and other partner agencies to debrief defendants who may provide useful intelligence. Cooperating defendants can be employed undercover or aid in providing a basis for search warrants, which are useful in the investigation of stolen motor vehicles or parts. The unit also uses the district attorney's technical investigators to assist in investigations, including surveillance, and forensic analysis of electronics seized.

The unit's prosecution strategies and tactics are similar to those used in narcotics cases. Street-level offenders arrested for auto insurance fraud, such as those who stage accidents, are treated like street-level drug dealers. They can expect to face arrest, and if they do not plead guilty, a trial. Implementing a vertical prosecution strategy, the unit monitors and supervises lower level vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases by prosecutors. Unit prosecutors personally handle cases involving higher level offenders and crime rings.

One prosecution example originated from the insurance industry and involved a staged accident ring, which included the use of a U-Haul van in a planned collision. The unit's investigation resulted in the 2015 arrest of the ringleader and three co-conspirators.

In another case involving Nassau County police, the unit's prosecution resulted in a top count guilty plea to third-degree grand larceny for a defendant who was accused of stealing catalytic converters from 35 vehicles. The sentence included more than \$20,000 in restitution, incarceration, and probation.

In a case that involved the theft of late-model vans for the purpose of scrapping them for raw metal value, the unit again obtained a top count E-felony conviction and restitution. These cases can be difficult because the vehicles are rendered unidentifiable through the scrapping process. The defendant received a sentence including both incarceration and probation.

## Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	4	Indictments	21
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	105	Misdemeanor Convictions	48
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	74	Felony Convictions	37
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	2	Number of MVT Cases Plea	92

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	7	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	4
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	9	Felony Convictions	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	4
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			\$22,014

### Nassau County Police Department

The Nassau County Police Department received a grant totaling \$126,500 in 2015, paying 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 utilizes both covert and overt operations to target motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

#### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

The Nassau County Police Department, in collaboration with the Nassau County District Attorney's Office, have together created strategies which are tailored to prevent, deter, and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County. The police strategy, spearheaded by its Crimes Against Property Squad, involves detectives, police officers and supervisors throughout the county incorporating intelligence-based policing to perform targeted and comprehensive motor vehicle theft enforcement and investigations as part of the Surveillance Apprehension Vehicle Enforcement program.

In 2015, 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.

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.

One major investigation centered on unregistered vehicles being offered for sale. The vehicles' model year and mileage were listed on the windows, however the investigating detective compared the VIN data to listed data from the NICB and Carfax, and discovered that the sellers were 'rolling back' the odometers and changing information on NYS DMV documentation to hide their fraud. Several victims suffered financial loss due to the diminished value of the vehicles. Two individuals were ultimately charged with third-degree grand larceny, second-degree possession of a forged instrument and first-degree scheme to defraud. Additional victims have and continue to come forward, and the investigation and prosecution continues.

Police also investigated a series of thefts of older Honda Civics and Acuras from within residential areas. These vehicles are suspected of being stolen for their body parts, engines and transmissions, which are generally stripped and affixed to other cars being used as street racers. Police have been in contact with both the NYPD and Suffolk County Police regarding this pattern.

Additionally, police investigated a rash of new vehicles being stolen from Infiniti dealership storage lots. It is believed that the suspect entered the vehicles' 'on-board diagnostic' port and reprogrammed their own key, making the factory key unusable and allowing them to remove the vehicle from the storage lot. A person of interest has been identified. The squad and the NICB were able to assist in the recovery of six of the vehicles from across the country and Mexico. The squad is also investigating a similar theft pattern of new vehicles from a Ford dealership, thus far resulting in the arrest of an individual in possession of a stolen 2016 Ford F150 valued at \$65,000.

An overarching principal of the strategy is a recognition that inter- and intra-agency coordination and collaboration are keys to success. As such, both police and county prosecutors continue to develop relationships with outside agencies, such as the Suffolk County Police Auto Theft Squad, the NYPD Auto Crimes Division, DMV, the Department of Environmental Conservation and the NICB in order to more closely focus on motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. They have also been developing relationships with investigators from insurance companies, which have proven to be a valuable source for information and collaboration.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot</b>			
<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
Investigations Initiated	51	Reported MV Thefts	482
Misdemeanor Arrests	2	Recovered Stolen MVs	23
Felony Arrests	8	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
Investigations Initiated	3	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	0		

## Suffolk County District Attorney's Office

The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office has a Labor, Insurance and Revenue Crimes Bureau that targets insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft. The district attorney received a \$312,500 grant in 2015 that funded two senior assistant district attorneys, a detective investigator and a paralegal –all full-time. The bureau includes a division chief, bureau chief, deputy bureau chief, and 10 prosecutors dealing with motor vehicle theft, motor vehicle insurance fraud, and labor crimes.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

The bureau continues to serve as a prime example of inter-agency cooperation in combating insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft. The bureau handles referrals from the state Department of Motor Vehicles, state Department of Financial Services, the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the insurance industry Special Investigative Units. The bureau continues to use technology such as pole cameras, GPS units, cell site location history, and geo-mapping software to capture and prosecute motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud offenders. In addition, the bureau develops sting operations where insurance 'give-ups' are purchased by undercover investigators, eventually leading to arrests when the individuals submit false insurance claims. As a result of successful investigations and prosecutions in 2015, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office recovered \$1,784 which was reimbursed to the Travelers Insurance Company for fraudulent motor vehicle insurance claims, as well as \$213,382 in restitution to the victims of motor vehicle theft cases

In a notable case, police used the GPS locating feature on a stolen iPad to the driveway of a serial car thief who had recently been released from prison. At the home, they discovered a stolen Jeep and other property stolen from several victims. The defendant was convicted of fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property and two counts of fifth-degree criminal possession of stolen property, which landed him four years in prison as a prior felony offender. It was his third state-prison sentence.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	21	Indictments	36
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	144	Misdemeanor Convictions	55
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	342	Felony Convictions	49
Number of MVT Cases Taken To Trial	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	62

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	33	Indictments	5
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	20	Misdemeanor Convictions	7
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	78	Felony Convictions	16
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	18
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$1,784.42	



## Suffolk County Police Department

The Suffolk County Police Department received a \$143,000 grant in 2015 to pay 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 district attorney's office.

### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

In 2015, 1,329 vehicles were reported stolen in Suffolk County, 31 more than in 2014. The vehicle recovery rate for 2015 was 75 percent – a nominal increase from the 74 percent recovery rate in 2014. 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 2015, the Property Recovery Section identified a crime pattern involving the theft of catalytic converters from commercial vehicles, predominantly Ford vans and box trucks parked in industrial areas overnight and on weekends. Investigations included an expanded canvass for witnesses and video, leading to the identification of a suspect vehicle from video evidence. The suspect vehicle information was distributed to all precincts. The field intelligence officer from the 1<sup>st</sup> Precinct debriefed a prisoner who identified a possible subject. Surveillance was established on this subject and within 48 hours, he was arrested while stealing catalytic converters from four commercial fleet vehicles. Subsequently, he confessed responsibility for and was charged in eight additional catalytic converter thefts. During the two months prior to his arrest, approximately 66 thefts of catalytic converters were reported, while in the two months after his arrest only four such thefts were reported.

Detectives assisted the National Insurance Crime Bureau, FBI and U.S. Customs to investigate the theft of 12 motor vehicles in Suffolk County that were believed to have been shipped overseas. Recovery detectives assisted Nassau County Police and Suffolk County Police detectives assigned to the Suffolk County District Attorney's office in an ongoing investigation into the theft of motor vehicles from dealerships. A subject in possession of one of the stolen vehicles was arrested and an ongoing collaborative strategy to continue this investigation was developed.

Detectives from the Property Recovery Section also collaborated with other agencies to investigate incidents of insurance fraud. As a result of collaboration with DMV investigators, 15 people were arrested for filing false documents in an effort to obtain driver's licenses and/or vehicle titles. Detectives also worked with DMV investigators and NICB investigators to conduct a probe into the production and use of fraudulent inspection certificates.

Detectives audited approximately 1,490 records of vehicles sold for scrap within Suffolk County resulting in the identification of 14 stolen vehicles and the arrest of eight subjects.

Suffolk County detectives assigned to the district attorney's office engaged in a vertical prosecution strategy involving the purchases of 46 stolen vehicles. Seven of the vehicles were sold in furtherance of insurance fraud, 15 vehicles were stolen from secured lots at car dealerships, and three vehicles were stolen during the commission of residential and commercial burglaries. Approximately 12 defendants were identified, but only two arrests made due to the ongoing nature of the investigation. One defendant –arrested for three burglaries and car thefts –cleared nearly 50 burglaries throughout

Suffolk County and is now cooperating with the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office. A second defendant was arrested by Nassau County Police for possessing a stolen vehicle.

Training sessions were conducted for Suffolk County Police Department personnel by Property Recovery Section detectives on topics such as tactics and investigative techniques. This resulted in increased awareness of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud crimes and increased arrests for fraudulent documents such as inspection and registration stickers. Detectives also attended training provided by NICB and the New York Anti Car Theft and Fraud Association's Annual State Education Conference. A seminar was conducted for members of the automobile industry concerning the trend of rim and tire thefts from dealerships.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	214	Reported MV Thefts	1,329
Misdemeanor Arrests	16	Recovered Stolen MVs	993
Felony Arrests	83	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	1

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	53	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	Statistics not kept
Misdemeanor Arrests	7	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation	0
Felony Arrests	39		

### Westchester County District Attorney's Office

The Westchester County District Attorney's Office received a \$316,000 grant in 2015 to fund an Auto Crimes Unit with a senior assistant prosecutor and two police investigators. Starting in 2015, a crime analyst was added to the unit and works 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 with auto theft investigations throughout the county. The prosecutor reviews all auto crime-related cases coming from each of the eight local court branches in Westchester County and vertically prosecutes most felony cases.

#### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

In 2015, the Auto Crimes Unit focused on insurance fraud investigations while continuing its efforts to assist local police departments in investigating and prosecuting auto-theft related crimes. For example in 2014, the Pelham Manor Police Department came to the unit asking for assistance in investigating a suspected arson of a vehicle that was torched in the police department parking lot. After obtaining search warrants for cell sites, analyzing license plate reader data, and interviewing witnesses, it was determined that the registered owner of the vehicle and the user of the vehicle, who were siblings, lied to police and the insurance company about the theft of their vehicle and that they were actually involved in setting fire to the vehicle. In January of 2015, two indictments were obtained for insurance fraud, arson and other related charges against the brother and sister. Both pleaded guilty to felony insurance fraud and arson charges.

In 2015, the unit continued following leads on staged accident rings, body shops involved in damage enhancement, and on suspected cases of owner give-ups. With grant funding, a part-time crime analyst was hired and is now dedicated to working on auto crime cases. The crime analyst has identified patterns and trends in the thefts of motorcycles, late model Hondas, and most recently, the theft of tires and rims. The analyst's work has been instrumental in efforts to stop these crimes and in identifying the perpetrators. The crime analyst, who is a retired police officer, has also assisted unit investigators in following leads on suspected cases of insurance fraud referred by the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

The theft of motorcycles and the theft of tires and rims continues to be the biggest auto-theft related problem in the county. During the summer, the senior assistant district attorney wrote several cell tower dump applications at the sites of several of these thefts to identify perpetrators. Two individuals who attempted to steal five sets of Porsche tires and rims from a local dealership were convicted of felonies and are now serving state prison sentences.

The unit also identified a group living in a group home in the Bronx who were traveling to Westchester County to commit 'car-hopping' crimes – the act of looking for valuables to steal from unsecured cars parked in driveways or on the streets. When they found keys to a car, they would steal it and abandon it at another location where they would also steal a car. A task force was created with the Auto Crimes Unit, the Yonkers Police Department, other local police departments, and NYPD. In December 2015, three defendants were indicted on several larcenies in five jurisdictions in Westchester County. The prosecution of all three is pending.

In the final quarter of 2015, the Auto Crimes Unit was contacted by the Larchmont Police Department to assist in interviewing two individuals arrested while stealing motorcycles from a trailer in the back of a local funeral home. Two suspects were arrested at the time and another two fled the scene. One motorcycle was stolen and never recovered, while another was recovered at the scene. Unit investigators assisted in conducting interviews of the arrested suspects and their associates, obtaining video from the area and interviewing others with information pertaining to the case. Search warrants were issued for cellular telephones recovered at the scene and for cell site data. Unit investigators continue to assist the Larchmont Police in attempting to identify the two remaining suspects.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	24	Indictments	7
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	32	Misdemeanor Convictions	70
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	117	Felony Convictions	20
Number of MVT Cases Taken to	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea	64

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	11	Indictments	2
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	1
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	2	Felony Convictions	4
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	

## Yonkers Police Department

The Yonkers Police Department received a \$134,000 grant in 2015 to pay for a full-time detective and overtime to support additional hours needed for complex investigations. The funding also goes toward officer 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 incidences of falsely reporting a vehicle stolen, staged accidents, fraudulent documents and other forms of fraud.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

The Yonkers Police Department has one detective dedicated to a motor vehicle crime unit funded through the grant. This detective trains uniformed police officers in Yonkers and other agencies on motor vehicle theft and fraud issues. In addition, the detective works with crime analysts to identify crime trends in auto theft. Last year, the motor vehicle theft and fraud detective worked 238 overtime hours assisting investigations with various jurisdictional agencies such as the New York State Police, Greenburgh Police, Tuckahoe Police, and US State Department on a variety of cases.

One notable case involved the investigation of used car lots involved in insurance fraud. Forged titles were being issued, finance schemes conducted and illegal taxes being charged. The investigation of one lot led to another location in Yonkers and subsequently a location in the Bronx that were all involved with fraudulent activities. The investigation is ongoing and multiple arrests are expected in the near future.

The detective also directed an investigation into stolen motorcycles, which led to the recovery of six bikes and resulted in a felony arrest. It is expected that additional motorcycles will be recovered as a result of this investigation. The detective was also involved in an arson investigation in which a vehicle was found doused in accelerant after being reported stolen in Yonkers.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	241	Reported MV Thefts	272
Misdemeanor Arrests	4	Recovered Stolen MVs	23
Felony Arrests	12	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	24	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	5	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 in 2015 to pay for a full-time detective, overtime, and travel and training costs to enhance the program's effectiveness.

#### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

In 2015, Buffalo Police, in collaboration with the Erie Crime Analysis Center and the Erie County district attorney, continued investigating the McMullen Crew. This ring is noted for extensive break-ins and larcenies from vehicles over the past few years. The individuals involved were arrested and the district attorney's office secured guilty pleas from nine defendants. The ring leader is the only defendant who has not yet entered a guilty plea in the case. The apprehension of this group is believed to have contributed to the 18 percent decrease in the number of vehicle larcenies in the county this year.

The unit detective also worked with Buffalo Fire Marshals on all suspected vehicle arsons, including those suspected of insurance fraud involvement. The Fire Marshal's Office was instrumental in assisting Buffalo Police with 24 arson arrests. The joint investigations resulted in more than \$40,000 of insurance claims being denied or withdrawn.

An investigation into a large scale insurance fraud ring involving staged and phantom accidents led to the prosecution of the ring leader on multiple felonies. This suspect later admitted to submitting two separate insurance claims for the same vehicle damage, obtaining \$2,146 from one insurance company and \$3,620.77 from another. The suspect also pled guilty to three additional felony charges and faces prosecution in Pennsylvania for purchasing a vehicle with counterfeit money. The investigation is ongoing and it appears there are other suspects involved. This case involved extensive collaboration between multiple police agencies, prosecutors, insurance agency investigators, DMV investigators, and the state Department of Financial Services.

The unit continues to investigate the ongoing trend of tire and rim thefts. Historically, older vehicles have been targeted for stripping and the incidents generally occur around deprived areas of the city. This year, however, the trend has expanded to include newer model vehicles in more affluent areas of the city. Generally, the more sophisticated car alarm systems on these cars prevent opportunistic larcenies and 'pops,' but it seems that the wheels of these vehicles can be targeted without triggering the alarms. Buffalo Police made one arrest – a young male with connections to a local auto shop. Buffalo Police continue to investigate this situation and have proactively utilized neighborhood social media outlets to educate the public about the trend, along with actions that can be taken to avoid being victimized.

## Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	44	Reported MV Thefts	1,056
Misdemeanor Arrests	220	Recovered Stolen MVs	827
Felony Arrests	38	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	3

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	19	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	N/A
Misdemeanor Arrests	19	Number of Accident Claims	11
Felony Arrests	5	Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	

### Cheektowaga Police Department

The Cheektowaga Police Department received a \$47,000 grant in 2015 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.

#### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

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 supported 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 DCJS grant.

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. For example, an investigation originated in the Town of Cheektowaga where a vehicle was reported stolen was later located burning in the City of Buffalo. A joint investigation with the Buffalo Fire Marshall led to an arrest of the owner for insurance fraud and falsely reporting an incident.

In another investigation, detectives observed a vehicle in the driveway of a residence known for illegal/suspicious activity. Further investigation revealed that the vehicle was reported stolen out of Arkansas and had a switched VIN from Kentucky. The vehicle was recovered and the intelligence that was gathered was provided to the National Insurance Crime Bureau for follow-up.

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 439 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 35 vehicles last year resulting in three SABIS fingerprint hits and one DNA databank hit.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	116	Reported MV Thefts	77
Misdemeanor Arrests	25	Recovered Stolen MVs	22
Felony Arrests	26	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	3	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	0
Felony Arrests	0		

### Erie County District Attorney's Office

The Erie County District Attorney's Office received a \$121,500 grant in 2015 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 Special Investigations and Prosecutions 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.

### MVTIFP Activity in 2015

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

In 2015, the assistant prosecutor initiated an investigation with the state Division of Financial Services into a large scale insurance fraud ring involved in double dipping and staged crashes. Through this investigation, the main participant was identified and the groundwork was laid for multiple felony convictions in early 2016, along with restitution to insurance companies. This investigation was developed as a result of a suspicious claim found by an insurance company investigator, which was then referred to the state. The claimant then became an informant who revealed the existence of a network of claims spanning several years and identified the principal participant. Close cooperation between the district attorney's office and the state was instrumental in achieving this result.

Erie County continues to see owner give-up cases originating in the city of Buffalo. In 2015, a number of cases were prosecuted which primarily resulted in convictions to insurance fraud or arson. In nearly all of the cases, the fraud was detected before any insurance payment was made.

In one case, an individual who owned a 2006 Buick that was having mechanical problems registered the vehicle in his brother's name because of outstanding child support issues. The car was found burning and the fire marshals contacted the defendant's brother – the registered owner – for an interview. He then explained the car's true owner, who subsequently pleaded guilty to attempted arson and insurance fraud.

Another case involved a woman who owned a 2005 Buick LaCrosse. The vehicle had high mileage and unrepaired mechanical problems, but the woman still owed \$6,000 in payments on the vehicle. An investigation revealed that the defendant drove from her home in Cheektowaga to Buffalo, where she bought \$2 of gas, poured it inside the vehicle, and then lit it on fire with a burning sock. She then took a cab to her home in Cheektowaga where she falsely reported the vehicle stolen the next morning. The defendant pled to two felonies, attempted arson and insurance fraud.

Other types of frauds prosecuted included a defendant who falsified a physician's report to the DMV to have her license reinstated; a defendant who used a stolen identity to purchase, insure and register a vehicle; and title jumping by buyers at the city of Buffalo Salvage auction. Title jumping is a recurring problem for the city and to reduce it, the district attorney's office is working with the DMV to identify and prosecute the offenders.

Theft cases also continue to be an issue in Buffalo and the surrounding communities. In a major case in 2015, an indictment was returned against 10 members of a ring responsible for numerous vehicle break-ins, where credit cards were stolen and used to purchase untraceable gift cards. All but two of the ring members have since entered guilty pleas.

Felony pleas were also obtained against car thieves. In one case, a defendant stole keys from the jacket pocket of a vehicle owner who was at a bar. In another, a defendant stole two separate cars within hours of one another.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	19	Indictments	1
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	249	Misdemeanor Convictions	47
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	11	Felony Convictions	19
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	30

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	13	Indictments	1
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	9
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	11	Felony Convictions	13
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	9
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$0	



## Niagara County District Attorney's Office

The Niagara County District Attorney's Office received a grant of \$114,000 in 2015, which was used to support 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.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

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 district attorney coordinates with administrative officers at the Niagara County Sheriff's Office, State Police and the three city police departments within Niagara County to encourage the consistent handling and charging of crimes relating to motor vehicles. A screening process is utilized to direct all of such cases to the dedicated assistant district attorney for review and then to be assigned to a criminal investigator, who maintains communication with the victim, insurance companies, and law enforcement throughout the process. The assigned assistant district attorney handles all felonies from arraignment through trial, and also misdemeanor cases as necessary.

The success in prosecuting and deterring insurance fraud this year was highlighted by the recent conviction of an international traveler who filled out fraudulent insurance claims wherever he went. In 2013, the defendant was deported to Niagara Falls by the Canada Border Service Agency after he had filed a series of insurance claims in Ontario. Shortly after his deportation, the defendant filed claims in Niagara County. The district attorney worked closely with the state Department of Financial Services to investigate and subsequently prosecute him. The prosecutor also coordinated with the U.S. Department of Justice to request the assistance of the Central Authority of Canada in order to secure witnesses pursuant to the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty with investigators who handled the his fraudulent claim in Canada. The defendant was found guilty. Details of the prosecution were highlighted in both the Buffalo News and in Fraud News Weekly, informing the public of the Niagara County District Attorney's aggressive stance against motor vehicle related crimes.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	141	Indictments	8
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	128	Misdemeanor Convictions	85
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	117	Felony Convictions	12
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	115

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	1
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	0
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	0	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		\$118,889	

## Niagara County Sheriff's Office

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office received a \$21,000 grant in 2015 to pay 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.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

In 2015, The Niagara County Sheriff's Office focused on three specific strategies to address motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud: reducing the vehicle thefts centered on and around the Tuscarora Indian Reservation, fighting the recent expansion of larcenies from vehicles, and identifying fraudulent insurance claims related to vehicle theft or falsely reporting accidents.

The sheriff's office has utilized informants, extra patrols, and prosecution by the Niagara County District Attorney's office to target vehicle thefts on or near the Tuscarora Reservation with great success. Reported vehicle thefts in the county have been reduced from 241 in 2010 to 41 in 2015. The arrest and prosecution of several defendants involved in crimes on the reservation has contributed to this decline.

In 2015, the task force sought to address larceny sprees by assigning an investigator, deploying extra patrols in identified hot spots, and monitoring social media and Internet sites for fenced goods. Through these efforts, a suspect believed to be involved in multiple larcenies and burglaries was identified. Based on evidence gathered through surveillance and monitoring of Internet sales sites, the defendant was arrested on two separate occasions and is facing multiple felony counts.

Efforts to identify insurance fraud – though more time consuming and harder to prove – have also shown success. One major case that began in 2014 as a stolen motorcycle investigation has developed into an ongoing investigation of two local motorcycle clubs. To date, the investigation has resulted in two arrests and denial of an insurance claim due to false reporting of the theft. The case involved multi-agency cooperation, long-term investigation, field intelligence, road patrol interdiction, and prosecutor involvement to develop a strong case.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	161	Reported MV Thefts	41
Misdemeanor Arrests	24	Recovered Stolen MVs	39
Felony Arrests	22	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	1

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	5	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	5
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 in 2015 to pay 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.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

In 2015, there was a slight increase in reported motor vehicle thefts in Niagara Falls compared to 2014. The rate of recovery of stolen vehicles remained at approximately 90 percent. The Criminal Investigation Division and the Auto Theft Unit dedicated approximately 500 hours of overtime, resulting in a three-fold increase in the number of theft investigations initiated when compared to 2014. These investigations yielded 28 misdemeanor arrests and nine felony arrests.

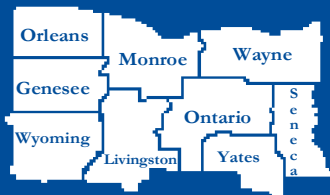
In one notable case, three truck tailgates were stolen from vehicles in the city of Niagara Falls. A detective from the Auto Theft Unit opened an investigation and began working with investigators from the Niagara County Sheriff's Office. The investigation led to an auto parts supply shop in Chaffee. In total, 10 tailgates were recovered, including one stolen from Niagara Falls. Investigators forwarded the information and evidence to the State Police in the town of Boston to pursue charges against the supply shop operator for possession of stolen property.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	578	Reported MV Thefts	108
Misdemeanor Arrests	28	Recovered Stolen MVs	91
Felony Arrests	9	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	3	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	4
Misdemeanor Arrests	1	Number of Accident Claims	1
Felony Arrests	0	Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	

## Finger Lakes Region



## *Finger Lakes Region*

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

### **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 in 2015 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.

#### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

Monroe County has a Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force, with representation from the district attorney's office, the Rochester Police Department, and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office. The bureau works closely with other task force agencies to continue the downward trend in auto theft within the county. In 2004, prior to the inception of the program, the number of motor vehicle thefts reported in Monroe County was 4,461. The number of thefts reported in 2014 was 974, representing a 78-percent decrease. Key to this success is the collaboration between law enforcement partners to identify trends and share information. Monthly meetings are conducted with the task force and other local police agencies to share information related to stolen vehicle and fraud investigations. At each meeting, new referrals received by the state Department of Financial Services Criminal Investigations Unit are reviewed by Task Force members and assigned to investigators working under the grant.

The district attorney's office developed a standard supporting deposition form to be used by officers when responding to reported incidents of motor vehicle theft. By standardizing the information that is collected from each incident, task force investigators are better able to analyze the nature of such thefts, including offender profiles, methods being used, gang affiliations, and the most common times, locations and types of vehicles involved. The district attorney's office also works to educate law enforcement agencies regarding the Auto Stripping statute in the NYS Penal Law.

When prosecuting motor vehicle insurance fraud crimes, the Monroe County District Attorney's Office severely restricts plea reductions in felony cases, with the most serious of these limitations being

directed at repeat offenders. The prosecutor assigned to the program works to maximize restitution to insurance providers in any case where it is obtainable. The assistant district attorney aggressively pursues restitution to insurance providers even in cases where an auto insurance fraud charge is settled due to a plea on another non-auto insurance fraud charge. This policy is particularly important, as such pleas regularly occur in cases of falsified theft reports and staged accidents, which can result in significant jail time and long probation terms, but reduced opportunities for restitution. The district attorney's office uses the vertical prosecution model for all motor vehicle-related crimes in an effort to ensure these prosecution priorities remain intact.

In 2015, the assistant district attorney assigned to the grant completed jury trials involving two co-defendants – both charged with multiple robbery, possession of a weapon and criminal use of a weapon counts. The defendants were found guilty on all counts and were each sentenced to 20 years of incarceration followed by five years of post-release supervision.

In another case in February 2015, two men stole a vehicle from the show room of a Nissan dealership in the town of Webster. The vehicle was recovered a day later and some damage was noted. Although there was no security video footage of the theft, one suspect admitted to the crime and implicated the second man in a statement. Cell phone records were used to tie both men to the incident. The defendant who gave the statement pleaded guilty to one count of petit larceny and was sentenced to 60 days shock probation. The second defendant pled guilty to one charge of third-degree burglary, and was sentenced to serve up to three years of incarceration.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	302	Indictments	26
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	155	Misdemeanor Convictions	101
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	142	Felony Convictions	34
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	4	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	174

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	8	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	3
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	8	Felony Convictions	2
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	5
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$11,738	

### Monroe County Sheriff's Office

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office received a \$31,000 grant in 2015 to pay 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.

## MVTIFP Activities in 2015

The sheriff's office utilizes its grant funds as part of a strategy to reduce the incidence of both motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The strategy in reducing stolen vehicles is to conduct proactive investigations, so offenders can be arrested while they are in the act of trying to steal cars, commit larcenies from parked vehicles, and/or stripping motor vehicles of parts. This includes the use of undercover surveillance, and enforcement details, as well as GPS and SCOUT alarm technology purchased with grant funds.

The sheriff's office uses coordinated departmental efforts when tracking and identifying pattern crimes and continues to use a Computer Statistics Program that is used to identify patterns to be addressed with targeted law enforcement strategies. The Monroe Crime Analysis Center assists with tracking and mapping crime patterns in the jurisdiction and in others that may signal an emerging trend.

In the second quarter of 2015, the sheriff's office noted a re-emerging pattern where vehicles were being broken into while left unattended at county parks. During these incidents, the suspects broke out windows and took purses that had been left inside. In response, a covert trail camera was installed in a park that was a frequent site of these crimes. The camera was able to catch an image of a vehicle used in the crimes. This information was provided to the Monroe Crime Analysis Center and was disseminated to area law enforcement. A plate number was acquired and a GPS order was obtained for the vehicle. During the surveillance detail, the suspect was observed breaking into a vehicle and stealing a purse in a Rochester park. The suspects recognized that they were being followed by undercover members and abandoned their vehicle. The subjects then fled on foot, but were later apprehended. As a result of the investigation, the purse and credit cards stolen were recovered. The suspects were charged with grand larceny, criminal mischief, and auto stripping.

In May 2015, an investigator received a referral regarding a possible insurance fraud case from an investigator with the state Department of Financial Services. An individual submitted a claim to Liberty Mutual stating that his 2015 Chevrolet Impala valued at \$45,000 was stolen from his driveway. The investigation revealed that the police report number submitted for the claim was bogus and the vehicle in question was never purchased by the subject and was, in fact, still on the sales lot of a local auto dealership. The man had obtained the VIN to the vehicle by copying it from the vehicle while it was for sale. He then submitted a claim to the insurance company for the loss of the vehicle. Investigators interviewed him and learned that he had a mental disability. He then gave a confession, but the Monroe County District Attorney's Office opted not to file charges. The insurance claim was denied.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	156	Reported MV Thefts	156
Misdemeanor Arrests	18	Recovered Stolen MVs	100
Felony Arrests	18	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	7	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	1	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	5
Felony Arrests	1		

## Rochester Police Department

The Rochester Police Department received a \$41,500 grant in 2015 to pay for overtime, investigations and training in the latest motor vehicle crime 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 and utilizes personnel from other divisions within the department as needed.

### **MVTIFP Activities in 2015**

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. Members of the Auto Theft Unit routinely attend specialized training to stay abreast of best practices in combatting auto crime. In 2015, members attended the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators Annual Training Seminar in May on Long Island. In March one member delivered auto theft training to 50 police recruits representing five different law enforcement agencies at the Monroe Community College Public Safety Training Facility. Auto Theft Unit members presented the training again in November to 17 University of Rochester Peace Officer Recruits at the training center. Members also attended 12 Auto Theft Task Force meetings throughout the year.

In 2015, the department utilized grant funding to conduct motor vehicle theft investigations and related activities. Ten of these investigations involved vehicles that were stolen and sold for scrap using various state Department of Motor Vehicle forms. Four of the vehicles sold for scrap had already been crushed or severely damaged when located and had no value upon recovery. The pre-theft aggregate value of these crushed vehicles was estimated to be over \$14,800. Members recovered 34 additional vehicles through various investigations with an estimated total value of \$102,650.

Analysis shows that many vehicle thefts are crimes of opportunity, made possible when a vehicle is left running or with keys inside. To combat this problem, members conducted two enforcement details issuing 13 citations for violations unattended vehicles. Motorists were also given brochures containing auto theft statistics and theft prevention measures.

There was a noticeable increase in the theft of sport motorcycles this year, with 23 reported and two others attempted. Only six motorcycles were recovered. In an attempt to recover motorcycles and gather intelligence, members conducted a detail with a senior investigator from the Department of Motor Vehicles focusing on locations where sport motorcycle enthusiasts gather on Sundays.

In early 2015, task force members working with the State Police and Monroe County District Attorney's office investigated the thefts of more than 20 stolen Dodge Caravans. The probe resulted in the arrest of a suspect who was apprehended while operating one of the stolen Caravans. During an interview, he admitted to several other thefts and provided information leading to the recovery of five additional stolen vehicles, which resulted in additional charges. The cases were sent to the Judicial Diversion Program and the suspect was sentenced to probation. Upon his release, the pattern of Caravan thefts resumed, with the same suspect identified in two of the thefts. During the investigation, task force members assisted in apprehending the suspect and his accomplice, who were driving yet another stolen Caravan they used to commit a bank robbery. Both suspects are awaiting federal charges for the robbery. In total, 30 stolen vehicle cases were cleared, including five by the arrest of the initial suspect.

Unit members investigated a variety of suspected insurance frauds throughout the year. Three

investigations involved claims for lost wages due to injuries sustained in motor vehicle accidents. One investigation revealed that the company the claimant said he worked for didn't exist. He was charged with third-degree grand larceny, and the claim for \$4,449 was denied. In the other cases, members were able to prove that no accidents ever occurred, with one case resulting in an arrest for Insurance Fraud 4<sup>th</sup>. The claims for \$1,621 and \$19,159 were both denied.

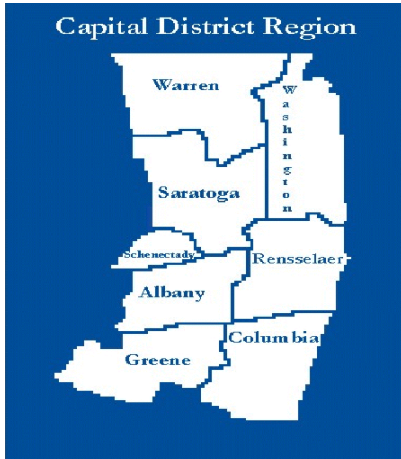
Unit members working with the Department of Financial Services and the National Insurance Crime Bureau are continuing an investigation involving a group that is suspected of committing caused and staged accidents and fraudulent vandalism claims. The group consists of five primary targets that have had multiple accidents with each other. Unit members have reviewed a total of thirty-seven accident claims and nine vandalism claims. Many of the vehicles involved were purchased and insured within two months of when the crashes occurred. Some of the vehicles were salvaged when purchased, and many appear to be auction vehicles. Other vehicles have been involved in multiple claims where the vehicle is totaled. Mileage discrepancies have also been found. Investigators are in the process of interviewing other participants in the claims with the hope of developing a witness against the suspects.

### Law Enforcement Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	50	Reported MV Thefts	544
Misdemeanor Arrests	8	Recovered Stolen MVs	38
Felony Arrests	29	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	2

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	21	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	3
Felony Arrests	2		





## ***Capital District Region***

Albany Police Department  
Albany County District Attorney's Office

### **Albany Police Department**

The Albany Police Department received a \$36,000 grant in 2015 to pay for police overtime and training for officers assigned to its Auto Crimes Task Force. The task force consists of 36 members, including patrol officers, detectives, sergeants, and lieutenants. The task force operates within the department's Criminal Investigation Division, and is supervised by a detective lieutenant and a detective sergeant. The primary objective of the task force is to investigate all auto-related thefts and auto-related insurance fraud.

#### **MVTIFP Activity for 2015**

The department realized a 13-percent decrease in stolen motor vehicles from figures recorded in 2014. The Auto Crimes Task Force worked together with the department's Traffic Safety Unit, Neighborhood Engagement Unit, and Albany Crime Analysis Center to combat auto theft. In order to address the common trend involving the theft of unattended motor vehicles that are left running, the Traffic Safety Unit conducted enforcement details aimed at owners who leave their vehicles running while unattended. The Neighborhood Engagement Unit was also tasked with educating residents in their zones about current crime trends.

The task force utilized data provided by the Albany Crime Analysis Center to target enforcement efforts on multiple occasions in 2015. The department conducted details around Washington Park, as well as in areas surrounding the location of city events after data showed increased reports of thefts from motor vehicles in these areas. The increased details resulted in arrests and likely prevented additional thefts from motor vehicles.

The task force also utilized intelligence to focus efforts on known offenders involved in vehicle related crimes. One case involved a series of thefts from vehicles inside a parking garage at the Albany Medical Center Hospital. With cooperation from the Albany Med security team, investigators were able to identify and locate a suspect who was subsequently charged with multiple thefts representing thousands of dollars in stolen property, much of which has been recovered.

In a case highlighting technology and collaboration with other agencies, investigators were able to use license plate reader data, credit card records, and surveillance video to track a vehicle stolen in Albany to the neighboring city of Schenectady. With the assistance from the Schenectady Police, sufficient evidence was gathered to make multiple felony arrests in the case.

The task force has continued to develop relationships with local area scrap yards and to monitor scrap yard records. As a result, partners at the scrap yards have continued to notify the task force about suspicious motor vehicles being sold for scrap. This has resulted in the recovery of 10 stolen motor vehicles sold for scrap in 2015.

**Law Enforcement Statistics**

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	235	Reported MV Thefts	235
Misdemeanor Arrests	34	Recovered Stolen MVs	163
Felony Arrests	74	Number of "Owner Give-Ups"	0

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	2	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To In Which Fraud is Suspected	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims	0
Felony Arrests	1	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 in 2015, which paid 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. The 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.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2015**

The Albany County District Attorney's Office established a motor vehicle crime 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 continues to meet quarterly to share information.

In 2015, the primary focus of the program 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.

Several new cases were initiated involving the theft of vehicles that were left unlocked or unattended with the keys inside. Another case involved a defendant who stole vehicles from two separate car dealerships in Albany County and was caught while in possession of one in Vermont. That case is being reviewed for possible grand jury action. Investigations were also pursued into fraudulent Internet vehicle purchases using credit cards; and into a mechanic who was defrauding customers out of down payments, and then scrapping vehicles without the owner's permission.

The assigned assistant district attorney is also working with the state Department of Financial Services to explore possible uncharged instances of insurance fraud in pending cases and to identify and develop more insurance fraud prosecutions in the future.

The crime victim advocates in the office ensure that in each instance of theft or fraud, victims are provided the necessary paperwork to be considered for restitution by the court. In instances where restitution cannot be recovered during the court case, recovery attempts continue through the corrections or probation process.

### Prosecutorial Office Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	8	Indictments	4
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	23	Misdemeanor Convictions	23
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	30	Felony Convictions	12
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	26

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	4	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	0
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	4	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		\$ 0	

### 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 MVTIF grant from DCJS in 2015, which paid 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.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

The association's training efforts in 2015 continued to concentrate on both vehicular crime and insurance fraud by providing effective professional and hands-on training in theft and fraud investigation and deterrence. The number of professionals taking advantage of this training continues to increase. The association continues to expand its reach using live education, technology and other channels which include:

- Training and Education: The association recognizes 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 is focused on providing law enforcement and insurance investigation officials with 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, state Attorney General’s Office, FBI, state Department of Motor Vehicles, National Insurance Crime Bureau, Office of Medical Misconduct, NYPD Auto Crime, State Police and state prosecutors.
- **Expanded and Improved Communication:** 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 with a membership including law enforcement agencies, insurance carrier and state agencies, the association fosters an effective networking arena and forum for sharing information. The association also collaborates 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 encourage a strong networking relationship among them. At the association’s annual state education conferences, law enforcement and special investigations personnel come together to learn from a wide variety of law enforcement, legal, state government and insurance company sources.

The spirit of cooperation fostered at the annual education conferences and all association training events continues, 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 provide new information to law enforcement that will aid their investigations into insurance fraud and other crimes due to the shared availability expertise. The association continues to use the vast network of interagency communication opportunities to enhance its efforts.

### Training Organization Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
Number of Seminars/Trainings/Conferences	15	Number of Webinar Trainings Produced	2
Number of Verified Attendees Number of Agencies Represented	1,656 441	Number of Verified Webinar	42
Number of MVT Articles Published	0	Number of MVIF Articles Published	0
Number of Webinars Available for Law Enforcement Agencies	6	Number of Webinars Available for Prosecutorial Offices	6

## New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc.

The New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc. received a \$38,800 grant in 2015 to enhance 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 which were attended by more than 2,500 prosecutors last year.

### MVTIFP Activities in 2015

In 2015, the institute coordinated a series of training presentations and webinars on how to effectively combat motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The institute conducted a conference in New York City and a two-day course at the "Summer College" at Syracuse Law School, which dealt specifically with prosecutorial aspects and approaches for motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases. Presenters included experienced prosecutors, representatives from police and other government agencies as well as insurance investigators.

In 2015, the institute continued its work as liaison with other stakeholders involved in combatting motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud, exchanging information, sharing resources, and attending meetings with organizations such as the New York State Police, FBI, NYPD, NICB, New York's Crime Analysis Centers and New York Anti-Theft and Fraud Association. In addition, the institute continued to assist prosecutors throughout New York by responding to questions and requests for technical and legal assistance and served as a clearing house for prosecutors in sharing information and relevant contacts.

Through "Online CLE," the institute maintains an extensive video library available to provide continuing legal education and training for New York prosecutors. All of the live motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud lectures and presentations from 2015 were added to the more than 125 existing lectures available online in the categories of insurance fraud and auto crime.

The Institute continues to partner with other agencies involved in combatting motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud, including the New York State Police, New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, National Insurance Crime Bureau, FBI, NYPD, and New York's Crime Analysis Centers. Prosecutors throughout the state are made aware of resources through regular group e-mails 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 in the investigation and prosecution of auto theft and insurance fraud-related crimes.

### Training Organization Statistics

<b>2015 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity:</b>			
<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Performance Measure</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
Number of Seminars/Trainings/Conferences	2	Number of Webinar Trainings Produced	1
Number of Verified Attendees	140	Number of Verified Webinar Training Viewers	34
Number of Agencies Represented	33	Number of MV-IF Articles Published	0
Number of MVT Articles Published	2	Number of Webinars Available for Prosecutorial Offices	1
Number of Webinars Available for Law Enforcement Agencies	1		

## Reported Incidents of Motor Vehicle Theft - 2015

Rank	COUNTY	MV Theft	Rank	COUNTY	MV Theft
1	Kings	2,480		Montgomery	34
2	Queens	2,270	33	Herkimer	32
3	Bronx	1,593	34	Steuben	31
4	Erie	1,302	35	St. Lawrence	29
5	Suffolk	1,219	36	Livingston	27
6	Monroe	1,067		Putnam	27
7	New York	824	38	Fulton	26
8	Nassau	683	39	Ontario	25
9	Westchester	679	40	Chenango	24
10	Onondaga	439		Clinton	24
11	Richmond	219	42	Otsego	22
12	Niagara	211	43	Sullivan	21
13	Albany	207	44	Madison	20
14	Orange	183		Seneca	20
15	Oneida	170	46	Orleans	19
16	Schenectady	158		Tioga	19
17	Rensselaer	152	48	Allegany	15
18	Broome	110	49	Columbia	14
	Dutchess	110		Delaware	14
20	Chautauqua	97		Franklin	14
21	Rockland	95	52	Warren	13
22	Ulster	71	53	Essex	12
23	Saratoga	58		Schoharie	12
24	Jefferson	50		Washington	12
	Oswego	50	56	Cortland	10
26	Wayne	47		Wyoming	10
	Chemung	40	58	Greene	9
28	Genesee	37	59	Lewis	6
29	Tompkins	35	60	Yates	2
30	Cattaraugus	34	61	Hamilton	1
	Cayuga	34		Schuyler	1

## Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Suspected Incidents - 2015

Rank	COUNTY	MV INSURANCE FRAUD	Rank	COUNTY	MV INSURANCE FRAUD
1	Kings	4,337		Herkimer	12
2	Queens	3,196		Cortland	12
3	New York	2,920	34	Cattaraugus	10
4	Bronx	2,367		Chautauqua	10
5	Nassau	1,248		Chenango	10
6	Suffolk	807		Delaware	10
7	Westchester	516		Lewis	10
8	Erie	299		Livingston	10
9	Richmond	249		Orleans	10
10	Monroe	215	41	Wayne	9
11	Orange	119	42	Cayuga	8
12	Albany	107	43	Allegany	7
13	Onondaga	98		Fulton	7
14	Rockland	81		Madison	7
15	Dutchess	54		Tompkins	7
16	Oneida	45	47	Greene	6
17	Niagara	42	48	Clinton	5
	Schenectady	42		Columbia	5
19	Broome	37		Franklin	5
20	Putnam	27	51	Montgomery	4
21	Essex	24		Washington	4
22	Ulster	22		Wyoming	4
23	Sullivan	18	54	Otsego	3
24	Rensselaer	15		Schuyler	3
	Ontario	15		Steuben	3
26	St. Lawrence	13		Tioga	3
	Oswego	13	58	Schoharie	2
	Saratoga	13		Seneca	2
	Jefferson	13		Warren	2
	Genesee	13		Yates	2
31	Chemung	12	62	Hamilton	1