



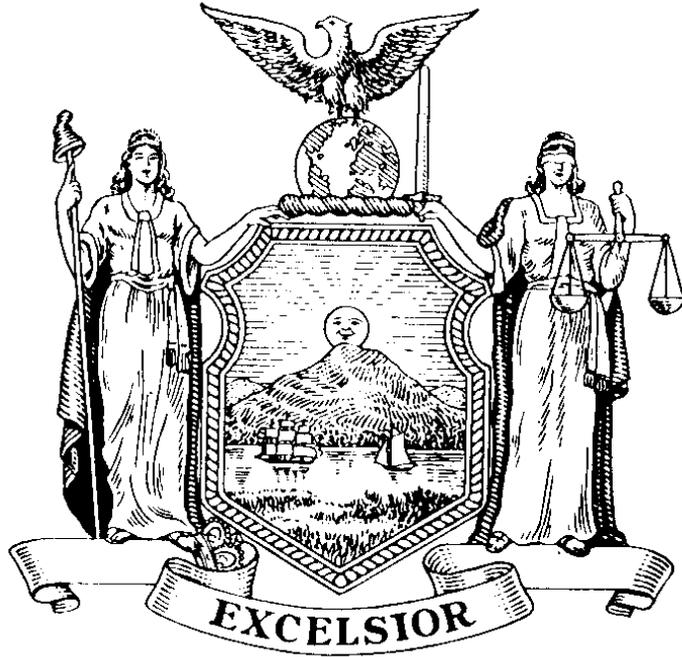
STATE OF NEW YORK
Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Michael C. Green
Executive Deputy Commissioner
Division of Criminal
Justice Services

Office of Program
Development and Funding

Jeffrey Bender
Deputy Commissioner

New York State



2013 Annual Report to the Governor and Legislature

Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board

New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
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2013 Motor Vehicle Theft and
Insurance Fraud Prevention
Board Members**

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New York State
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Mission Statement

Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board

In accordance with Executive Law §846-1 and 846-m, the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud (MVT&IF) Prevention Board, as its stated mission and purpose, shall make recommendations to the Commissioner of the Division of Criminal Justice Services (Commissioner) with respect to the exercise of his or her functions, powers and duties as set forth in Executive Law §846-1(3).

The Board shall also:

In accordance with the legislative intent of Article 36-A of the Executive Law, develop and recommend to the Commissioner a plan of operation that shall provide for a coordinated approach to curtailing motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud throughout the state (hereinafter "plan"). The plan shall provide an integrated means to detect, prevent, deter, and reduce motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud by providing funds, upon the recommendation of the Board and approval by the Commissioner, to meet these objectives.

The plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- An assessment of the scope of the problem of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud, including a regional analysis of the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud and related activities;
- An analysis of various methods of combating the problem; and
- The development of a request for proposal process, consistent with the plan, for applications from provider agencies to receive grants from the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Fund established pursuant to §89-d of the State Finance Law.

Table of Contents

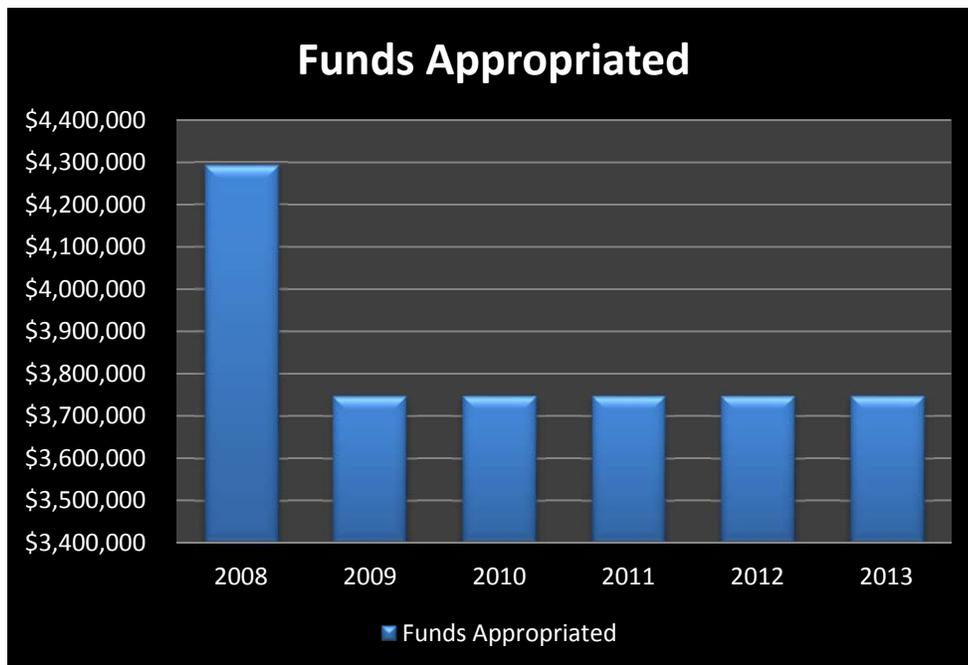
	Page
I. Introduction	1
II. Dimensions of Motor Vehicle Theft in New York State	2
III. Dimensions of Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud in New York State	3
IV. Program Overview	7
A. Program Goals	7
B. Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board	7
C. Program Priorities	8
V. Board Activity	8
A. Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board Meetings	8
B. SFY2013 Funding Proposals	8
VI. Grant Program Descriptions	10

Appendix – 2013 Statistics

I. INTRODUCTION

New York State enacted Executive Law, Article 36-A (L. 1994, c. 170) creating the *New York Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Demonstration Program* to help reduce the overall cost of motor vehicle insurance in the State. A 12-member *Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board* was authorized under this statute oversee the program. Members of the Board, selected by the Governor and the Legislature, include representatives of law enforcement, consumers of motor vehicle insurance, insurance carriers and relevant state agencies. The Board became operational in September 1997 with the appointment of its members. This report is submitted annually to the Governor and the Legislature by the *New York Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board* as required under Executive Law §846-1(3)(h).

Funding for the program is provided for under State Finance Law §89-d, which established a special fund consisting of monies received from the \$10 fee assessed on each insurance policy issued for a portion of passenger vehicles and all other motor vehicles registered in New York State (Insurance Law §9110). The 2013-14 State Budget appropriated \$3.7 million in support of demonstration projects.

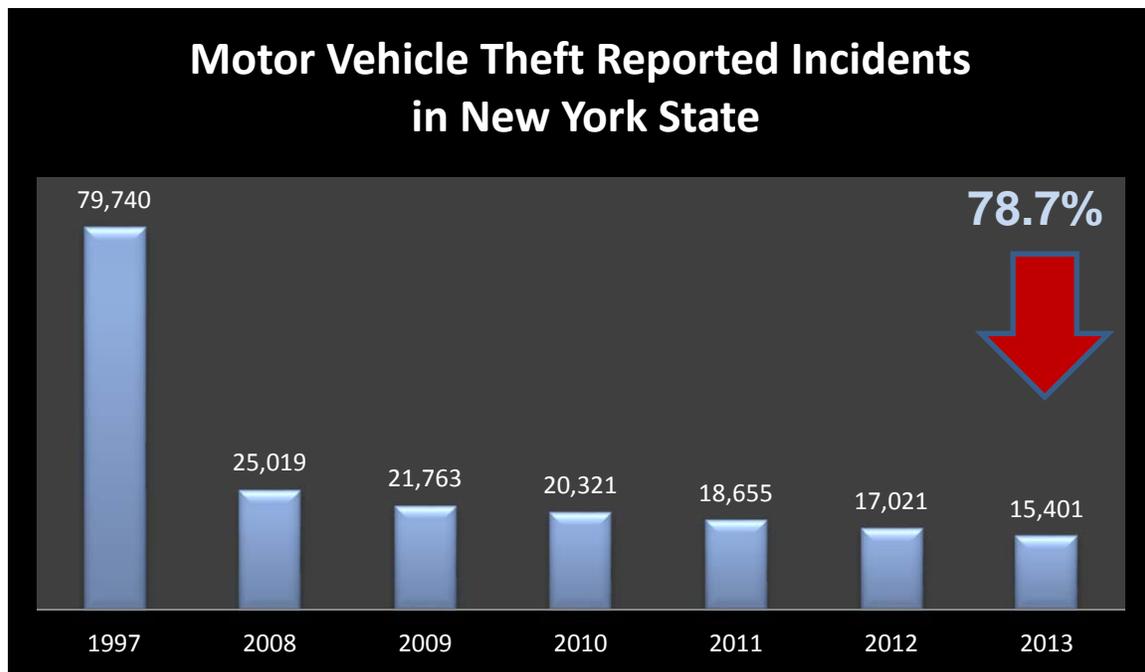


Having completed its organizational tasks of crafting bylaws and a mission statement, as well as creating a strategy for conducting a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, the Board made its first awards in September 1997. The Board has issued RFPs annually since then and 2013 marked the 17th year of the Board's operation.

All of the tasks outlined above are part of an organized and planned pursuit of reducing motor vehicle theft rates and insurance fraud in New York. The impact of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud cannot be understated. It is a highly-organized criminal activity that costs hundreds of millions of dollars each year. Those costs are passed on to law abiding citizens and legitimate businesses and result in increased costs of doing business and higher insurance rates.

Motor Vehicle Theft

Great strides have been made in reducing motor vehicle theft in New York. From 1997 through 2013, reported thefts were down 78.7 percent. In 2013, there were 15,401 motor vehicles stolen in New York State.



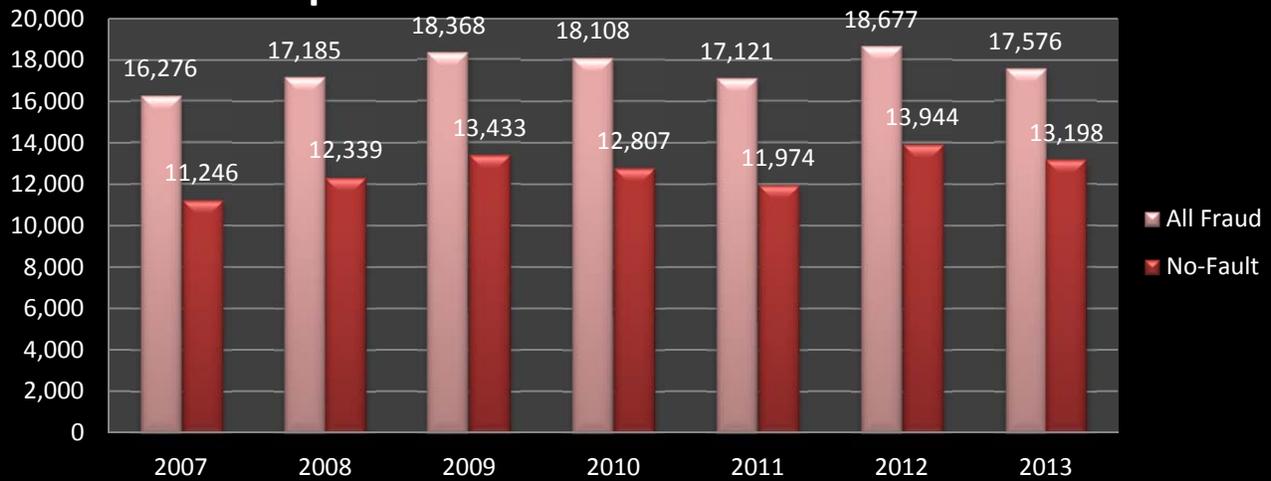
Law enforcement knowledge of motor vehicle theft makes it apparent that the trafficking of stolen vehicles knows no state or international boundaries, and that insurance fraud, in many cases, is perpetrated by well-organized groups of profit-motivated conspirators.

Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud

The incidence of motor vehicle insurance fraud in the early 1990s was significantly lower than the level now reported. Beginning in 1997, the New York State Insurance Fraud Bureau had seen an alarming increase in the number of reports of suspected insurance fraud from insurers across the state. Overall reports of motor vehicle insurance fraud had increased consistently from 5,214 in 1996 to a high of 24,282 in 2003. No-fault insurance fraud also increased during this time period to a high of 17,831 in 2003, accounting for 73 percent of all reports of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud. Combined investigative and prosecutorial efforts of state and local law enforcement agencies to combat motor vehicle insurance fraud, coupled with changes in the insurance laws, resulted in a 33 percent decrease in all types of motor vehicle insurance fraud from 2003 to 2007 (including a 36.9 percent drop in no-fault fraud and a 22 percent decline in other types of motor vehicle insurance fraud).

As demonstrated in the following chart, current levels of suspected incidences of motor vehicle insurance fraud are well below historic highs, but have consistently exceeded 2007 suspected incidences. A continued focus on reducing the incidences of these offenses is warranted.

Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Suspected Incidence in New York State



Statewide Plan of Operation

In August 1999, the New York State Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board initiated the development of a statewide plan for curtailing motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud throughout the state. The Board determined that the experience and expertise gained as a result of the ongoing operations of the funded demonstration projects provided a solid foundation upon which to build a statewide plan. To research and develop a plan reflective of the problem in all regions of New York State, the Board recommended that several agencies with extensive expertise in this area be involved in its development. In addition, officers representing 16 law enforcement agencies were added to the Statewide Work Group.

The size of the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Statewide Advisory Group, which is comprised of individuals with backgrounds in combating motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud, has grown as the number of grantees has grown. The following agencies participate in the 2013 Statewide Advisory Group:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Albany City Police | Niagara County Sheriff's Office |
| Albany County District Attorney | Niagara Falls City Police |
| Bronx County District Attorney | NYS Attorney General's Office |
| Buffalo City Police | NYS Department of Financial Services |
| Cheektowaga Town Police | NYS Department of Motor Vehicles |
| Erie County District Attorney | NYS Division of State Police |
| Fire Department of New York | Queens County District Attorney |
| Kings County District Attorney | Richmond County District Attorney |
| Monroe County District Attorney | Rochester City Police |
| Monroe County Sheriff's Office | Suffolk County District Attorney |
| Nassau County District Attorney | Suffolk County Police |
| Nassau County Police | Syracuse County Police |
| New York City Police | Yonkers City Police |
| New York County District Attorney | Westchester County District Attorney |
| New York Prosecutors' Training Institute | |
| Niagara County District Attorney | |

The following insurance industry carriers were also represented at the 2013 Statewide Advisory Group: Allstate, Auto One, Farmers, New York Central Mutual and Zurich North America.

The Statewide Advisory Group convenes annually with the objective of researching and developing updates for inclusion in the Motor Vehicle Theft (MVT) Statewide Plan of Operation and the Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud (MVIF) Statewide Plan of Operation to provide for a coordinated approach to curtailing motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud throughout the state.

The annually updated MVT Statewide Plan of Operation and MVIF Statewide Plan of Operation provide an integrated means to detect, prevent, deter and reduce motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. They are available on the DCJS website www.criminaljustice.ny.gov. These plans provide guidance on the types of projects that will be supported with MVTIF Program funding. Following the format for the statewide plan recommended by the Advisory Group, the Annual Report will present information on the dimensions of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud in two separate sections.

Regional Overview

The preponderance of motor vehicle theft continues to occur in the New York City region. Erie, Suffolk, Nassau, Monroe, Westchester and Onondaga round out the top 10 counties with regard to UCR reports from law enforcement. Of these top 10 counties, there were no demonstrated increases in incidents of motor vehicle theft in 2013.

Motor Vehicle Theft 2012 vs. 2013 Top Ten Counties			
County	2012	2013	Change
Queens	2,715	2,411	-11.2%
Kings (Brooklyn)	2,680	2,606	-2.8%
Bronx	1,649	1,449	-12.13%
Erie	1,481	1,256	-15.2%
Suffolk	1,182	1,176	-.5%
Nassau	1,001	888	-11.29%
Monroe	976	886	-10.0%
New York	834	742	-11.04%
Westchester	632	613	-3.1%
Onondaga	580	542	-6.6%

Statewide Overview

On October 29, 2012, Superstorm Sandy battered coastal portions of New York State with record-setting flooding and devastating winds. As one of the worst natural disasters to hit New York, Sandy caused tremendous damage to homes, businesses, infrastructure and vehicles. Approximately 400,000 vehicles were flooded, leaving an opening for unscrupulous individuals to sell salvaged vehicles to unsuspecting consumers or to file false insurance claims. Despite the significant damage and loss, New York State district attorneys did not report a substantial rise in insurance fraud prosecutions. This is attributed to the efforts of insurance company executives and governmental regulatory agencies to respond to the urgent needs of the community expeditiously.



Statewide Statistics

According to the National Insurance Crime Bureau, New York ranks among the top five states for fraudulent auto insurance claims.

As outlined in the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) *2012 Consumer Guide to Automobile Insurance*, New York State drivers are required to secure auto insurance that includes:

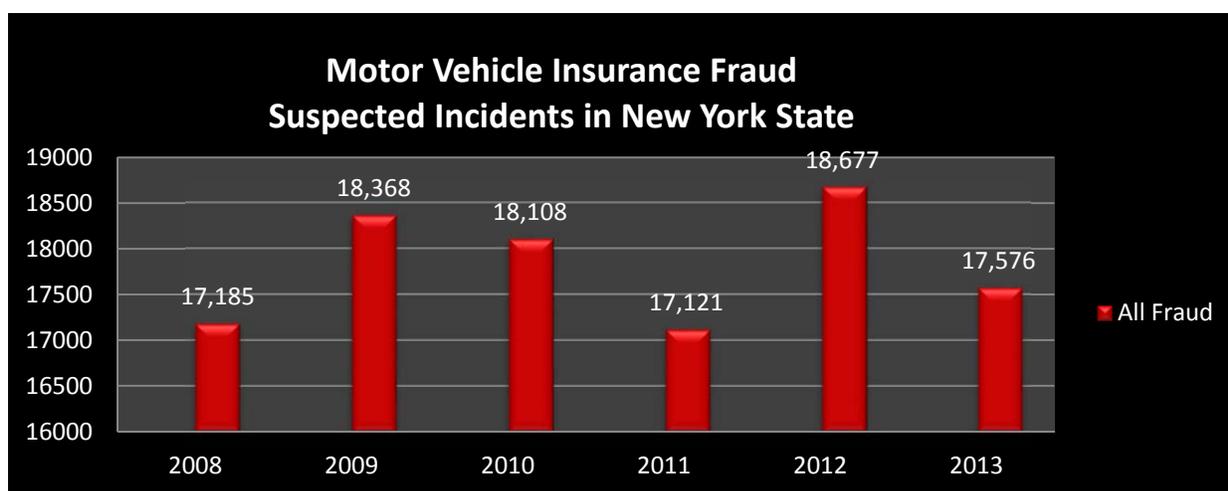
- **No-Fault Personal Injury Protection (PIP):** To pay medical expenses, lost earnings and other reasonable and necessary expenses for a driver or passenger injured in, or a pedestrian injured by, their vehicle;
- **Liability:** To protect against the harm their vehicle, or any vehicle they drive with the owner's permission, might do to other people and their property; and,
- **Uninsured Motorists:** To protect against the injuries them, their family or their passengers might suffer in a hit-and-run accident or in an accident with an uninsured vehicle.

Legislative findings associated with the creation of the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Demonstration Program (New York Executive Law §846-J) point out: "Motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud is a major problem in New York costing honest motor vehicle

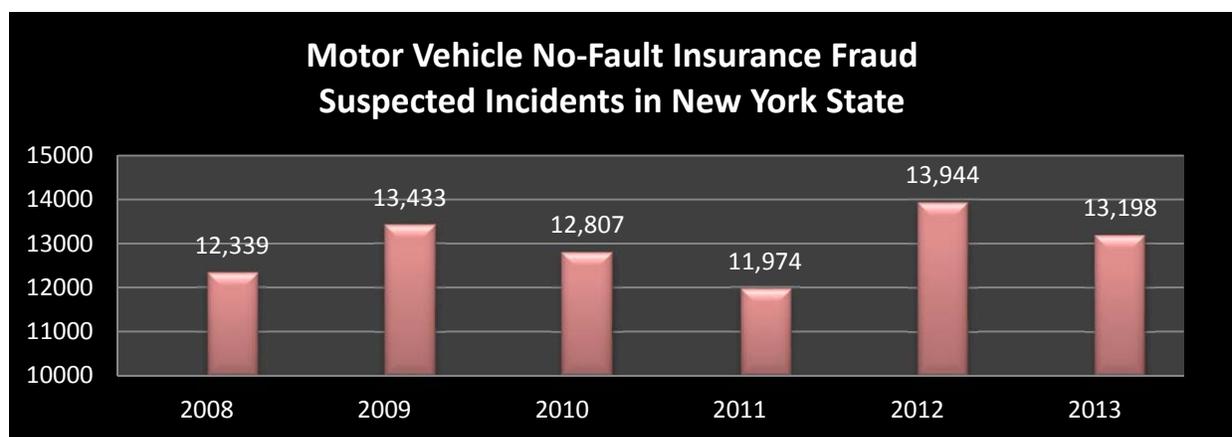
policyholders billions of dollars annually. As the cost of motor vehicle insurance continues to rise, this essential coverage has become less affordable and more out of reach for many New Yorkers."

According to InsuranceQuotesUSA.com, auto insurance in New York costs an average of \$1,122 annually, making it the third most expensive insurance jurisdiction in the nation, surpassed only by New Jersey and Washington, D.C. The Coalition Against Insurance Fraud estimates that insurance fraud costs every family in the United States about \$950 a year in the form of higher insurance premiums. According to estimates by the Insurance Information Institute, insurance fraud accounts for about 10 percent of the property/casualty insurance industry's incurred losses and loss adjustment expenses. In addition, auto insurers in New York pay almost twice as much in no-fault claims as they collect in no-fault premiums.

A study of New York's no-fault system by the Insurance Research Council (IRC) shows how prevalent fraud is in the New York City area. About one in every five claims settled appears to have some element of fraud, and as many as one in three appears to be inflated, according to the IRC.



In 2013, there were 17,576 incidents of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud reported to the Insurance Frauds Bureau of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), including motor vehicle theft, motor vehicle fire, larceny from a motor vehicle, motor vehicle vandalism, motor vehicle collision damage, motor vehicle fraud bills, motor vehicle insurance cards and motor vehicle miscellaneous and No-Fault.



Of those 17,576 incidents, 13,198 pertained to no-fault insurance fraud. Based on this data, no-fault insurance fraud accounts for approximately 74.6 percent of all reported suspected incidents of motor vehicle insurance fraud.

II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The *New York Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Demonstration Program* supports a variety of initiatives targeting motor vehicle theft and related motor vehicle insurance fraud.

Program Goals

The goals of the program are to provide an integrated means to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud by developing and providing funding for demonstration programs that include: education on theft and fraud prevention programs on motor vehicle theft and fraud prevention and specialized law enforcement units to combat motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. The following entities are eligible to participate: any locality, governmental agency or not-for-profit organization that provides one or more of the motor vehicle theft or insurance fraud prevention programs approved by the Board. Current budget language restricts program funding to local assistance projects only.

Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board

The demonstration program is administered by a 12-member board chaired by the Commissioner of the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), or his or her designee. All Board members are appointed by the Governor: three recommended by the Speaker of the Assembly, three by the Temporary President of the Senate and the remaining five by the Governor. The members, who are not considered public officials, serve a four-year term. The Board is to be representative of consumers of motor vehicle insurance, motor vehicle insurance companies, law enforcement agencies and the judicial system. The Board must meet a minimum of four times a year.

The Board is charged with developing and recommending a coordinated plan of operation that provides for the statewide reduction of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Elements of the plan must include:

1. An assessment of the magnitude and scope of the problem, including an analysis of theft and fraud by region;
2. Methods for combating the problem; and
3. Development of a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

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 State agency or from any insurer;

6. Assist municipalities in the development of local programs;
7. Advise and assist the Superintendent of Insurance pursuant to Insurance Law §2348. (This section now requires that rate filings reflect insurers' savings resulting from the program); and,
8. Annually submit to the Governor and Chairs of Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees a report on the Board's activities, activities of grant recipients and the results or impact.

Program Priorities

Program priorities identified in the enabling legislation are: **motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud**. Funds must be used to augment, not supplant, locally-supported initiatives. Activities eligible for funding include:

1. Prosecution and adjudication;
2. Law enforcement;
3. Community-based organizations;
4. Educational programs for motor vehicle owners; and,
5. Programs to examine the efficacy of theft prevention devices

III. BOARD ACTIVITY

Board meetings were held on March 5th, 2013; July 10th, 2013; October 21st, 2013; and December 9th, 2013.

List of Programs Funded by the Board:

New York City Agencies

Applicant	Amount Recommended
Bronx County District Attorney	\$302,505
Kings County District Attorney	\$227,200
New York County District Attorney	\$275,000
Queens County District Attorney	\$568,200
Richmond County District Attorney	\$77,100
New York City PD – Auto Crime Unit	\$189,600
New York City PD – Fraudulent Accident Investigation Squad	\$100,100
Fire Department of NYC	\$104,900

New York City Suburbs Agencies

Applicant	Amount Recommended
Nassau County District Attorney	\$169,100
Nassau County Police Department	\$130,000
Suffolk County District Attorney	\$315,100
Suffolk County Police Department	\$143,200
Westchester County District Attorney	\$300,900
Yonkers City Police Department	\$139,400

Capital Region/Hudson Valley

Applicant	Amount Recommended
Albany City Police Department	\$36,500
Albany County District Attorney	\$68,100

Central Region

Applicant	Amount Recommended
Syracuse City Police Department	\$26,000

Western Region

Applicant	Amount Recommended
Buffalo City Police Department	\$121,000
Cheektowaga Town Police Department	\$48,000
Erie County District Attorney	\$120,700
Monroe County District Attorney	\$125,000
Monroe County Sheriff Office	\$31,200
Rochester City Police Department	\$42,200
Niagara County District Attorney	\$152,100
Niagara County Sheriff Department	\$21,500
Niagara Falls City Police Department	\$36,500

Statewide

Applicant	Amount Recommended
New York Anti-Car Theft & Fraud Association	\$57,000
New York Prosecutor Training Institute	\$31,900

IV. 2013 Grant Program Descriptions



New York City Region

- Bronx County Office of the District Attorney
- Kings County Office of the District Attorney
- New York County Office of the District Attorney
- Queens County Office of the District Attorney
- Richmond County Office of the District Attorney
- New York City Police Department
 - Auto Crime Division (ACD)
 - Fraudulent Accident Investigation Squad (FAIS)
- Fire Department of New York

Bronx County Office of the District Attorney

The Bronx County District Attorney's Office Anti-Auto Theft Unit, in collaboration with individual NYPD precincts, has investigated both auto crime and insurance fraud matters since receiving initial grant funding in 1995. The Anti-Auto Theft program, which has been supported with resources provided by state grants, was designed to increase the number of successful

prosecutions of defendants charged with grand larceny of a motor vehicle, criminal possession of stolen property, illegal possession of a vehicle identification number, auto stripping and/or unauthorized use of a vehicle.

The Bronx District Attorney's Office owns five bait cars, two of which were purchased with funds provided from a one-time legislative grant awarded in 2010. Working jointly with precincts that experience an increase in car theft, the bait cars are positioned in high crime areas, with plainclothes police officers stationed nearby. The office continues to work to conduct joint investigations with police precincts throughout Bronx County.

During 2013, the office worked with Bronx precincts to conduct bait car operations and to use the two license plate readers (LPRs) in its possession. During the year, use of the LPRs led to two arrests. Also in 2013, joint operations between the NYPD and the Office's auto crime unit led to the recovery of 221 vehicles valued at approximately \$3,135,735.

On October 2, 2011, the owner of a 2006 Infiniti M35 reported to the NYPD that his car, purportedly last seen at midnight on September 30, 2011, was missing when he returned to the car's parking spot on October 1. He subsequently reported the total loss of the car to his insurer, Esurance. Unbeknownst to the owner, the New York City Fire Department responded to the report of a car fire involving the defendant's 2006 Infiniti M35 on September 30, 2011, at 5:57 a.m. – more than 14 hours before the purported last sighting of the vehicle. A New York City Fire Marshal assigned to investigate the fire deemed its origin suspicious and subsequently interviewed the owner. The owner admitted that, as a result of a previous accident, his insurance premiums doubled and he could no longer afford the car. The owner paid an unidentified associate \$500 to make the car disappear. The associate later returned the keys to the owner (so that he could prove to the insurer that the car was actually stolen). The owner was indicted for insurance fraud; he pled guilty on October 13, 2013 and was sentenced to a period of probation.

On July 15, 2013, a perpetrator jumped into a running and unlocked 2011 Honda Pilot after the owner went into a school. The owner came out and saw the vehicle going down the street. She had left her iPhone in the vehicle and was able to use the 'Find my iPhone' app to locate the vehicle. Her husband drove to the location and a chase ensued. The police located the vehicle a few blocks away and then located the defendant walking in the vicinity.

At the precinct, police found identification cards and car keys belonging to other individuals in the defendant's possession. The defendant admitted taking cars he found unlocked and running. He also admitted to stealing eight other vehicles between February 2013 and July 2013. In addition, he told police where the cars were stolen from and where they were legally parked after he finished using them. The defendant was sentenced to a total of four-to-eight years incarceration.

In a joint investigation by the NYPD Auto Crime Unit and the Bronx District Attorney's Office, an industrious suspect was discovered to have stolen at least 30 older-model Honda, Nissan and Toyota automobiles and delivering them to a Bronx scrap-metal yard. Once there, the defendant completed forged Department of Motor disposition forms "MV-35" disposition forms alleging that he was the owner of each vehicle. The defendant received scrap value for the cars in cash. Video surveillance systems at the scrap yard recorded each transaction and provided evidence of the defendant's possession and operation of the stolen vehicles. The defendant was indicted on 104 counts of Grand Larceny, Possession of Stolen Property and Falsifying Business Records. On October 31, 2013, the defendant pleaded guilty and was subsequently sentenced to a period of two-to-four years of incarceration.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	10	Indictments	40
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	89	Misdemeanor Convictions	211
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	328	Felony Convictions	74
Confidential Informants Developed	2	Warrants Issued	6
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	6	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	285

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	5	Indictments	2
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	5
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	5	Felony Convictions	4
Confidential Informants Developed	5	Warrants Issued	1
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	9
Restitution to the Insurance Industry		\$0	

Kings County Office of the District Attorney

The Kings County District Attorney's Office (KCDA) has a long and distinguished history of conducting innovative and complex investigations, especially in the area of "white collar" or financial crime. Over the years, the Rackets Division, which is responsible for overseeing this project, has successfully conducted investigations into organized car thefts, chop shops, odometer rollbacks, fraudulent collision shops, medical clinics involved in fraudulent activities and durable medical equipment providers, as well as arsons for profit, identity theft, dealers of fraudulent insurance cards and money laundering. These investigations and prosecutions are often conducted with the assistance of other agencies such as the Department of Motor Vehicles, NYPD Auto Crimes Unit, NYPD Fraudulent Accident Investigation Squad (FAIS), and U.S. Postal Inspectors.

The Office has a zone system of prosecution in which Assistant District Attorneys are assigned to one of five different zones covering specific precincts in Kings County. These ADAs prosecute all criminal activity within their assigned zone. Within each zone, there are ADAs dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of automobile theft and insurance fraud. Additionally, financial investigators and paralegals also devote as much time as necessary to assist in the prosecutions of grant-related crimes. Detective investigators from the Office's Special Investigations Unit are available to provide support as requested. Finally, it should be noted that although ADAs handle auto related cases, senior members of the Rackets Division are available to these attorneys in order to provide training and supervision.

Description of MVT and IF Related Activity During 2013

Below is a sampling of cases that highlight KCDA's successes investigating and prosecuting automobile theft and insurance fraud. These achievements have been enhanced, due to support provided by MVTIF grant funds:

- A defendant who owned a used car dealership registered and maintained more than fifty websites, focusing on the dealership, which advertised used cars for sale. The defendant was indicted on 480 counts including: failure to file required forms with the DMV, larceny of 27 motor vehicles and larceny from more than 30 customers. These customers were directed to wire transfer thousands of dollars to the defendant's bank account in return for cars they never received. During this investigation, the defendant fled to Florida. The ADA supervised the defendant's apprehension in Miami and his extradition back to New York where he was remanded by the judge at the ADA's request. The ADA organized four complex Grand Jury presentations, through which he procured the testimony of numerous out-of-state witnesses, some of who resided as far away as Saudi Arabia. The defendant pled guilty under all four indictments to three counts of grand larceny in the third degree and two counts of scheme to defraud in the second degree. He received a total sentence of 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ to 7 years incarceration. The defendant was further required to sign multiple confessions of judgment in favor of the various civilian complainants, totaling \$276,404.
- A defendant arranged for medical mills to bill insurance companies for injuries supposedly sustained in multiple staged accidents. These injuries turned out to be fraudulent. The defendant was arrested on two separate cases and subsequently pleaded guilty to two counts of falsely reporting an incident in the second degree. He received probation and was required to pay \$5,000 in restitution to the complainant insurance company.
- A defendant made a complaint with the NYPD that the doors, seats and headlights of his 2011 Audi R8 had been removed from his vehicle. Geico issued the defendant a check in the amount of \$48,774, which the defendant cashed. Subsequent investigation indicated that no theft had occurred based on the fact that both doors had the original production numbers stamped upon them. The defendant was arrested and subsequently pled guilty to falsely reporting an incident in the third degree. He was sentenced to a conditional discharge, with the condition being that he remain out of trouble. During the proceeding, the defendant provided a check representing restitution for \$48,774. A representative from Geico was present and accepted the check.
- A defendant had a few stolen older-model Nissans in his possession. Several Nissans were recovered in one or more concentrated geographical areas, with minimal or no damage. After search warrants were executed for the DNA of the defendant, his DNA was recovered on the steering wheel of another stolen vehicle. The defendant was arrested and subsequently pled guilty to two counts of criminal possession of stolen property in the fifth degree, receiving a total sentence of two years in jail. Four orders of protection were also issued on behalf of the complaining witnesses.
- The Rackets Division is currently handling another Supreme Court case against a confidential defendant, who was involved in multiple staged accidents with other vehicles. In one such incident, the defendant intentionally crashed his car into another vehicle, then faked injury and provided the name and identification of another person. He then received the proceeds of a no-fault insurance claim and a civil lawsuit filed by that other person, who split the money with the defendant. The passengers in the defendant's car also sought fraudulent medical treatment pursuant to the claim. The defendant later admitted to his participation in multiple additional staged accidents, including a similarly staged accident that was also the subject a fraudulent no-fault claim. The defendant and other participants were indicted for these staged accidents. The defendant ultimately entered into a plea deal on both cases, which includes cooperation against other perpetrators of no-fault insurance fraud, including the involved clinics, as part of multiple ongoing investigations.

- In multiple additional cases handled by the Rackets Division and the various trial zones, individuals were arrested and prosecuted after stealing cars, falsely reporting their cars stolen or after seeking medical treatment for faked injuries that were not actually sustained in fictitious or staged accidents. Many of these cases have resulted in misdemeanor and felony dispositions. Additional cases are still the subject of pending plea negotiations or investigations.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	87
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	427	Misdemeanor Convictions	224
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	404	Felony Convictions	43
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	140	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	820

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	1	Indictments	4
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	9	Misdemeanor Convictions	6
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	23	Felony Convictions	2
Confidential Informants Developed	1	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	4	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	44
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$69,702.81	

New York County District Attorney's Office (DANY)

The New York County District Attorney's Office (DANY) devotes substantial resources to combating motor vehicle theft, insurance fraud and the production, sale and use of fraudulent vehicle-related documents. Long-term, major investigations are handled by the Rackets and Major Economic Crime Bureaus. Individual insurance frauds and other investigations are handled in the Special Prosecutions Bureau. All are supported by the Asset Forfeiture, Forensic Accounting and Financial Investigations Units. The Money Laundering and Tax Crimes Unit also contributes to this effort. Assistants in the Trial Division handle numerous fraudulent document cases and the majority of offenses related to vehicle theft.

Current Trends and Activity

The highlight of DANY's program for 2013 was the near conclusion of a long-term joint investigation that led to the indictment and arrest of 33 defendants of a major stolen motorcycle and firearms trafficking ring. Various defendants were charged with stealing and re-selling 63 motorcycles with a total value close to \$500,000 and the possession and sale of 15 firearms. They also orchestrated an insurance fraud scheme in which owners of luxury vehicles falsely reported their cars stolen and sold them to the defendants for a fraction of their value for eventual shipment and re-sale overseas. This 17-month investigation involved undercover officers, the use of extensive surveillance and electronic eavesdropping. Three defendants were convicted of enterprise corruption and numerous other charges after a jury trial that lasted two months. Almost all of the others have pled guilty, bringing the total number of defendants convicted as a result of the investigation to 31. Most of these defendants received lengthy state prison sentences. The leader of the criminal enterprise received a sentence that will result in up to 9 years of incarceration.

A corrupt personal injury attorney pleaded guilty in three separate indictments charging him with stealing his clients' insurance settlement funds, almost all of which involved motor vehicle accidents. In addition to stealing dozens of settlements, he filed a variety of forged and falsified documents with insurance companies. He was sentenced to 2½ to 7 years in prison.

Cases were resolved against a truck dealership and a vehicle scrapper who previously pled guilty to forging and falsifying insurance certificates in their applications to participate in the Truck Replacement Program. This federal and state funded program provides low interest loans to truckers who trade in their old trucks and purchase new "greener" vehicles. Truck dealers and scrappers applying to participate in this program must meet the Port Authority's stringent insurance coverage requirements. In addition to lying about their insurance and falsifying certificates, the defendants bribed undercover Port Authority investigators to remove the false documents from their application files when they were discovered. The defendants were sentenced after paying a total of \$68,000 in reparation to the Port Authority of NY and NJ and to the DA's Office.

A former DMV employee pled guilty to multiple charges in connection to a scheme in which he allowed people to present forged out-of-state licenses in the names of others as required documentation for the issuance of new, valid NYS licenses. The employee's crimes allowed the imposters to obtain valid licenses bearing their photos in the names of other people, surely facilitating further fraud schemes. The rogue employee charged thousands of dollars for his "services" and provided a license to at least one deported felon who had returned to the U.S. illegally. He received a sentence of probation despite strong objection from DANY.

DANY joined the NYS Inspector General, DMV and the United States Attorney in an investigation into widespread cheating on the various tests required to obtain commercial driver's licenses (CDLs), including tests for licenses allowing the operation of school buses, large rigs and trucks transporting hazardous materials. DANY arrested nine people and the US Attorney's Office charged the group that organized and operated the elaborate and lucrative ring. The ring conducted most of its operations in the area around the lower Manhattan DMV office.

Many other defendants were charged with possessing a wide variety of fake documents including driver's licenses, insurance cards, vehicle registrations, titles, inspection stickers, VIN plates, license plates and parking plaques. Many of the false documents, particularly driver's licenses, were used to commit other financial crimes. One defendant was convicted after a jury trial of possessing a forged driver's license and two stolen license plates. He was sentenced to 3 to 6 years in prison. A defendant in an unrelated case was convicted of possessing a forged license and received a sentence of 1½ to 3 years. Another defendant was sentenced to 9 months in jail after pleading guilty to impersonating a diplomat and possessing fraudulent vehicle insurance documents. An additional defendant received a sentence of 1½ to 3 years after pleading guilty to possessing a counterfeit license plate and an altered VIN.

A defendant in a long-pending case pleaded guilty to multiple counts of arson and was sentenced to nine years in prison. He admitted to dousing several luxury vehicles with gasoline and setting them on fire, in addition to setting fire to an apartment lobby on Central Park West. He was carrying a loaded gun and a container of gasoline at the time of his arrest. A search of his apartment revealed hundreds of rounds of ammunition and additional cans of gasoline. While insurance fraud was not the motive here, several other defendants were charged in separate "owner give-up" cases in which they falsely reported their cars stolen and, in some instances, had them torched in advance of making a false insurance claim.

The number of vehicles reported stolen continued to decline. 49 fewer cars were reported stolen in Manhattan in 2013 than in 2012. However, motor vehicle theft remains a problem. Vehicle break-ins motivated by the desire to steal equipment and property from inside the vehicle are also a continuing problem. Although there were fewer misdemeanor and felony arrests for vehicle theft in 2013 compared to 2012, there was an increase in the number of misdemeanor and felony convictions: 158 misdemeanor convictions in 2013 compared to 140 in 2012, and 137 felony convictions in 2013 compared to 128 in 2012. There is a similar pattern in fraud cases; although there were fewer felony arrests for fraud-related offenses in 2013 than in 2012, there were more felony convictions-128 felony convictions in 2013 compared to 117 in 2012. There were also significantly more misdemeanor arrests and convictions for fraud-related offenses this year as well, with 238 misdemeanor arrests and 144 misdemeanor convictions in 2013 compared to 160 arrests and 70 convictions in 2012.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	n/a	Indictments	61
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	283	Misdemeanor Convictions	158
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	162	Felony Convictions	137
Confidential Informants Developed*	n/a	Warrants Issued	n/a
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	6	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained**	289

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	15	Indictments	61
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	238	Misdemeanor Convictions	144
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	162	Felony Convictions	128
Confidential Informants Developed*	n/a	Warrants Issued	6
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	5	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained**	267
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry***		\$100,600	

*Full Data Not Available due to case disbursement

**Not all pleas are reduced

***Additionally, \$395,600 was ordered to be paid in the future.

Queens County Office of the District Attorney

The Queens District Attorney's Office (QDA) Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit is responsible for handling auto crime and insurance fraud-related investigations and prosecutions in Queens County. The unit is comprised of assistant district attorneys and investigators with specific experience and expertise in motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud who are assigned to investigate and prosecute these matters, with a focus on long-term investigative efforts, sting operations and the handling of specially selected trial matters that target organized motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud activity.

During 2013, four assistant district attorneys were assigned to the grant program, including the Chief of the Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit, the Bureau Chief of the Organized Crime and Rackets Bureau (part-time) and two other assistant district attorneys. In addition, four investigators were assigned to the program during this period. Assigned staff engaged in ongoing gathering and analysis of crime patterns, intelligence data, and emerging patterns in the community. They also utilized a full range of investigative techniques; including intensive physical surveillance, the use of informants and undercover operatives, sting operations and sophisticated surveillance, as well as search warrants, wiretapping and/or other electronic

eavesdropping and surveillance. Investigations and prosecutions of organized auto crime and insurance fraud matters focus on building enterprise corruption cases, where possible, to ensure the organized foundations of crime activity are uprooted and maximum sentencing is obtained. In addition, assigned prosecutors aggressively address individual prosecutions in the county, targeting them for strong dispositions and sentences, particularly because of the often-found linkage of individual prosecutions to an overall pattern of criminal activity.

Notable Cases

In 2013, QDA's Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit handled 85 new cases (57 motor vehicle theft-related and 28 insurance fraud-related) and 57 convictions (43 motor vehicle theft-related and 14 insurance fraud-related), including 34 felony convictions (25 motor vehicle theft-related and nine insurance fraud-related). Excluding the Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit, there were an additional 917 new cases (915 motor vehicle theft-related and two insurance fraud-related), including 112 felony convictions (all motor vehicle theft-related).

Over the past several years, there have also been a large number of insurance fraud prosecutions and successful dispositions in this area. In 2013, eight cases were disposed of by the defendant specifically pleading guilty to insurance fraud. In addition, a great deal of effort was spent on following up on any licensed professionals found to be involved in insurance fraud schemes, making sure that they were dealt administratively, as well as by their respective licensing agencies.

Successful investigative and prosecutorial efforts in both the auto crime and insurance fraud areas in 2013 include:

- **Operation Integrated Medical Care:** A Queens County grand jury indicted nine individuals and one medical corporation for involvement in a no-fault insurance scheme. The scheme allegedly defrauded insurance companies of more than \$150,000 through the operation of a Queens Village. The charged defendants included the clinic corporation, the clinic manager (who allegedly paid runners to find patients), the clinic receptionist and two runners who allegedly coached "patients" in exaggerating their injuries for the reporting of false claims. In May 2013, the clinic corporation pled guilty to the felony of insurance fraud in the third degree on three separate indictments and was fined \$10,000 for each indictment. Four additional defendants have pleaded guilty to date. Charges for the remaining defendants are currently pending.
- **Operation Steal for Scrap:** Five individuals were charged with stealing 31 cars and bringing them to a Queens scrap yard where they were to be crushed and sold as scrap metal. The defendants were allegedly paid \$400 to \$700 per vehicle. The defendants were charged with varying offenses including: felony grand larceny, criminal possession of stolen property, unauthorized use of a vehicle and falsifying business records. Three jail sentences and one probationary sentence were imposed.
- **Operation Cars to Go:** In an investigation that involved the New York State Police Auto Theft Unit, 10 individuals were charged in an 82 count indictment on grand larceny and other charges. They were charged in connection with an auto theft ring that allegedly targeted and stole high-end vehicles from car dealerships in Queens and Brooklyn for resale. This included allegedly selling one of the vehicles to a defendant who had arranged to have it shipped overseas. Investigators placed a GPS device on one of the stolen vehicles and tracked it to a shipping container in a terminal on Staten Island. The

defendants were sentenced to three jail sentences, two conditional discharge sentences, and one probationary sentence. Charges against other defendants are currently pending.

- **Queens Medical Clinic:** A Queens physician and a technician who operated and worked at a medical clinic in South Richmond Hill were charged with defrauding insurance companies and the New York State Worker's Compensation Board. More than \$160,000 was fraudulently billed over a two-year period for medical tests that were never performed. It is alleged that the defendants falsified the tests by recycling old patient test results. Charges are still pending.
- **Luxury Auto Theft Ring:** A sweeping 18-month investigation led to the shutdown of a luxury automobile theft ring that was allegedly responsible for stealing 48 high-end vehicles valued at approximately \$2.4 million. The investigation utilized court-authorized wiretaps, traditional surveillance and other investigative techniques. The defendants are accused of stealing the automobiles from Queens County and elsewhere in the tri-state area. The defendants are accused of stealing and then "tagging" the cars – essentially changing the vehicle identification (VIN) numbers and registering the stolen vehicles with "washed" titles then using "brokers" to sell them. The ring is alleged to have even taken orders for certain makes and models to be stolen. Charges are currently pending.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
* Investigations Initiated	8	Indictments	24
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	18
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	57	Felony Convictions	25
* Confidential Informants Developed	3	* Warrants Issued	37
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	25

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
* Investigations Initiated	3	Indictments	14
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	5
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	28	Felony Convictions	9
* Confidential Informants Developed	5	* Warrants Issued	1
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	13
* Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$133,376	

*Please note that the statistics in the charts above, reflect the activity of QDA's Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit only and are not Office-wide numbers. As noted above, Office-wide statistics, excluding the Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit, reflect 917 new cases (915 motor vehicle theft-related and 2 insurance fraud-related) and 683 convictions (680 motor vehicle theft-related and 3 insurance fraud-related), including (112) felony convictions (112) motor vehicle theft-related and 0 insurance-fraud related).

Richmond County Office of the District Attorney

The Richmond County District Attorney's (RCDA) Specialized MVTIF unit operated within three legal bureaus in 2013 – Investigations, Supreme Court, and Criminal Court – as well as the Detective Investigators Squad. The strategic principles that guided the MVTIF initiatives were:

- Integration of specific outreach and information measures;
- Use of the available operational analysis;
- Merger of knowledge and expertise of law enforcement; and
- Involvement of prosecutors early in investigations to interview witnesses and victims and examine the evidence for effective prosecution.

Notable Cases

In 2013, motor vehicle thefts and related crimes generally appeared to be random occurrences of presented opportunity. The majority of vehicle theft cases had motives of joyriding or transportation. However, these motives can only be verified by interviewing apprehended defendants. Richmond County had 224 reported cases of grand larceny auto. The breakdown according to each was:

- 72 cases reported in the 120 Precinct
- 62 cases in the 121 Precinct
- 50 cases in the 122 Precinct
- 40 in the 123 Precinct

The 2013 MVTIF grant funded program activities of RCDA were consistent with activities from previous years. Felony MVTIF cases were assigned to an Assistant District Attorney (ADA) shortly after an arrest. Fraud cases that required extensive investigations were assigned to an ADA almost immediately after the report of an incident. ADAs prosecuted 41 felonies and 114 misdemeanors. Most of these cases had multiple charges, and some involved weapons and drugs. Eight motor vehicle insurance fraud cases were prosecuted, three felonies and five misdemeanors.

- One case involved two women ages 48 and 23, who were apprehended for stealing a car from a parking lot. The women admitted to the crime, stating that one woman found the keys on the floor in the store and gave them to her accomplice. The women left the store, located the 1999 Oldsmobile Cutlass car, and drove off. The vehicle had an estimated resale value of \$2,100. The two women are currently facing multiple felony and misdemeanor charges.
- A similar case took place in a popular local restaurant. A 23-year-old male took keys he found on the bar that belonged to another patron. The suspect left the bar, located the victim's 2002 Ford Explorer and drove away. The vehicle had an estimated value of \$4,500. The suspect was arrested the same day and was charged with multiple felonies and misdemeanors.
- Four Nissan Armadas, with a value of over \$200,000, were stolen from a dealership holding facility. In July 2011, an individual was identified as a suspect using DNA evidence that was recovered at the crime scene. After an enhanced investigation, the suspect was indicted for the crimes in January 2013.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	3
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	114	Misdemeanor Convictions	38
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	41	Felony Convictions	16
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	11
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	44

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	0	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	5	Misdemeanor Convictions	3
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	3	Felony Convictions	0
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	3
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			\$0

New York City Police Department – Auto Crime Division

The NYPD Auto Crime Division was established in 1980 and is part of the Organized Crime Control Bureau of the New York City Police Department. The Auto Crime Division is a citywide investigative unit whose efforts are directed primarily at chop shops, auto salvage yards, organized theft rings and auto theft exports. The Division also actively investigates insurance fraud and closely monitors businesses associated with the automotive industry.

In 2013, there were 7,192 reported auto thefts in New York City. This is an 8 percent decrease compared to 2012. The two-year decrease is 5.2 percent, the 13 year decrease is 76.7 percent, and the 21-year decrease is 94.5 percent.

Various trends emerged regarding stolen vehicles in 2013. These included perpetrators using contacts in the automotive industry to have duplicate sets of coded keys produced, older vehicles being stolen for scrap, insurance fraud being committed by individuals falsely reporting vehicles stolen, motorcycles stolen to be stripped and exported and the use of fraudulent credit cards and driver licenses to rent vehicles with the intent to export these rented vehicles out of

the country. The Auto Crime Division continues to review reports of stolen vehicles for possible insurance fraud indicators on an ongoing basis.

The Auto Crime Division works concurrently in the same areas that the police precincts patrol and investigates all forms of auto related theft. The Auto Crime Division utilizes several different strategies to combat auto crime within New York City. Some methods utilized include sting operations, mobile surveillance, Get Legit or Quit Operations (GLQ), Multi Agency Response Community Hot Spots Operations (MARCH), the deployment of License Plate Readers, analysis of complaint reports for the purpose of investigating insurance fraud, development of confidential informants, search warrants, debriefing of suspects arrested for grand larceny of an auto and training aimed at utilizing new techniques such as the processing of DNA from recovered stolen vehicles to identify suspects and collaborations with surrounding Police Agencies to combat auto theft.

During the period from January 1- December 31, 2013, several cases originating in 2012 were investigated by the Division. These cases have been designated as long-term cases and are still under investigation by case officers. Other cases have been brought to completion by the Auto Crime Division, while new investigations have begun. The following are brief highlights of some of these cases:

- In February of 2012, the Auto Crime Division opened what has been designated as a long term-case involving the investigation of reports of enhanced damages being conducted by repair shops for insurance fraud. The repair shops submit fraudulent bills to insurance companies for unnecessary repairs. The investigation has involved members of the NYS Financial Crimes Bureau, the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), and various other state and federal agencies, including the US Attorney's Office.
- In December of 2012, the Auto Crime Division opened a long-term case involving the selling of stolen parts including engines, transmissions, airbags and firearms in the City of New York.
- In January of 2013, the Auto Crime Division opened a case involving the investigation of late model vehicle thefts. A mobile locksmith is producing vehicle keys so that thieves can circumvent the factory alarm systems. Once this is completed, the thieves can steal the vehicles at any time of the day or night without raising suspicion that they are not the vehicle owner. This allows perpetrators to alter the vehicle numbers and resell the cars undetected.
- In July of 2013, the Auto Crime Division began investigating the theft of motorcycles in the New York City area. After reviewing complaint reports lodged and videos of thefts, an increase in Harley Davidson motorcycle larcenies was discovered. Video footage confirmed that a late model Ford Econoline extended van with blacked out windows was being used to steal these motorcycles. Investigative efforts on this case are ongoing.
- In April of 2013, ACD began investigating the disposal of stolen vehicles at a scrap yard located in Queens. Six subjects were responsible for the thefts of older vehicles that were stolen subsequently disposed of at the scrap yard. The investigation resulted in the recovery of 23 stolen cars. The six subjects were charged with a total of 53 felony counts, which were prosecuted by the Queens District Attorney's Rackets Bureau.
- In December of 2013, Auto Crime Division initiated an investigations of an organized theft ring from the Bronx. This case involves the theft and tagging of high-end automobiles involving 18 suspects.

- A yearlong investigation conducted by the Auto Crime Division resulted in 36 search warrants and 61 TITLE III wire taps. Banking records, numerous fraudulent/forged titles, VIN plates, 311 vehicles (valued at approximately \$15.5 million), \$2.2 million dollars of US currency, 21 kilograms of cocaine, a kilo press and two pounds of marijuana were seized over the course of the investigation. The 18 subjects were charged with a total of 23 felonies, including one A1 felony. The resulting cases were all prosecuted by the Queens District Attorney's Rackets Bureau.

- During 2013, the Auto Crime Division conducted and led several MARCH operations along with a citywide Grand Larceny Auto (GLA) Initiative Operation. These operations targeted specific areas and involved the NYC Department of Buildings, the Department of Environmental Conservation, ASPCA, FDNY, the Traffic Control Division and various other units of the NYPD, including the Auto Larceny Units and Boro Task Forces. The operations resulted in numerous arrests and summonses.

- The Auto Crime Division's Special Projects Module initiated multiple suspected insurance fraud investigations in 2013, which involved the utilization of motor vehicles. These investigations sometimes involved collaboration with other agencies to assist in the determination of proper probable cause for prosecution. The result of these short term investigations by the Auto Crime Division produced multiple arrests for insurance fraud, arson, reckless endangerment, grand larceny, false statements and falsifying business records.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	39	Reported MV Thefts	7,192
Misdemeanor Arrests	59	Recovered Stolen MVs	1,945
Felony Arrests	261	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$9,031,964
Confidential Informants Developed	42	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	6

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	39	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	68
Misdemeanor Arrests	59	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	66
Felony Arrests	261		
Confidential Informants Developed	42		

New York City Police Department – Fraudulent Accident Investigation Squad

The New York City Police Department's Fraudulent Accident Investigation Squad (FAIS) and the Health Care Fraud Task Force (HCFTF) are part of the Organized Crime Investigation Division, which falls under the Organized Crime Control Bureau. The FAIS and the HCFTF are designed to specifically address all aspects of no-fault insurance fraud within the five boroughs of New York City and the Eastern and Southern Districts of New York. Both units are dedicated to combating no-fault insurance fraud at the state and federal levels.

2013 Case Highlights

- In February 2013, FAIS concluded Phase II of a long-term investigation dubbed "Operation Blackbook". This investigation began in 2008 in conjunction with the Queens District Attorney's Office. It focused on a criminal enterprise whose members were engaged in an

organized scheme to commit large scale insurance fraud through staged accidents and health care fraud. The takedown was based on evidence that the medical clinic paid runners to bring accident victims to the Queens Integrated Medical Clinic. Ten subjects were arrested in Phase II including; the manager/owner, a clinic employee, a medical professional, two runners and five participants in the staged vehicle accidents. The takedown of Phase I resulted in the arrest of 15 subjects; bringing the total arrested in "Operation Blackbook" to 25 defendants. The FAIS investigators utilized over 50 wiretaps and hours of surveillance to gather sufficient evidence to charge the participants in this case.

- In January 2013, FAIS began the takedown of Phase II of "Operation Crash for Cash". This was a long term investigation into a medical facility located in Brooklyn's 73rd Precinct. This clinic paid runners who orchestrated staged motor vehicle accidents for profit. The investigation was conducted mainly in the 73rd, 75th, 67th, and 69th precincts. Debriefings of a registered confidential informant (CI) revealed numerous accidents that were staged or created by the CI. The FAIS and the NYS Attorney General's Office have identified seven accidents (five involving U-Hauls) tied or linked to the co-operator in the investigation. FAIS arrested 16 subjects in Phase II and 22 subjects in Phase I, for a total of 38 defendants.
- Operation "Rent a Truck" is an investigation being conducted jointly by FAIS and the U.S. Postal Inspector's Office and is currently being prosecuted in the Eastern District of New York. The investigation is focused on a criminal ring staging accidents. The subjects and co-conspirators rented U-Haul vans and trucks, then hired other vehicles to be used in staged automobiles accidents. FAIS, working with the United States Postal Inspector and the New York State Department of Financial Services, identified more than 20 staged accidents set up by this criminal ring. In May 2013, FAIS commenced the takedown of Phase 1 of the operation, which resulted in nine arrests, including an active New York City corrections officer assigned to Rikers Island. FAIS is continuing its investigation and anticipates arresting nine more subjects in the near future.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	25	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	57
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	*See note below
Felony Arrests	67		
Confidential Informants Developed	6		

*Note: The FAIS and the HCFTF cannot accurately provide a number of accident claims cancelled due to Law Enforcement investigations initiated.

The Bureau of Fire Investigation (BFI)

Law enforcement Division of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY)

The Bureau of Fire Investigation (BFI) is the law enforcement division of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY). The BFI is responsible for the investigation of incidents of fire, arson, and arson-related crimes including motor vehicle fires in all five counties of New York City. Fire marshals in the possess expertise in both forensic fire scene examination and arson-for-profit criminal investigation. All members of the BFI are sworn police officers under NYS Criminal Procedure Law.

Each year, more than 50 firefighters are seriously injured while operating at motor vehicle fires. The BFI established a dedicated unit to address motor vehicle fires called the Auto Fraud Squad (AFS). The primary mission of the AFS is the detection and prosecution of motor vehicle arson and fraud by fire, with a focus on owner give-ups and torch-for-hire operations. The AFS

consists of four fire marshal investigators and one supervisor. It is supported by crime scene specialists, intelligence analysts and technical services operators.

Fire marshals focus on evidence specifically connecting an individual to the arson or staged theft of a vehicle. A crucial part of every investigation is the investigative interview of the motor vehicle owner. When confronted with the weight of evidence directly refuting written and verbal statements, motor vehicle owners, even the skilled offenders, often make admissions to one or a combination of offenses, including but not limited to arson, conspiracy, insurance fraud and offering a false written statement. The interview/interrogation process has a high success rate leading to arrests and prosecutions, as well as insurance claims denied or withdrawn.

2013 Case Reviews

Case #1 - On January 28, 2013, FDNY units responded to a report of a 2011 Toyota Camry on fire in Manhattan. The motor vehicle had been stolen in the Bronx that day. During a prescreening process of the fire activity, fire marshals noted unusual circumstances associated with this incident and initiated a response plan. Fire marshals determined that flammable liquid was used to accelerate the fire and recovered evidence of arson and fraud at the fire scene.

An investigative interview was conducted focusing on details related to the theft and the owner's net worth, current financial state and alibi for the time of the occurrence. During the investigative interview, the owner was asked to complete and sign a statement in the form of a questionnaire detailing facts and circumstances related to the vehicle, the theft and personal finances. As instructed, the owner brought all sets of car keys to the interview. The keys were secured by Fire Marshals as evidence.

Interrogation of the motor vehicle owner led to a full confession. He reported that he borrowed \$5,000 from a loan shark, whom he had been introduced to by a third party. When unable to repay the loan, the third-party took the car and its keys, then later returned the keys but not the car. He reported he was told the car was torched at a specific location and he should file an insurance claim and use the insurance claim payment to pay the loan shark. The insurance claim was for \$19,850. The motor vehicle owner agreed to cooperate with efforts to further the ongoing investigation.

Fire Marshals arrested the motor vehicle owner on charges of insurance fraud in the third degree, attempted grand larceny auto in the third degree, falsifying business records in the second degree, and making a false written statement.

Case #2 - Fire marshals responded to the fire scene of a 2011 BMW 328IS in Staten Island to conduct a forensic examination. Evidence of arson and fraud was recovered in the form of fire debris for lab analysis, transponder/ignition key evidence and VIN tampering evidence. The crime scene was documented. An investigation canvass was conducted for witnesses, security cameras and other potential leads. Fire marshals conducted interviews with FDNY personnel and searched the following computer based services and databases: New York Fire Incident Report System (NYFIRS), eJustice/State Police Information Network (NYSPIN)/Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV), ISO Claims Search and Accurint.

The vehicle owner's name was searched in the SAFETNet database. A hit came back with a link to a NYPD/DEA Narcotics Task Force. Auto Fraud Squad members contacted the Narcotics Task Force and coordinated to interview the motor vehicle owner.

Fire marshals interviewed the motor vehicle owner that detailed facts relative to the vehicle theft and the owner's personal finances. The vehicle owner was pressed about the facts of the theft and the security features associated with the vehicle's transponder keys. The vehicle owner confessed that he owed a drug dealer \$14,000. The drug dealer took his car and torched it. When the owner received the insurance money, he was expected to pay the \$14,000 debt. The Insurance claim was valued at \$25,500. The weight of the arson, fraud and conspiracy charges later led to an enhanced investigation involving the Narcotics Task Force.

Case #3 - On November 23, 2013, FDNY units responded to reports of a 2010 Nissan Altima on fire in Queens. Fire marshals responded, conducted a forensic examination of the vehicle and recovered evidence of arson. Soon after, a \$10,000 insurance claim was made by the owner. Fire marshals reviewed the NYPD stolen vehicle report and vehicle theft affidavit and a red flag was raised when the owner claimed to be in possession of the vehicle at the time of the fire, as well as two days later.

On December 10, fire marshals interviewed and asked the motor vehicle owner to complete and sign a statement in the form of a questionnaire detailing facts and circumstances related to the vehicle, the theft and personal finances. An interview followed that focused on details related to the time of the theft, as the time the owner reported the vehicle stolen and the time it burned were in conflict. When the motor vehicle owner was confronted with the documented inconsistencies, she confessed to giving the vehicle to a relative to get rid of because it was a leased vehicle with high mileage that would result in a \$10,000 penalty payment when returned. The owner agreed to cooperate with fire marshals and recorded a telephone conversation with the relative. Fire marshals arrested the vehicle owner on December 17 and charged her with insurance fraud, filing three false written statements and falsely reporting an incident. The investigation is ongoing.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Arson Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
MV Fires in NYC 5 Counties	2689	Misdemeanor Charges Filed	42
Investigations Initiated by AFS	513	Felony Charges Filed	46
Value of Fire Insurance Claims Denied or Withdrawn	\$694,000	Total Arrests	46

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	513	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	n/a
Misdemeanor Arrests	42	Number of Accident or Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	27
Felony Arrests	46		
Confidential Informants Developed	4		



New York City Suburban Region

Nassau County Office of the District Attorney
Nassau County Police Department
Suffolk County Office of the District Attorney
Suffolk County Police Department
Westchester County Office of the District Attorney
Yonkers City Police Department

Nassau County Office of the District Attorney

In 2013, the Nassau County District Attorney prosecuted 84 MVTIF-related felony arrests and 54 misdemeanor arrests. There were 14 indictments, 64 felony convictions and 21 misdemeanor convictions. As a result, restitution for insurance fraud related crimes was ordered totaling \$11,998. Notable cases include:

- The theft of at least three classic 1930s cars. The defendant was hired to restore the classic cars but instead he sold them without the owner's knowledge. The defendant concealed the thefts by substituting shells of similar model cars which he kept partially hidden under tarps. The shells were kept in a hard to access area of the defendant's garage, thus preventing the owner from examining them and delaying the discovery of the thefts. The defendant was sentenced and ordered to pay restitution of \$220,652. The restitution was part of a plea disposition which had been negotiated in 2012 and so was included in the statistics for that year.
- An investigation into staged accident rings operating in Nassau is ongoing. The investigation has identified an organization led by a Brooklyn resident who has been recruiting individuals in Brooklyn to participate in staged accidents in Nassau County. The subject does not own or rent any of the vehicles involved in the accidents. Rather, he recruits individuals (mostly women) to register and insure vehicles in their own name or to rent motor vehicles. Other individuals act as passengers in the vehicle. In multiple instances, the group of participants drive a vehicle into Nassau County to look for a non-participating driver. The participant's vehicle then strikes the victim's car. Upon arrival of police officers an accident report is filed. The subjects return to New York City where they obtain medical treatment and file fraudulent insurance claims
- Two defendants were identified by an undercover officer and a confidential informant using \$20,000 of prerecorded buy money to purchase two stolen vehicles. Both defendants were arrested. The cars and \$18,000 of the buy money have been recovered. The defendants pled guilty and are awaiting sentencing.
- A defendant was arrested for stealing two cars from the same auto dealer. The defendant was in possession of an additional seven sets of car keys from the dealership at the time of arrest.
- A defendant was arrested by the Nassau County police for selling stolen cars as scrap. The defendant sold nine stolen vehicles to the same scrap dealer in a four week period.

- In August, the office commenced prosecution of an individual who used stolen identities to purchase at least five motor vehicles from auto dealerships in Nassau County and other counties. The defendant was arrested. The vehicles, valued at \$22,000, were recovered and returned to the dealerships. The defendant pled guilty to grand larceny in the second degree and related charges.
- An investigation has been opened into a car salesman who was taking cash down payments from prospective buyers, pocketing the money and processing the sale without indicating any down payment. The result was that the buyer got the car but not the credit for the downpayment. In many cases, the victim lost thousands of dollars from the down payment, made higher than anticipated monthly payments and ultimately had the car repossessed. The dealership lost the cars and in several cases is making restitution to the buyers. To date, three dealerships and 50 buyers have been identified as victims.

2013 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	1	Indictments	14
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	53	Misdemeanor Convictions	21
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	83	Felony Convictions	63
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	57

2013 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	2	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	1	Misdemeanor Convictions	0
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	2	Felony Convictions	1
Confidential Informants Developed	1	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	1
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			\$11,998.00

Nassau County Police Department

In 2013, the Nassau County Police Department (NCPD) utilized NYS DCJS Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud program funds to continue to run the Search Apprehension Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) program. This year, management of the program was shifted from the Office of the Chief of Patrol to the Department's Crimes Against Property (CAP) Squad's Vehicle Theft section.

Notable Cases

An integral component of the SAVE program is the review of incoming crime reports by police officers, CAP squad detectives, their supervisors and precinct intelligence analysts. They monitor suspicious activity as well as current crime data in order to identify patterns and trends in motor vehicle theft and related crimes. They establish "hot spots" which are then actively targeted. The department has created extensive directives on the proper protocol to follow when investigating/arresting those who commit these crimes and continues to educate all personnel on these policies and procedures. SAVE-related topics are frequently discussed at regularly scheduled monthly precinct briefings in which local crime patterns are evaluated. These efforts and activities have resulted in increased vigilance countywide and have laid a solid foundation for the successful implementation of the program.

SAVE officers are directed to scan the railroad stations as frequently as possible with LPRs, as these locations have been known as high activity sites for auto theft activity. At the end of a SAVE enforcement patrol, the officers provide an accounting of any actions taken, including arrests, VTL enforcement efforts and other activities.

An LPR hit revealed that a car found unoccupied in Valley Stream had been stolen. Special patrol officers conducted surveillance of the stolen vehicle until two subjects entered it and attempted to drive away. The vehicle was stopped and the operator subsequently arrested.

In another instance, a 911 call indicated that there were possible stolen vehicles at a junkyard in Oceanside. The junkyard in question had been the scene of a recent recovered stolen vehicles and parts investigation. Upon arrival, two stolen cars were recovered and three subjects were arrested. SAVE officers and CAP Squad detectives responded to assist with the investigation and arrests.

Along with the enforcement component of this program, Nassau County Police Department CAP Squad and precinct squad detectives utilized grant funds to conduct several investigations related to motor vehicle theft. Detectives conducted searches of scrap records to discover stolen vehicle leads, specifically by determining whether vehicles are being disposed of properly, with a special focus on the correct use of MV-35 forms. NCPD detectives largely focused on investigating a high-end vehicle theft pattern, occurring mostly on the North Shore of Nassau County.

One investigation stemmed from the thefts of high-end vehicles, including a 2014 Jeep Cherokee, two 2013 Land Rovers, a 2013 Infiniti, two 2012 Mercedes Benzes, a 2012 BMW, a 2011 Land Rover, a 2010 Lincoln and a 2010 Porsche, among others. Detectives interviewed the victims for further theft leads, canvassed theft areas and developed video leads to identify suspect vehicles. They produced suspect vehicle intelligence bulletins and distributed them to precincts. In the course of this investigation, NCPD detectives coordinated with other law enforcement agencies, including the NYPD Auto Crimes Division and the New Jersey State Police Auto Task Force. A large portion of the high end stolen vehicles were recovered in those areas.

The NCPD and the Suffolk County Police Department conducted a joint investigation into a pattern of stolen tires and rims. This collaboration resulted in grand larceny arrests of four suspects.

NCPD detectives worked an investigation with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearm and Explosives (ATF). An ATF confidential informant was utilized in the identification and arrest of a suspect in the theft of a 2013 Nissan, which was recovered at the time of arrest.

In addition to investigating the high-end theft cases, the Vehicle Theft Squad and precinct squad detectives have been re-interviewing all victims for fraud indicators. Victims are questioned in depth, with a special focus on key/fob accountability. These interviews are part of a continuing effort to prevent fraud from going undetected. The Vehicle Theft Squad makes contact with insurance claims representatives on all high end theft cases. Each theft is indexed with the NICB. The Vehicle Theft Squad secures any additional key fobs from owners of high end vehicle thefts. Repeated searches of databases are conducted from recovery leads, parking tickets, license plate readers, ISO, CARFAX, NYSPIN, etc. Detectives work closely with representatives from the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) to enhance their ability to prevent, deter, and reduce incidences of motor vehicle insurance fraud.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	68	Reported MV Thefts	
Misdemeanor Arrests	1	Recovered Stolen MVs	21
Felony Arrests	21	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$212,000.00
Confidential Informants Developed	2	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	6	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	37,750
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled	0
Felony Arrests	0	Due to Law Enforcement Investigation	
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Initiation	

Suffolk County Office of the District Attorney

The Labor, Insurance Crimes Bureau (LICRB) was created to prioritize efforts to combat insurance fraud and related crimes such as motor vehicle theft. One of the goals of the bureau is to utilize different strategies to effectively target motor vehicle insurance fraud offenders. LICRB is supervised by a division chief, a bureau chief, a deputy bureau chief and 11 prosecutors who deal strictly with tax, labor, motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. The LICRB has a team of investigators that includes a senior detective investigator, three detective investigators, two Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD) detectives assigned to the Suffolk County DA's Office, a representative from the state Department of Financial Services and one agent from the National Insurance Crimes Bureau (NICB). It has one paralegal solely dedicated to MVTIF grant matters and also employs non-MVTIF clerical staff, investigators and prosecutors, whose time is not reimbursed by the DCJS grant.

The LICRB has allowed investigators and prosecutors to strengthen resources and knowledge and maintain an increased level of experience and expertise in these areas. LICRB prosecutes all cases generated by its investigators related to insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft, as well as all cases generated by the Property Recovery Section of the Suffolk County Police Department and the New York State Police. LICRB also oversees an undercover operation involving a sting location where insurance "give-ups", stolen motor vehicles and stolen motorcycles are purchased. In these cases, sellers believe the vehicle was disposed of by the undercover detectives.

Notable Cases

The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office successfully concluded numerous long-term and short-term investigations and prosecutions in 2013.

The bureau concluded a long-term investigation into four defendants who were involved in a scheme to rent cars at metropolitan airports using fake ID's and credit information. They would then sell the fairly new rental vehicles for quick cash. The investigation resulted in the recovery of eight vehicles that were sold to the DA's office undercover investigator and two more rental vehicles which were seized at the time of arrest. The vehicles purchased by the undercover investigator included, a 2013 Dodge Durango, a 2012 Mercedes-Benz, a 2013 Nissan Altima, a

2011 Ford Escape, a 2012 Nissan Altima and a 2011 Ford Escape. The investigator paid \$22,500 for the eight rental cars, but the vehicles had an approximate bluebook value of \$245,000. The defendants secured valid credit account information from a local retail store and forged Connecticut and New York State licenses to rent the cars from Hertz, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Dollar and Avis. The two defendants who conducted the vehicle sales transactions with the undercover investigator were indicted. One defendant was indicted on nine counts of criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree as well as various other charges including marijuana and forgery. The second defendant was indicted on seven counts of criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree, six counts of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle in the third degree and other forgery charges. Both defendants remain in custody while their cases are pending.

The Office completed an investigation involving a mobile diagnostic company which was billing both private and government insurance policies for diagnostic testing that was either not performed, performed on one date yet billed on another or the tests were not reviewed by the insurance company's physician. The diagnostic company had a radiologist on staff who owned one of the billing corporations. The radiologist performed no-fault reviews and is believed to be a part of the fraudulent scheme. A search warrant was executed in February 2013 at the mobile diagnostic testing facility office for more than 400 patient files, 13 doctors' files, log sheets, computer and server equipment and other paperwork related to the insurance fraud investigation. At the time of the search warrant, the diagnostic facility owner was arrested for five counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument. Based on the investigation, it was revealed that Medicare was also one of the entities being fraudulently billed. Three corporations were also charged. The mobile diagnostic company and the three corporations were charged with 52 counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument, seven counts of insurance fraud and three counts of conspiracy. The four defendant indictment is still pending and details of the case are still being investigated.

Another notable investigation and prosecution resolved this year involved four co-defendants who attempted to make an insurance claim for the alleged theft of a 2006 Hyundai Sonata. Two of the defendants were the vehicle's owners, a mother and daughter, who gave the car to the two co-defendants, who in turn sold the vehicle to undercover detectives. The entire transaction was captured with audio/video surveillance and a recorded statement was taken by Geico Insurance Company. Both mother and daughter pled guilty to insurance fraud and were required to pay equal shares of the full restitution amount of \$7,396 to Geico.

Another successful no-fault investigation conducted by LIRCB related to a chiropractor who billed numerous insurance companies under both no-fault and workers' compensation patient benefits. An investigation revealed the chiropractor was "ghost billing" and billing for services not rendered. The investigation was generated as a result of referrals from the New York State Insurance Fund (NYSIF), the National Insurance Crimes Bureau (NICB) and General Casualty of Wisconsin. A pre-text policy was obtained and an undercover investigator was sent to the suspect chiropractor for treatment. The billing confirmed that the undercover investigator was billed for dates he was not at the office and for certain treatments that were never received. During the course of the investigation, a confidential informant (CI) was developed who supplied the District Attorney's Office with patients' names who were fraudulently billed. One example was a patient who had cancer and was no longer able to receive any chiropractic treatment due to his medical condition. A search warrant was executed at the chiropractor's office in November 2013. Investigators sorted through the insurance and patient files to determine if other patients were fraudulently billed. The chiropractor's case is still pending.

As a result of these successful investigations and prosecutions in 2013, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office has recovered \$113,048 for victims of motor vehicle theft, including

\$2,000 in forfeiture funds that were received. Another \$226,097 went to victims of motor vehicle insurance fraud, which included \$5,000 in forfeiture funds that were received.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: SCDAO Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	16	Indictments	42
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	18	Misdemeanor Convictions	43
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	163	Felony Convictions	25
Confidential Informants Developed	7	Warrants Issued	4
# of MVT Cases Taken To Trial	2	# of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	53

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: SCDAO Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	29	Indictments	25
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	6	Misdemeanor Convictions	25
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	31	Felony Convictions	11
Confidential Informants Developed	7	Warrants Issued	4
# of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	# of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	37
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			\$221,097.59

Suffolk County Police Department – Vehicle Theft Section

Up until the spring of 2013, the Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD) had employed a dedicated Vehicle Theft Section (VTS) to address the problems of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. Between January and April of 2013, VTS moved from a centralized command model to an approach involving the entire department. Two former VTS detectives were transferred to the Property Recovery Section, along with certain duties previously performed by the Vehicle Theft Section. The Property Recovery Section and a detective sergeant assigned to the District Attorney's office now have the responsibility of coordinating all vehicle theft and insurance fraud investigations. Additionally, the Criminal Intelligence Section has begun a program of field intelligence officers and formalized a mandated debriefing program of all persons arrested within Suffolk County. A formalized Crime Pattern Program has been implemented throughout the department to help investigate crime patterns based on identified characteristics of the crime or geographical identifications.

The Suffolk County Police Department Property Recovery Section consists of one detective sergeant and six detectives. The detectives are tasked with the investigation of vehicle theft and insurance fraud, marine theft and fraud rings, odometer frauds, vehicle dismantles and investigations involving the disposal of junk and salvage vehicles. In addition, two detectives from the SCPD DA section are tasked with the investigations of motor vehicle theft and two detectives from the DA are assigned to insurance fraud investigations.

Notable Cases

Vehicle thefts showed a slight increase in 2013 with 1,273 vehicles reported stolen, of 21 more than in 2012. The vehicle recovery rate for 2013 is slightly higher than 2012, at 78 percent vs. 75 percent.

- The Honda Civic remained the most frequently stolen vehicle in the Suffolk County Police District. The VTS used several proven strategies to combat this theft trend, including speed shop and car meet inspections, confidential informant cultivation and prisoner debriefing.
- In July 2013, CIS identified a pattern involving the theft of 33 Honda vehicles stolen in the communities of Brentwood, Bayshore and Central Islip. 22 of those vehicles were recovered. Sources indicated this might have been part of a gang initiation. Mapping of the theft locations indicated a central point of commonality. Property Recovery Section detectives have begun surveillance of various known dismantlers/chop shop locations within that area. Debriefings have begun using target-specific questions in an effort to develop any information related to this pattern.
- In January 2013, Property Recovery Section detectives continued an investigation into an identified crime trend involving the theft of catalytic converters from railroad stations and other commercial locations where vehicles were parked unattended for extended periods of time. A GPS order was obtained after a suspect and vehicle were developed through canvassing of crime scenes, interviewing of victims and surveillance. The suspect was subsequently arrested and charged with three counts of criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree, three counts of grand larceny in the fourth degree and one count of auto stripping in the first degree.
- In January 2013, Property Recovery Section detectives continued an investigation into a crime pattern involving the theft of catalytic converters from vehicles parked in various shopping centers along the Sunrise Highway corridor in the towns of Babylon and Islip. A GPS order was obtained after a suspect and vehicle were developed through the canvassing of crime scenes, interviews with victims, surveillance and the development of a confidential informant. Two suspects were arrested and charged with six counts of criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree, 13 counts of grand larceny in the fourth degree, four counts of criminal mischief in the third degree, nine counts of criminal mischief in the second degree and two counts of auto stripping in the first degree.
- In May 2013, the 6th Precinct crime section began an investigation into an ongoing pattern of catalytic converter thefts. Officers developed information through a video canvass and debriefings. Three persons of interest were identified and records were obtained from local scrap metal dealers. Officers responding to a suspicious person call identified and took two of these people into custody. They were attempting to steal a catalytic converter from a vehicle parked in a driveway. Further debriefing of these subjects implicated them and a third person in this crime pattern as well as a number of other crimes. The three were charged with four counts of grand larceny in the fourth degree, four counts of criminal mischief in the third degree, four counts of auto stripping in the third degree and two counts of burglary in the second degree. Additionally, these persons of interest were identified in connection with multiple larcenies and catalytic converter thefts occurring in Riverhead Town Police jurisdictions.
- In January 2013, detectives from the Suffolk County Police District Attorney section began an investigation into the sale of marijuana. This investigation developed into a vehicle theft investigation when the undercover detectives began purchasing stolen rental vehicles from the suspects. These suspects would use fraudulent credit cards and identifications to rent vehicles from various rental agencies located near the various airports in the New York City area and sell them to SCPD detectives at a plant location wired with surveillance equipment. Detectives were able to purchase or seize 11 stolen rental vehicles. Search warrants were

executed at two locations. The seizure included a credit card embossing machine, a reader/writer/scanner, an Apache laminating machine, ink cartridges, holograms, blank credit cards, hundreds of fraudulent credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express), laptop computers and records (including handwritten records) containing credit card numbers. Three subjects were charged with two counts of criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree, two counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree, and one count of criminal possession of a forgery device. The case progressed through the court and these subjects were indicted on multiple counts related to this case.

- During 2013, detectives continued oversight of the scrap processor and vehicle dismantler industry. More than 60 percent of vehicles stolen in the Suffolk County Police District are greater than eight model years old and can be easily disposed of at junkyards. Scrap vehicle investigations have frequently revealed stolen vehicles, resulting in arrests for grand larceny, criminal possession of stolen property, offering a false instrument for filing and unregistered vehicle collector. Interviews with defendants who have committed these types of crime have revealed that most are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol. These defendants find stealing and scrapping vehicles a fast and easy way to earn money to feed their addiction. Detectives from the Property Recovery Section were able to identify and arrest 14 subjects selling stolen vehicles to scrap yards. These subjects were charged with various motor vehicle related offenses.
- During 2013, detectives conducted joint investigations with the Nassau County Police Department, the Southampton Town Police Department, the Riverhead Town Police Department, NICB and NYS DMV. In one case, a subject was arrested by a patrol officer for stealing tires and rims from a vehicle parked in a dealership. Detectives, assisted by Property Recovery Section Detectives, were able to debrief this subject, who provided information that lead to the arrest of five additional subjects involved in an identified crime pattern that involved the theft of tires and rims from vehicles in dealerships throughout Suffolk County, Amityville Village and Nassau County. These five subjects were charged in 15 incidents that occurred over the course of nine months. All six were charged with 28 counts, including grand larceny in the third degree, grand larceny in the second degree and burglary in the second degree.
- Detectives continue to investigate a family suspected in a large case of insurance fraud. In May 2013, detectives arrested one of the subjects, who was charged with one count of grand larceny in the third degree, one count of attempted grand larceny in the third degree and two counts of insurance fraud in the third degree. After debriefing the subject, he agreed to become a cooperative informant. During an interview with his attorney present, the subject provided information on more current cases involving the other subjects in the investigation. Detectives from the Property Recovery Section were able to make arrangements with an insurance investigator from Michigan who provided identification and a written statement implicating the other subjects in this investigation. The investigation is continuing.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	241	Reported MV Thefts	1,273
Misdemeanor Arrests	4	Recovered Stolen MVs	999
Felony Arrests	77	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$414,000

Confidential Informants Developed	0	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0
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2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	7	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	46,093
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	0
Felony Arrests	2		
Confidential Informants Developed	1		

Westchester County Office of the District Attorney

The Westchester County District Attorney's Auto Crimes Unit (ACU) is dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of auto theft and auto insurance fraud on a countywide level. The unit is a full time investigative and prosecutorial unit consisting of two Assistant District Attorneys and a police investigator.

Notable Cases

Since the Unit's creation in 1998, auto theft has been reduced in Westchester County by 84 between 1997, when 4130 vehicles were stolen, and 2012, when there were 632 stolen vehicles reported. The latest official DCJS statistics rank Westchester County ninth in the state for the number of stolen vehicles. The Westchester County Auto Crimes Unit continues to conduct a statistical analysis with an eye toward further reduction in auto theft. In fact, with the exception of 2009 and 2011, the number of stolen motor vehicles has dropped significantly every year since 1998. With respect to suspected insurance fraud, the most current available statistics for 2012 rank Westchester County seventh in the state, with 465 suspected instances of insurance fraud.

During 2013, ACU continued to focus on the southern portion of Westchester County, which accounted for the majority of the County's auto crime. ACU concluded several joint investigations into motor vehicle related insurance fraud. It continued a joint investigation with the New York State Police, IFB and NICB into damage enhancement at auto body shops in Westchester County. One shop owner pled guilty to insurance fraud in the third degree and a disposition was worked out for a second shop owner.

ACU is continuing a joint investigation with NICB, the Queens County DA's Office and NYSP into doctors involved in insurance fraud related to no-fault insurance. A CI was developed who has been providing information regarding no-fault insurance fraud.

ACU also continued efforts investigating individuals and/or body shops involved in the re-tagging of vehicles and motorcycles throughout Westchester County. ACU also investigated several owner give-ups of vehicles and motorcycles. One led to the arrest of the owner of a "give-up" motorcycle.

Early in 2013, the ACU worked jointly with NYSP and Yonkers Police to continue its investigation of a motorcycle theft ring. At least four individuals were identified and were the subjects of a wiretap investigation in NYC. The four individuals were arrested and charged for the thefts in Westchester County.

In another case, nine Mercedes-Benz vehicles were stolen from a New Rochelle dealership. An investigation was conducted that led to the identification of suspects operating in New York City, specifically in Queens. The Queens County DA's office arrested the ring responsible for this large theft. All nine of the vehicles were recovered.

The ACU worked with the Scarsdale Police Department to look into the theft of three high-end luxury vehicles that were stolen from the parking lot of a local gym in the early morning hours. The three cars were located and recovered in the Bronx 48 hours after the theft.

In 2013, there was an increase in the number of instances of individuals breaking into cars to steal personal items, such as credit cards, wallets, money, GPS, and any other electronic devices. Working with the Harrison PD, the Westchester County PD and the Town of Mamaroneck PD, three such rings were identified. One individual was also identified in the theft of a gun out of the car of a retired police officer. One individual was prosecuted and is currently serving a state prison sentence for the thefts. Two other individuals have pending cases.

The ACU worked with various police departments to look into the theft of car parts from local dealerships. At the end of 2013, a ring was arrested for the theft of approximately 46 catalytic converters.

During 2013, the ACU continued to assist DMV investigators scrutinizing the procurement, use and possession of fraudulent driver's licenses. The ACU continued to develop additional informants with the policy of holding all defendants "as charged". These defendants have been arrested for felony auto theft with sufficient proof of guilt, have been arrested for other crimes, and/or have a criminal background involving automobiles.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	20	Indictments	11
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	14	Misdemeanor Convictions	36
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	98	Felony Convictions	23
Confidential Informants Developed	1	Warrants Issued	55
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	2	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	39

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	10	Indictments	0
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	3	Misdemeanor Convictions	1
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	7	Felony Convictions	2
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	7
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	

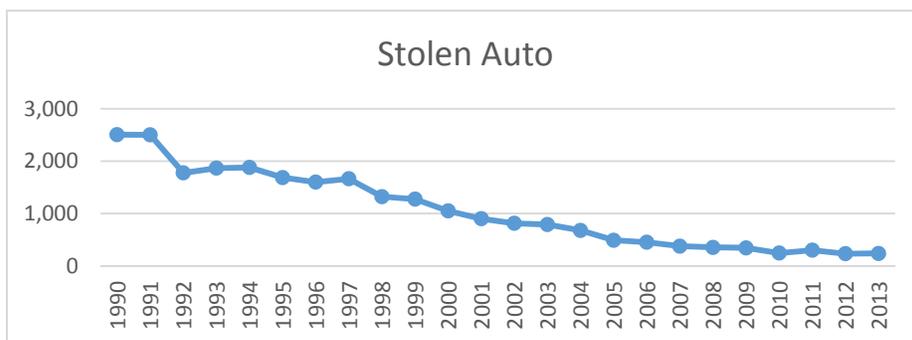
Yonkers City Police Department

The Yonkers Police Department's Auto Crime Unit works out of its agency's Intelligence Unit. Due in part to the efforts of the Auto Crime Unit, the number of auto thefts in Yonkers hit a

historic low of 231 in 2012. It rose slightly to 236 in 2013. Since 1990, there has been a decrease in auto theft of more than 90 percent.

During 2013, the Yonkers Police Department Auto Crime Unit began 54 auto theft and auto-related fraud investigations and continued several others from the previous year.

The Department's focus on auto theft has changed throughout the years. The climate has changed in Yonkers, whose close proximity to New York City and easy access to highways had made it a prime target of car thieves. As reported on blogs and through confidential informants, thieves are now afraid to come to Yonkers, particularly with cars that have been pieced together with stolen parts or with an eye to steal and strip down a car. Numerous chop shops have been shut down during the past decade and have not returned to the area, at least not in permanent locations. Those that have set up shop are best described as fly-by-night and set up in locations under bridges or in abandoned garages or lots. Offenders are quickly arrested or forced to flee.



A new trend is the theft of construction vehicles that are transported to Haiti. Whole vehicles disappear from the street and resurface in Haiti intact, no doubt to be utilized in rebuilding Port-au-Prince. The Yonkers Auto Crime Unit worked with several jurisdictions, particularly New York City and the State Police, on these kinds of cases.

Motorcycle theft remains a big problem. Motorcycles are easy to remove from the street with a box truck and a ramp. A current trend that has existed for several years is the theft of motorcycles and cars that get shipped through the Dominican Republic to other countries. This practice has recently started to spread through some western African and former Eastern Bloc countries.

The current trends in auto-related fraud included falsely reporting a car stolen, staging accidents to feed medical mills or enhancing damage to a vehicle by a body shop or owner to collect insurance. These types of fraud have not changed much over the last several years. One group investigated by the Yonkers Auto Crime Unit staged accidents and filed claims on the same cars repeatedly, collecting small sums each time.

There was also an uptick in falsified inspection stickers and business records in 2013. In the aftermath of superstorm Sandy, many intact vehicles with falsified papers were shipped to Oregon and other states marked as "sell parts only".

Cases of fraudulent identification cards, checks, plates, licenses, registrations and other counterfeit documents seemingly have no end. Every year, new ways of producing and distributing these documents arise. The Internet is now used extensively in this kind of crime. Bogus dealer plates being sold and rented on Craigslist continues. Patrol officers, detectives, repair shops and dealerships are instructed in how to detect fraudulent documents.

The Unit worked closely on cases with the following agencies:

Putnam County Sheriff

FBI

DEA

U.S. Postal Service

U.S. Customs

NICB

NYS IG

NY Insurance Fraud Bureau

Westchester DA

Danbury CT, PD

Dept. of Motor Vehicles

Waterbury, CT PD

New York State Police

Harrison PD

New Castle PD

White Plains PD

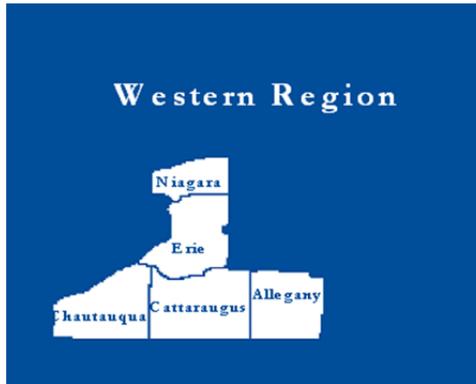
NYPD Auto Theft Unit

Bronx DA

Connecticut SP

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	40	Reported MV Thefts	236
Misdemeanor Arrests	2	Recovered Stolen MVs	116
Felony Arrests	17	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	233,607
Confidential Informants Developed	8	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	3

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	14	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	0
Felony Arrests	3		
Confidential Informants Developed	7		



Western Region

Buffalo City Police Department
Cheektowaga Town Police Department
Erie County Office of the District Attorney
Niagara County Office of the District Attorney
Niagara County Sheriff's Office
Niagara Falls City Police Department

Buffalo City Police Department

The Buffalo Police Department's (BPD) detective division has squads within each of the five patrol districts, in addition to seven investigation units, including the Buffalo Police Department's General Investigation Unit (GIU). The GIU Squad thoroughly investigates every complaint related to arson, frauds, property recovery and motor vehicle theft. While the Buffalo Police Department does not have a specific Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Unit, it has a dedicated full-time detective assigned to these types of investigations. Buffalo's GIU detective works with federal, state, and local law enforcement, as well as assisting the efforts of local insurance company investigators.

MVTIF Related 2013 Activity/ Implemented Strategies

Buffalo Police's GIU detective has solely recovered a total of \$586,368 in stolen vehicles and parts during 2013. This is a 17.7 percent increase over 2012.

During 2013, the MVTIF detective made six misdemeanor arrests and 11 felony arrests for criminal motor vehicle activity. In addition, there were three misdemeanor arrests and 10 felony arrests for insurance fraud. The Buffalo Police Patrol also made more than 280 MVTIF arrests. The final figures for the end of 2013 have shown a significant decrease of 17.4 percent in the number of stolen vehicles, which was consistent in all five of Buffalo's police districts.

Buffalo Police continued its efforts to combat insurance fraud. Police and fire investigators were advised by various insurance companies that many complainants, after intensive interviews, rescinded their claim or admitted to falsely reporting the theft of their own vehicle. A 10.7 percent increase in the number of reported fraudulent incendiary auto fires was seen. This can be partially attributed to the increased number of reports from community members, who are able to text in tips directly to the Buffalo Police.

Some of this year's highlights include:

Buffalo Police were involved in a case with the Liberty Lake Police Department in the State of Washington. The incident involved a \$500,000 vehicle fraud and identity case. A suspect from Buffalo was arrested for the theft of one of the involved vehicles. He had initiated contact with an automotive dealership in Liberty Lake, Washington in January 2013. The suspect was introduced to the dealership through a sports agent from Texas. This sports agent was a friend of the suspect's family, who utilized this automotive dealership to supply high-end vehicles to athletes across the United States. The suspect from Buffalo initiated deals for five vehicles from this dealership utilizing the stolen identities from two individuals.

On May 13, during a routine traffic stop in Buffalo, a suspect was found in possession of a stolen 2007 Porsche Boxster, valued at \$53,225, with a Washington State registration. In addition, a stolen 2011 Cadillac CTS, with value of \$45,450, was located in the parking lot near the defendant's apartment building. The Motor Vehicle Theft ADA is working with the Buffalo City Court ADA on this case, which includes charges relating to identity theft and fraudulent documents. The Buffalo Police Department continue to work with authorities from Washington State to determine if additional charges should be pursued in New York State.

The GIU Detective was involved in a case collaborating with auto theft investigators from Newark, New Jersey along with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), and the Queens County DA's Office. Buffalo Police investigated the theft of a 1950 Riley Drop Head Coupe Convertible. This vehicle was reported stolen by a woman in Buffalo who attempted to retrieve the vehicle from storage and was notified that it was missing from the storage facility. The GIU detective was notified that the vehicle was sold and awaiting shipment out of the country. The detective immediately notified a special agent from the NICB, about the theft and asked that the vehicle be indexed in an attempt to prevent shipment. Through the course of the investigation, the vehicle was picked up and delivered to an address near New York City. An investigator from the Queens County District Attorney's searched the location with negative results. Further information led investigators to believe the vehicle could be located at an address in New Jersey. The Newark, New Jersey Auto Theft Squad was contacted. A Newark sergeant located and examined the vehicle with NICB Investigators to confirm it was the same 1950 Riley Drop Head Coupe Convertible stolen in Buffalo. The collaboration of auto theft investigators in both New York and New Jersey was instrumental in the recovering the vehicle.

Another ongoing investigation involves a city tow truck operator who was indicted in a federal bribery probe. The operator was paying off police officers as part of a criminal scheme directing accident scene towing and repairs to his company. The company is also being investigated for tax, wire and insurance fraud. The probe is a multi-agency effort, involving the FBI, US Attorney's Office, NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, Buffalo Police, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance and the IRS. Part of this investigation, centers around a fictitious claim of repair on a vehicle from the tow truck operator's business. Repairs were paid out by an insurance carrier in the amount of \$26,000, but the repairs were not completed as claimed. This investigation is continuing and a claim has been filed with the Insurance Frauds Bureau. The tow truck company owner and two others have been indicted by a grand jury on felony charges.

Last year, the GIU detective closed a case involving one of the largest scrap metal processors in upstate New York. The investigation led to the discovery of thefts of more than \$200,000 in construction equipment by two employees. Both Buffalo Police and investigators from the National Insurance Crime Bureau assisted in this investigation and all equipment was recovered. Both men were indicted. This investigation also uncovered information that led to an ancillary investigation by Buffalo Police of three men who broke into the same scrap metal processing business and stole \$50,000. The main suspect was 19 years old and the judge granted him youthful offender status, reducing a potential 29 year sentence to one to three years. The other two men await sentencing.

A joint case involving the partnership of the GIU Detective, the District Attorney's Auto Theft prosecutor and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority centered on an individual claiming sustained injuries by a bus door. When the GIU detective and NFTA Police looked for this individual for questioning, he fled New York State. This suspect was located in Arizona and brought back to New York State by Buffalo Police and was subsequently booked for insurance fraud.

For the insurance fraud components of the aforementioned investigations, Buffalo's GIU detective met with the assistant district attorney (ADA) assigned to auto theft, along with an investigator from the New York State Department of Financial Services, a Buffalo fire marshal, and a National Insurance Crime Bureau investigator.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	47*	Reported MV Thefts	1,012**
Misdemeanor Arrests	6	Recovered Stolen MVs	768**
Felony Arrests	11	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$8,733,575**
Confidential Informants Developed	1	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	1

*More than doubled from last year.

**Based on Preliminary Information – December 2013 Report not due until end of January

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	49	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	N/A
Misdemeanor Arrests	3	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	N/A
Felony Arrests	10		
Confidential Informants Developed	2		

Cheektowaga Town Police Department

The Town of Cheektowaga Police Department (CPD) assigns 10 of its 19 detectives to participate in the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Program, with one designated as the primary MVTIF detective.

The Department's 2013 efforts focused heavily on the investigation of auto theft, insurance fraud, heavy equipment theft and theft of motorcycles, particularly those with switched Vehicle Identification Numbers (VINs). Field efforts consisted of a three pronged approach:

- Surveillance
 - Known/suspected chop shops in the Greater Buffalo area
 - "Hot spots" for motor vehicle thefts and larcenies
 - Areas where a pattern of motor vehicle thefts/larcenies are occurring
- Collection of Evidence – Two detectives have received extensive training in fingerprint identification, photography, evidence processing and DNA recovery.
- Intelligence Sharing – The primary detective makes every effort to share information developed with other law enforcement entities in the area, as well as within the department. This is accomplished through interaction and collaboration with agencies including the Buffalo Police Department's Auto Theft Squad, the Erie County Sheriff's Office, the New York State Police, Lancaster Police, Amherst Police, West Seneca Police, the Erie County District Attorney's Office, the New York State Insurance Fraud Bureau, the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, the New York State Department of Homeland Security, the United States Border Patrol and the National Insurance Crime Bureau. In addition, the department collaborates with representatives from various insurance companies. Reports and analysis provided by a police officer assigned to the Erie County Crime Analysis Center are also utilized in Cheektowaga's MVTIF efforts.

Cheektowaga's Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activities for 2013

- **January**
 - The primary detective assisted the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority Police Department in an investigation involving six stolen vehicles from Avis Car Rental.
 - Three stolen motor vehicles were recovered.
- **February**
 - Instructed recruits at the Erie County Central Police Services Academy on Penal Law related to Motor Vehicle Theft and switched Vehicle Identification Numbers
 - Attended the Motor Vehicle Theft group meeting in Rochester
 - Joint investigation with Arcade Police led to recovery of stolen vehicle
 - Joint investigation with Buffalo fire marshals and Auto Theft Squad regarding arson/insurance fraud suspect
- **March**
 - Assisted Buffalo Police Auto Theft Squad with an investigation involving 53 stolen car batteries
 - DNA match led to the arrest of a suspect in a theft of a motor vehicle during the commission of a burglary
 - Recovered two stolen snow plows valued at \$11,800
- **April**
 - Attended the Statewide Work Group Meeting in Albany
 - Assisted the NFTA Police Department with a stolen vehicle investigation
- **May**
 - Worked two joint investigations with the New York State Office of Financial Services; investigation led two "victims" to withdraw their claims, saving insurance companies \$6,800
 - Attended the International Association of Auto Theft Investigator's conference in Niagara Falls, Canada
- **June**
 - Detectives attended the Juneteenth Festival in Buffalo; 34 motorcycles and seven cars were examined; intelligence forwarded to Buffalo Auto Theft Squad for follow-up
 - Worked a joint investigation with the National Insurance Crime Bureau leading to an arrest for no VIN plate on a motorcycle
 - Recovery of two stolen vehicles
- **July**
 - Assisted Amherst Police and Erie County Sheriff with confidential VIN checks
 - Assisted CPD patrol with traffic checkpoint; 220 vehicles and six motorcycles examined; one arrest for a stolen vehicle
 - Attendance at Lancaster Speedway; 176 motorcycles examined; one located with no VIN
 - Attendance at the Shredd & Ragan Cruise Night in North Tonawanda; 93 vehicles examined
- **August**
 - Attendance at Lancaster Speedway; 137 vehicles examined, two with no VIN; 186 motorcycles examined
 - Investigation led to the recovery of a stolen John Deere lawn tractor

- **September**
 - Assisted patrol with traffic checkpoint; 287 vehicles, two motorcycles and one trailer examined
 - Instructed at the Central Police Services Police Academy on Penal Law and stolen vehicle identification
- **October**
 - Assisted Buffalo Police Auto Theft Squad in recovery of a stolen ATV
 - Assisted New York Police Department Auto Crimes Unit with a stolen vehicles investigation
 - Assisted Palm Beach County, FL Sheriff's Office with a cloned vehicle investigation
- **November**
 - Worked joint investigations with the National Insurance Crime Bureau, NYS DMV and Buffalo Auto Theft Squad
- **December**
 - Worked joint identify theft/insurance fraud investigations with GEICO Insurance, Nationwide Insurance, and Progressive Insurance

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	107	Reported MV Thefts	75
Misdemeanor Arrests	32	Recovered Stolen MVs	21
Felony Arrests	32	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$210,000.00
Confidential Informants Developed	1	Number of "Owner Give-ups" Identified	1

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	6	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	46
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled	2
Felony Arrests	0	Due to Law Enforcement Investigation	
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Initiation	





Cloned Vehicle from Florida



Forged VIN Plate

Erie County Office of the District Attorney

The Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Unit is a unit of the Special Investigations Bureau of the Erie County District Attorney's Office. The unit is comprised of one assistant district attorney. The ADA works very closely with the detectives from the City of Buffalo and the Town of Cheektowaga Police Departments. The ADA also meets with various law enforcement agencies throughout the area to collaborate on continuing investigations. The ADA vertically prosecutes more serious motor vehicles theft crimes as well as all of the insurance fraud cases in Erie County.

2013 Convictions

In September 2012, a conviction was obtained against a man who was a suspect in a rash of tire thefts throughout Erie County. Some of the thefts were committed with the use of stolen, older model vehicles that could be taken easily and had significant cargo capacity. In November 2012, the defendant, driving a stolen vehicle, was seen by Buffalo Police running a stop sign. When police attempted to pull him over, the defendant fled at a high rate of speed through city streets and struck nine parked cars. The chase eventually ended in a multiple vehicle pile-up that destroyed the stolen vehicle. Having identified the defendant as a likely participant in the wheel thefts, his prosecution was prioritized through the MVTIF program. Wheel thefts abruptly declined after the man was taken into custody in January 2013. In December 2013, shortly before trial, the defendant pleaded guilty to reckless endangerment in the second degree and criminal mischief in the third degree. He was sentenced to a total of 1½ years in prison.

Another notable conviction concentration was seen in owner give-ups, which represent the largest type of MVTIF crime occurring in Erie County. Most of these vehicles are destroyed by arson. In one case, the Office was able to charge a defendant with arson, although she did not personally burn the vehicle. The woman admitted to fire marshals that she had given money to an individual to burn her 2006 Hyundai Sonata. After speaking with the fire marshals on two occasions, the suspect pretended to assist them in finding the person who actually set the fire. The suspect finally admitted that the car had not been stolen. The woman stated that she wanted to get rid of the car because her boyfriend had been killed in it. The woman denied that she had it burned for the insurance money, but also admitted it needed expensive repairs. Despite confessing to fire marshals, the woman mailed the fraudulent affidavit of theft to her insurance company. The woman was subsequently interviewed by an insurance investigator. She withdrew her claim after the insurance investigator informed her that he already knew about her confession. The defendant pled guilty to arson in the third degree as an accomplice and

insurance fraud in the third degree. She was sentenced as a second felony offender to 3 to 6 years on each count to be served concurrently.

A defendant on probation for a felony conviction falsely claimed his shoulder was injured when he was struck by the bus door while boarding a Metro Bus owned by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA). The defendant gave a false statement in support of his application for no-fault benefits. All NFTA busses have cameras and a recording demonstrated that no such incident occurred. The defendant pled guilty to two counts of offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree and insurance fraud in the fifth degree in the long-term case. He was sentenced as a second felony offender to 1½ to 3 years on each of the E felonies.

In 2012 a defendant stole various items of heavy equipment from his employer. The equipment was located and identified by the Buffalo Police Department and the NICB. Confessions were obtained from the defendant and another employee in Niagara County, who was also in possession of stolen heavy equipment on his property. The second defendant was referred to the MVTIF unit in the Niagara District Attorney's Office for prosecution. A conviction for criminal possession for stolen property in the third degree was obtained.

Another theft case involved stolen tailgates from new trucks located in the Norfolk Southern rail yard where trucks brought in by rail and stored on the until they were picked up and transported to dealerships. Truck tailgates had been disappearing for nearly two years. The railroad police investigator determined that tailgates went missing after the trucking company was on the property picking up trucks. A suspect was confronted by the investigator and admitted to stealing eight tailgates, each valued at \$2,000, and selling them for \$200 apiece. All but two tailgates were recovered. The defendant executed a confession of judgment for \$4,000 in favor of the Norfolk Southern Railroad, paying restitution for the final two. He pled to grand larceny in the third degree and a class E felony conviction was obtained.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	3	Indictments	1
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	318	Misdemeanor Convictions	42
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	5	Felony Convictions	3
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	45

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	27	Indictments	9
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	4
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	10	Felony Convictions	13
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	17
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$739 to industry, \$4K to Norfolk Southern RR and \$72K to NYS DTF	

The Niagara County District Attorney's Office has a special unit dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud that consists of one full-time criminal investigator and one full-time assistant district attorney.

2013 Notable Cases

- One defendant and a companion were arrested for unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, criminal possession of stolen property, criminal possession of a controlled substance and various vehicle and traffic offenses. The MVTIF investigator discovered other ongoing cases involving both suspects, which were in process with different assigned ADAs. Although victims and witnesses were reluctant to cooperate, the arrests and information gathered were useful to the investigation. The assistant district attorneys united their prosecution efforts. One suspect pled guilty to felony criminal possession of a controlled substance.
- Another case involved a defendant who leased a building for commercial purposes. Two months into the lease, the owner discovered that most of the steel and wiring had been removed from the premises. The defendant sold these items as scrap, amassing approximately \$20,000. In addition to the theft, the defendant filed a business insurance claim to cover the "loss". Investigators opened a case for the metal scrapping and reported the insurance fraud to NYS DFS. The insurance company was contacted, the claim was denied, and the defendant was prosecuted for two misdemeanor convictions. In addition, a \$20,000 civil judgment was obtained for the damage he caused.
- A defendant set fire to the truck of his ex-girlfriend's new boyfriend, causing \$4,000 in damage. An indictment was obtained for C felony arson, D felony criminal mischief, and A misdemeanor auto stripping. The defendant is also being charged with violation of probation.
- A defendant rented a two bay garage at a building on New Jersey Avenue in Niagara Falls. He then removed four cars from the property that belonged to other business customers, who also rented space from the building owner. The defendant had no legal right to remove the vehicles. The defendant scrapped them, along with some other snow plows and a refrigeration truck unit that was outside. In addition, the defendant stripped copper plumbing from the building claiming he was updating the space. The defendant is currently pending indictment.
- On May 18, 2013, a defendant bought a Bobcat excavator and dump truck from a man in Pennsylvania. He gave the seller a \$6,000 down payment and then removed the excavator from the job site. On May 24, the defendant sold the excavator to Bobcat of Buffalo for \$40,000. The defendant then reported the excavator stolen on June 21. Bobcat of Buffalo discovered that the defendant had no authorization to sell the machine. The Bobcat was recovered. The defendant was arrested and jailed for federal probation violation.
- Investigation led to the discovery of an individual attempting to sell a used inspection sticker for \$40 on Craigslist. This information was turned over to the Department of Motor Vehicles and further investigation is pending.
- On April 2, 2012, a defendant traded a 2007 Cadillac to a Cecconi dealership for a 2012 Chrysler 200. He left a \$2,000 deposit and signed a contract indicating that he would return

the car within five days if his financing was not approved. When he left the dealership, the vehicle was registered to the defendant. He then reportedly cancelled the financing, claiming there was a contract dispute with the dealership and the finance company. On April 16, a NYS title was issued to the defendant for the 2012 Chrysler. After applying on-line for a duplicate title for the 2007 Cadillac, the defendant received one on October 2. He then attempted to retrieve the Cadillac from the Cecconi dealership. The Town of Niagara Police Department were called. The Cecconi dealership produced the title for the 2007 Cadillac that had been signed over to them by the defendant. The defendant was instructed to leave without the 2007 Cadillac. On December 20, 2012, Cecconi reported the 2012 Chrysler stolen to the Town of Niagara Police.

In 2013, DMV and DFS investigators were notified of the case and all available reports relating to the two vehicles were investigated. The investigation uncovered that the 2012 Chrysler had been traded into Basil Honda by the defendant, wholesaled to a dealer in Horseheads and later purchased by a man in Painted Post. This investigation was later transferred to the Erie County District Attorney's Office after it was determined that the vast majority of the crimes associated with the vehicles were in Erie County's jurisdiction.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	108	Indictments	5
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	132	Misdemeanor Convictions	48
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	99	Felony Convictions	13
Confidential Informants Developed	1	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	2	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	78

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<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	5
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	1	Felony Convictions	0
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	3
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			\$1,942

Niagara County Office of the Sheriff

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office is the primary law enforcement agency in Niagara County and is responsible for 12 townships and 5 villages in the county. The office also supplements law enforcement agencies in the county's three cities: Niagara Falls, Lockport, and North Tonawanda. An office-wide task force to deal with automobile theft and insurance fraud consists of supervisors, investigators and deputies who are trained in advanced methods of auto theft investigations, detection and intelligence gathering. The task force is an important part of the Sheriff's Office as it works to reduce automobile theft and insurance fraud countywide with intra-agency efforts, and by sharing resources and information with local and state agencies.

Careful analysis of trends and field intelligence/mapping are proactive tools in the fight against motor vehicle theft, insurance fraud and larcenies from vehicles. With the aid of the MVTIF Program, investigators can follow up more frequently, patrol deputies can be given concentrated patrol assignments and deputies and investigators alike benefit from available training opportunities. Due to these advantages, the office reported an approximate 15 percent decrease in automobile theft in 2013.

Notable Cases

In 2013, investigators and deputies of the Sheriff's Office successfully arrested several perpetrators who had committed larcenies involving the theft of personal property from vehicles in the county. This crime is showing a marked increase in occurrence every year as more people keep high-end devices in their vehicles (smart phones, tablets, GPS devices, etc.). This act is often underreported because victims won't report insignificant losses of "only" loose change or a cell phone charger. Overtime efforts allowed extra marked and unmarked patrols in targeted areas. Some deputies surveyed neighborhoods during overnights, while marked units actively patrolled during evening and daylight hours at shopping plazas and malls. Between February and December 2013, more than seven arrests were made in the area of motor vehicle crime.

An arrest in January 2013 in the Town of Lockport was made after the recovery of heavy machinery stolen from a scrapyard in the City of Buffalo in 2011. Investigators working with Buffalo Police, Cheektowaga Police and the Niagara County District Attorney's Office recovered a pay loader, a paver, a loader and other pieces of smaller equipment at the home of a former employee of the company. The value of items recovered was \$106,750.

In 2013 five people in possession of stolen vehicles were arrested at various times over the course of the year. Four arrests were made in the Town of Lockport in February, March, July and October. The fifth was made in October in the Town of Wheatfield.

2013 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations initiated	119	Recovered Stolen MV's	36
Misdemeanor arrests	17	"Owner Give-Ups" Identified	2
Felony arrests	13	Value of vehicles recovered	\$390,104
Confidential Informants Developed	2	Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts	53

Niagara Falls City Police Department

In 2013, the Niagara Falls Police Department's (NFPD) Criminal Investigations Division (CID) combated motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. The project is managed as a special operation under the direction of the captain of the CID. Emphasis is placed on investigations, follow-ups and insurance fraud cases. Currently, NFPD handles motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases in the following manner:

1. Crime reports are taken by the Patrol Division and forwarded to the CID where they are reviewed by supervisors and assigned to a criminal investigator or to patrol division personnel for follow-up or continued investigation.
2. Copies of the Auto Theft/Insurance Fraud-related reports are then forwarded to the Police Planning/Computer Division for statistical analysis.
3. This information is then forwarded to the Superintendent of Police and captain of CID for analysis to be utilized in the weekly meeting attended by all division supervisors. The investigations are analyzed to predict crime pattern indicators and focus on auto-theft, insurance fraud, and false insurance claims. As the situation warrants, this agency operates surveillance in locations identified as high auto theft crime areas through crime analysis data collected.
4. Stings and undercover operations are then planned and scheduled as a result of the data analysis.

Notable Cases

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	192	Reported MV Thefts	111
Misdemeanor Arrests	40	Recovered Stolen MVs	90
Felony Arrests	43	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$412,208
Confidential Informants Developed	10	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	1

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	5	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	0
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled	2

Felony Arrests	2	Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	
Confidential Informants Developed	10		

During 2013, the City of Niagara Falls had reports of 111 stolen vehicles, demonstrating a 14 percent decrease from the 129 reported stolen vehicles in 2012. NFPD increased its ability to follow-up and investigate cases, making 11 grand larceny fourth arrests, 10 unauthorized use of a motor vehicle arrests and 14 auto stripping arrests. A large number of motor vehicle larcenies were also reported in 2013. A recent analysis by the USDOJ Diagnostic Center concluded that larceny, including larceny from vehicles, is the most prevalent property crime occurring in the City of Niagara Falls. The MVTIF Unit has conducted several surveillance operations utilizing information provided by the Field Intelligence/Crime Analyst Office in an attempt to curtail the problem.

Finger Lakes Region



Finger Lakes Region

Monroe County Office of the District Attorney
Monroe County Office of the Sheriff
Rochester City Police Department

Monroe County Office of the District Attorney

The Monroe County District Attorney's Office established a Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Bureau in 2004 under the supervision of the County Court Bureau Chief, now the Non-Violent Felony Bureau Chief. The majority of stolen vehicle and insurance fraud cases involving motor vehicles have been assigned to this unit. Misdemeanor auto theft cases continue to be prosecuted by various ADAs assigned to local criminal courts. Most cases are adjudicated, but the members of the MVTIF unit advise assigned ADAs on procedures and prosecution strategies. Intelligence gained as a result of misdemeanor prosecutions is provided to the unit to assist with its investigations.

The ADA assigned to the MVTIF unit, after an initial screen by the Non-Violent Felony Bureau chief, fully evaluates all of the cases referred to the program by police agencies and meets with officers on a regular basis to discuss programmatic issues of mutual concern. The investigator assigned to the MVTIF unit enhances the prosecution of cases by interviewing witnesses, evaluating evidence, serving subpoenas, checking prior criminal histories of defendants to identify repeat offenders and working closely with police agency personnel assigned by their respective departments to investigate the targeted crimes. The Non-Violent Felony Bureau Chief advises and supervises the personnel assigned to the program, chairs meetings with the NYS DMV and local representatives of the Insurance Fraud Bureau of the New York State Insurance Department and provides input in the development of strategies and priorities for the program.

Current Trends and Statistics

Due to the work of the MVTIF unit and taskforce, there has been a marked decrease in the incidence of motor vehicle theft in Monroe County. In 2006, 3,030 motor vehicle thefts were reported; in 2012 the number was 976, a 68 percent decrease.

The District Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Auto Theft Task Force, continues to work to educate law enforcement agencies in Monroe County about the auto stripping statute in New York State Penal Law. Law enforcement agencies have been directed to charge defendants with auto stripping, when appropriate, in cases of auto theft and larcenies from vehicles where damage to the vehicle has occurred. Since an auto stripping in the third degree conviction provides a predicate element for a felony auto stripping in the second degree prosecution, it would be sought by the ADA either through an indictment or a plea offer.

The District Attorney's Office has requested that when law enforcement agencies in Monroe County deal with stolen auto cases, that they charge the driver with unauthorized use of a vehicle (UUV) in the third degree in addition to the appropriate felony charge. Since the UUV in the third degree conviction provides a predicate element for a felony UUV in the second degree prosecution, it would be sought by the ADA through an indictment or a plea offer.

In early 2013, Monroe County experienced numerous theft of personal property occurrences from both locked and unlocked vehicles. Most of these thefts, which began in late 2012, occurred in the suburbs surrounding the City of Rochester, particularly in the towns of Greece and Gates. The investigation later revealed that the thefts were being conducted by separate groups of individuals. The groups would break the windows of locked cars and steal credit cards, wallets and purses. These would be used to purchase merchandise that the groups would sell on the streets for cash. In February 2013, several defendants were prosecuted. A single defendant was prosecuted for a large number of burglaries and car thefts in the affected areas. He pled guilty to 12 felony counts (six burglary third degree and six grand larceny fourth degree) and will be sentenced to state prison. In addition, the ringleader of a gang responsible for dozens of car thefts also in the Town of Greece was sentenced to 3½ years in state prison. Since these arrests, the number of larcenies and car thefts has declined dramatically. Not surprisingly, a large percentage of the thefts resulted from vehicle owners leaving valuable items in full view within the vehicle.

The task force completed its work on a car theft operation ring involving Ford Econoline vans. In a short span of time, 37 vans were stolen, targeted due to the relative ease of "popping" the ignition. The defendant stole the vans from construction sites and would drive them to other construction sites. There he would steal equipment and other valuables before stripping them of their catalytic converters and abandoning them. The defendant stole the vans on Friday nights so that the crime would not likely be noticed for two days. These thefts were particularly effective because it is typical to see these types of vans at construction sites and it did not look out of the ordinary to see an individual loading equipment into one. Following a collaborative investigation, a defendant was apprehended and information was discovered that lead to the arrest and successful prosecution of a second defendant. The primary defendant received 3½ to 7 years in prison and was ordered to pay \$13,000 in restitution. The other cooperated with authorities and received a probation sentence.

In a similar case, the ADA assigned to the grant also prosecuted two defendants for stealing fleet vehicles from local businesses and then selling the parts for scrap. Both defendants pled guilty to separate charges based on their involvement, one receiving 1 to 3 years in prison while the other was sentenced to 5 years of probation. Each was ordered to pay \$1,839 in restitution.

In 2013, a repeat offender in Monroe County was prosecuted on multiple felony counts for selling stolen cars to a scrapyard. The defendant would steal cars and recruit other people to go to the scrapyard to fill out paperwork, then sell the cars as their own. The defendant subsequently pled guilty to several counts of offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree and is awaiting sentencing. This defendant was also one of several individuals indicted previously who received misdemeanor plea bargains for similar activity in 2013.

In May, the ADA prosecuted an insurance fraud case involving the owner of a trucking company who filed false insurance claims. The defendant purchased comprehensive coverage for a particular truck in his fleet, then switched the VIN numbers from the covered vehicle to a different but similar truck that had already sustained damage in an accident. The defendant pled guilty to a class D felony and received 5 years of probation as well as an order to pay \$11,140 in restitution to the insurance provider.

This year, in another fraud case, a defendant claimed she hit a guard rail, sustaining significant damage to her vehicle. After the accident, the defendant called her insurance company (Progressive Insurance) to report the accident and inquire about coverage. Progressive informed her that she did not have coverage for that type of accident. In the following days, the defendant called Progressive to add the coverage. The defendant then called Progressive again and claimed the same accident happened after her new coverage became effective. She was convicted of attempted grand larceny in the fourth degree and sentenced to three years of probation. No restitution was ordered because the investigation found the fraud prior to the claim being paid.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	6	Indictments	56
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	129	Misdemeanor Convictions	108
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	154	Felony Convictions	25
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	1	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	272

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<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	1
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	2	Felony Convictions	2
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	1	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	4
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry			\$46,223.42

Monroe County Office of the Sheriff

In 2013, the Monroe County Sheriff Office's Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force (MVTIF) was composed of one administrative sergeant and four investigators. The Task Force worked in conjunction with other members of law enforcement within Monroe County, including the Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, City of Rochester Police Department, New York State Police Fraud Bureau and NYS Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

In 2013, 136 vehicles were stolen from towns in the Monroe County Sheriff's Office's primary response area. This is a nine percent increase from the 2012 total of 125.

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office initiated nine investigations into motor vehicle insurance fraud, resulting in one misdemeanor arrest and two felony arrests. This is a shifting trend in the type of motor vehicle crime compared to 2012. No investigations were initiated or arrests made in regard to insurance fraud in 2012.

2013 Notable Arrests, Clearances & Investigations:

- Between December 2012 and March 2013, the MCSO investigated 28 incidents of catalytic converters being stolen from commercial vehicles, primarily overnight and on the weekends. An additional 11 incidents occurred within the Rochester Police Department's jurisdiction, two occurred in the Town of Greece and six in the Ontario County area. Intelligence gathered by members of the MVTIF Unit revealed that the converters were being sold to local scrap yards for about \$100 apiece. Repairs for the targeted vehicles cost approximately \$1,500 each, including materials and labor. Four suspects and the vehicle

used in the course of the crimes were identified. Investigators placed a tracking device on that vehicle.

On March 17, MVTIF investigators tracked a suspect's vehicle to an industrial area in the Rochester. While there, investigators heard an electric saw. After the suspects left, two trucks were discovered with catalytic converters removed. Investigators followed the suspects, pulled the vehicle over and took the two into custody, charging them with auto stripping, grand larceny and criminal mischief.

- On March 29 MCSO was notified that a Penfield resident might be in possession of a stolen piece of heavy equipment. An MCSO investigator attempted to make contact with the suspect without success. A deputy was detailed to monitor the address and a search warrant was processed for the property.

On March 30, CIS and MVTIF served the search warrant. Investigators recovered the Case road construction grade front end loader originally reported stolen. In addition, a stolen Kioti tractor/loader was recovered. The Case loader and Kioti units were valued at \$45,000 and \$17,000, respectively. Investigators learned that the equipment was stolen with the assistance of NICB agent. Upon further investigation, a bucket from a local construction company, a Grizzly four wheeler stolen in Niagara County in 2009, multiple pieces of specialized construction equipment and tools were also recovered. In all, a total of about \$150,000 in property was recovered and 15 separate victims were identified. The suspect was arrested and charged with criminal possession of stolen property in the second degree.

- A man insured with the GEICO Insurance Company filed a claim alleging he was involved in an unreported motor vehicle accident. The policy holder reported that he struck a raccoon, causing \$3,600 in damage to his 2006 Volvo. An examination of the vehicle did not support the assertion that the damage was caused by striking a raccoon. The man gave a recorded interview supporting his claim, but shortly after withdrew the claim. The claim was forwarded for review and follow up with the NYS Insurance Fraud Bureau. A NYS Insurance Fraud Bureau investigator, accompanied by an MVTIF investigator, attempted to re-interview the suspect. The man was uncooperative. Numerous attempts to meet and interview the suspect were unsuccessful. On April 9, 2013, investigators located the suspect and charged him with insurance fraud in the third degree.
- In July, the Secret Service and the MCSO ECU identified a suspect who was responsible for creating forged instruments, including US currency, NYS motor vehicle inspection stickers and titles. An investigator developed a CI who was able to provide credible information in regard to the suspect's criminal activity. As a result of that information, surveillance was conducted on the suspect and law enforcement was able to verify that the suspect was producing and selling forged NYS inspection stickers. A GPS order was obtained and a tracker was placed on the suspect's vehicle. Investigators orchestrated a surveillance effort on July 26. A member of law enforcement posed as a mechanic at a repair shop who was interested in buying 24 forged inspection stickers from the suspect and the equipment to create his own inspection stickers. The suspect was arrested for criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree, forgery in the second degree and possession of a forgery device. This was a successful collaborative effort between the Secret Service, NYS Motor Vehicle investigators, RPD, and the US Postal Service.
- In July, a stolen motorcycle was listed for sale on Craigslist "as is" or for parts. The listing indicated that no title was available. An MVTIF investigator contacted the seller and tentatively identified him from phone information. A surveillance was conducted on the suspect's house in the Village of Scottsville. The motorcycle was recovered, along with parts that had already been removed. The suspect was interviewed and confessed to the theft. He

was charged with criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree and auto stripping.

- In November, an MVTIF investigator was contacted by an investigator from the NYS Department of Financial Services Criminal Investigations Unit regarding a fraudulent insurance claim referred from GEICO. The suspect had reported that he'd been involved in an accident with his 2002 Hyundai Sonata on September 19, 2013. The investigation revealed that he had called GEICO on September 17 and added collision coverage to his policy. His policy change became effective on September 18. Investigators interviewed the suspect about the incident. The suspect admitted that he added collision to his policy after an accident occurred in an attempt to obtain money for vehicle repairs. He was subsequently charged with insurance fraud in the fifth degree.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	136	Reported MV Thefts	136
Misdemeanor Arrests	11	Recovered Stolen MVs	74
Felony Arrests	6	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$685,705
Confidential Informants Developed	1	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	9	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	7,107
Misdemeanor Arrests	1	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	4
Felony Arrests	2		
Confidential Informants Developed	0		

Rochester City Police Department

The Rochester Police Department's Auto Theft Unit is under the command of the Special Operations Division and is responsible for work relating to the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Program (MVTIF). The Auto Theft Unit investigator coordinates investigations and motor vehicle related crime initiatives utilizing personnel from various other divisions within the department.

The Auto Theft Unit investigator is assigned to a multi-agency Auto Crime Task Force. The Task Force operates from within the Auto Theft Unit of the NYS Police Special Investigations Unit in Rochester. The Task Force also includes investigators from the Monroe County District Attorney's Office, State Department of Motor Vehicles Field Investigations Division and the Criminal Investigations Unit of the State Department of Financial Service's Insurance Division.

In 2013, Task Force investigators were able to attend two MVTIF Statewide Advisory Group Meetings, the Northeast Chapter of the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators 41st Annual training Seminar and the NYACT/NYPTI sponsored NYPD Auto Crimes School. The investigator assigned to the Auto Theft Task Force presented training on scrap yards and stolen vehicle investigations that resulted in 51 motor vehicle theft and 15 insurance fraud targets being entered into SAFETNet. In addition, members attended 13 Auto Theft Task Force meetings throughout the year. The meetings are open to all local law enforcement agencies involved in motor vehicle-related investigations.

In 2013, the types of motor vehicle theft that occurred in Rochester remained similar to past years. While vehicle theft for joyriding continued to decline, vehicles stolen for scrap remained a constant problem. Suspects scout neighborhoods searching for vehicles that aren't frequently driven, are unregistered or are inoperable. Then, scrap processors are contacted, who in turn send tow trucks to retrieve and purchase the vehicle. The suspects wait near the vehicle to meet the tow truck operator. A suspect completes the necessary paperwork and receives payment for the vehicle before it is towed. In most instances, the vehicles are towed from the owner's residence while they are not home.

Members conducted 28 investigations into vehicles stolen for scrap that had been sold to local scrap processors and dismantlers. Many of the vehicles had already been crushed or severely damaged when located. The aggregate value of the crushed vehicles, available for itemization, was \$27,800.

One investigation was initiated when members identified a pattern of thefts primarily involving Ford Econoline vans and U-Haul trucks. The suspects stole commercial vans for use in the commission of additional crimes, including construction site larcenies of tools and materials throughout Monroe County. Three primary suspects were identified. One of the suspects was already incarcerated for a van theft. This suspect was utilized as an informant in the investigation and helped confirm the identity and activities of the other suspects. The informant identified locations where vans were stolen from or abandoned at locations of other crimes and places where stolen property was sold.

According to the informant, the suspects would often meet a contractor at a storage facility he rented. The suspects would sell the van contents and other miscellaneous stolen property to the contractor. After the sale, the suspects would remove the catalytic converter from the van and park it near a suspect's residence. Scrap yard records were investigated to identify where the converters were being scrapped. Covert pole cameras were installed near both the suspect's residence and the scrap processor's location. A twelve hour surveillance operation was conducted which involved the participation of multiple agencies. Ultimately, the suspect removed the catalytic converter from a van and sold it to the scrap processor, where it was immediately recovered. Later in the evening, the suspect was arrested as he tried to dispose of the van. The suspect was charged with multiple felonies.

As the investigation continued, the informant also aided in the recovery of two snowmobiles stolen from Wayne County, an ATV stolen from the Town of Greece and several extension ladders taken from the roof rack of another stolen van.

Using information provided by the informant, a search warrant was obtained and executed at the storage facility where most of the stolen property had been sold. Multiple agencies assisted with the warrant execution. The joint initiative resulted in the recovery of property that had been stolen from multiple municipalities.

The majority of the stolen vans were recovered by patrol officers during normal duty hours. However, two of the stolen vans were recovered by Auto Crime Task Force members investigating the pattern. One of the suspects was identified while selling some equipment to a local secondhand dealer, who was actually an RPD undercover operative. His arrest was delayed until the undercover operation was complete. The suspects are responsible for at least 37 vehicle thefts and 20 other crimes committed with the stolen vans. The investigation uncovered another associate of the suspects, who became a confidential informant detailing ongoing drug activity in the area.

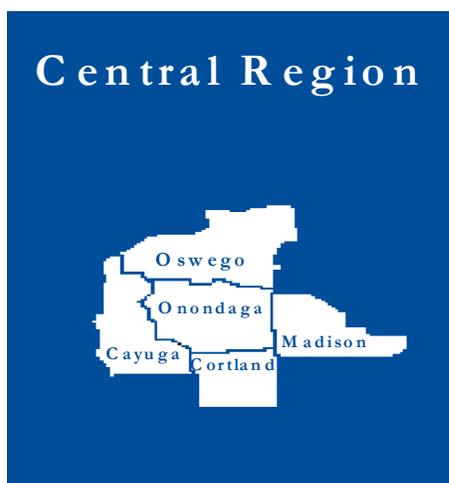
Another notable theft investigation involved a rash of catalytic converter thefts in the City of Rochester. Several suspects were identified with the cooperation of local scrap processors. The MCSO obtained warrants to install tracking devices on two vehicles. Members from both agencies, along with investigators from the NYS DMV and the Ontario County Sheriff's Office conducted a two night surveillance. The suspects were seen removing two catalytic converters from vehicles in the City of Rochester. Investigators continued to follow the suspects after these thefts. Before dawn, the suspects were stopped and arrested. The stolen converters were recovered from the truck. Two reciprocating saws, multiple saw blades, bolt cutters and a flashlight were also recovered. Two suspects were arrested and charged with grand larceny in the fourth degree, auto stripping in the second degree, criminal mischief in the fourth degree and possession of burglary tools.

Members investigated a variety of suspected insurance frauds throughout the year, including claims for prior unreported damage and false theft reports. In one investigation, the insured filed a claim with Progressive Insurance for lost wages due to injuries sustained during a motor vehicle accident. The insured suspect claimed that she worked for a day care provider. The investigation revealed that the address for the day care was a vacant lot. The phone number and employer's name were also fraudulent. A business license for the day care could not be found in county records. The suspect was uncooperative and refused to be interviewed. The suspect was arrested for insurance fraud in the third degree and the claim for \$3,180 was denied.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	74	Reported MV Thefts	489
Misdemeanor Arrests	6	Recovered Stolen MVs	49
Felony Arrests	28	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$182,750
Confidential Informants Developed	3	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	1

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	17	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	14
Misdemeanor Arrests	2	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	11
Felony Arrests	3		
Confidential Informants Developed	0		

Central Region



Syracuse City Police Department

Syracuse City Police Department

The Syracuse Police Department (SPD) assigns members to dedicated stolen vehicle patrols and follow up investigations. Due to budget constraints, the Syracuse Police Department continues to face reduced manpower numbers and the Stolen Vehicle Section has been abolished, however the record keeping and review of stolen vehicle investigations has taken a giant step forward. The Onondaga Crime Analysis Center (OCAC), staffed by sworn law enforcement officers and civilian crime analysts, is located within the Syracuse Police Department building. One crime analyst is dedicated to mapping stolen vehicle activity and other vehicle related crime within the city of Syracuse and Onondaga County. The analyst produces electronic crime bulletins that are disseminated throughout the department and to other law enforcement agencies throughout the county.

During 2013, 393 motor vehicle thefts, with a value of \$2,293,008 were reported. The department recovered 286 vehicles, with a value of \$1,821,601. The department closed 83 stolen vehicle cases (21 percent) through the arrest of 150 individuals. This resulted in 150 misdemeanor and 128 felony charges. Additionally, the department recovered 32 stolen vehicles from outside agencies. The value of these vehicles was \$368,427. The department made arrests in seven (22 percent) of the outside agency recoveries, with 14 individuals charged with 40 misdemeanor and five felony offenses. Outside agencies recovered 16 vehicles stolen from Syracuse with a value of \$162,150. Five vehicles that had been stolen in 2012 were recovered in 2013. Those vehicles had a value of \$52,820. The total value of the stolen vehicles recovered by in 2013 was \$2,242,484. There was an 18 percent increase in incidents of stolen vehicles from 2012 to 2013, while the recovery rate decreased seven percent.

Notable Cases

The types of vehicles stolen from Syracuse include: 178 passenger vehicles, 97 sport utility vehicles, 61 vans, 36 trucks and five motorcycles. In addition, 16 other types of motor vehicles were also stolen. The vehicles most frequently stolen were manufactured by General Motors.

The top five stolen vehicles, by make and model were:

- Dodge Caravan (17)
- Chevy Impala (11)
- Honda Civic (9)
- Chevy Venture (8)
- Chevy Malibu (8)
- Buick Century (8)
- Honda Accord (8)
- Jeep Grand Cherokee (8)
- Toyota Camry (7)
- Dodge Neon (7)
- Plymouth Voyager (7)

For many years, ignition bypass was the number one method of theft in Syracuse. During 2013, the methods used included: the keys (104); unattended vehicles/engine left running (42); ignition bypass (38); vehicle tow (25); burglary (23); domestic incidents (11); carjacking (8); rental (6); and drug trade (4). In 34 incidents, the victim claimed to know the suspect. 99 incidents of theft were reported with no known method of larceny. In the majority of the unknown method thefts, the owner of the vehicle was still in possession of the keys. The department also responded to 6,987 motor vehicle accidents during 2013, 384 more than in 2012.

Syracuse continues to be concerned about vehicles being stolen and scrapped. Throughout the year, vehicles were stolen with the use of a tow truck. The National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) was used as an online tool to locate 14 stolen vehicles. However, the data didn't appear until months after the vehicles had been scrapped. As part of continuing efforts to address this problem, officers stopped two trucks for vehicle and traffic violations and checked the paperwork of the vehicle in tow.

Officers recovered two unreported stolen vehicles from separate tow trucks en route to area scrap yards. In one case, a vehicle owner was aware that his vehicle was stolen but was unsure of the incident time. The Motor Vehicle Unit responded to conduct the investigation. The vehicle was stolen from the driveway, approximately 100 yards from a commercial building. Officers viewed the surveillance tapes from the building and were able to determine that the vehicle was towed in the early morning by a red flatbed tow truck. The officers checked local scrap yards and learned that the stolen vehicle had been crushed approximately 20 minutes after the tow left the property. Scrap yard employees were able to provide the officers with the name of the tow truck operator and the fraudulent MV-35 submitted. Officers located the tow operator and took his statement. The tow truck driver met a man claiming to be the vehicle owner. They agreed to a cash price on the value of the vehicle. The individual stated that the key had broken off in the door and the car would have to be towed since he had no way to unlock it or turn it on. The MV-35 was completed and the following morning the tow operator came and towed the vehicle. The officers concluded that the tow operator had been duped and wasn't an active participant in the theft. The tow truck operator had no criminal record and his tow truck was DOT licensed. He wasn't charged and the case was turned over to the detective bureau.

In the first quarter of 2013, six pickup trucks equipped with snow plow blades were stolen. Only one was recovered. The recovered truck was found in a marina by Otisco Lake, approximately 20 miles from the scene of the theft. The truck was completely stripped and dumped at the site. Due to the high scrap value of the other five unrecovered trucks, officers suspect they were sold for scrap.

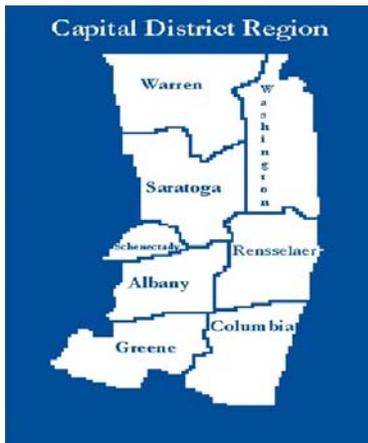
The theft of unattended vehicles continues to be an issue in the city. In the past, it had been primarily a cold weather crime. However, victims are increasingly leaving their vehicles running unattended year-round. These crimes are often crimes of opportunity, which makes recovering the stolen vehicles a relatively quick task.

Members of the department attended or conducted 53 meetings with various law enforcement entities including: the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office, the OCSD, NYSP, Geddes PD, DEA, US Marshalls, Dewitt PD and various other town and village departments.

The Syracuse Police Department did not investigate any incidents of insurance fraud during 2013. However, there were numerous insurance fraud investigations conducted within Onondaga County. The Onondaga County District Attorney's Office stated that all insurance fraud investigations and prosecutions were brought to their attention from private sector insurance companies. The District Attorney's Office reports that no law enforcement agency within the county identified cases of insurance fraud during the reporting period.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	393	Reported MV Thefts	393
Misdemeanor Arrests	150	Recovered Stolen MVs	286
Felony Arrests	128	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$1,821,601
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	0	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	6,987
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled Due to Law Enforcement Investigation Initiation	0
Felony Arrests	0		
Confidential Informants Developed	0		



Capital District Region

Albany City Police Department
Albany County Office of the District Attorney

Albany City Police Department

The Albany Police Department (APD) created an Auto Crimes Task Force (ACTF) in 2003. It initially consisted of five members but has expanded over time to 36 members. The ACTF includes patrol officers, detectives, sergeants, and lieutenants. All of these individuals attended a four-day training in New York City in 2013. The ACTF operates out of APD's Criminal Investigation Unit under the supervision of the detective lieutenant and detective sergeant.

The ACTF's primary objective is to investigate all cases of auto theft, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and possible motor vehicle insurance fraud. The ACTF continues to work with NYS DMV, Albany County District Attorney's Office and NY Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association in an effort to reduce motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud related crimes.

Albany Police Department MVTIF activity for 2013

During 2013, the Albany Police Department (APD) saw a four percent decrease in stolen motor vehicles, from 195 incidents in 2012 to 187 this year. APD's recovery rate was 89 percent for stolen vehicles in 2013. Most of the stolen vehicles were a result of victims leaving their vehicles running unattended or leaving spare keys in an unlocked vehicle. Most recovered vehicles show no signs of forced entry. The top two locations for motor vehicle theft were in areas where the majority of service calls originate. The service calls received include reports of assault, robbery, drug sales and possessions and weapon possession. A majority of the city's population live and work in these areas, so vehicles are in abundance.

The number of unauthorized use of motor vehicle reports decreased 18 percent in 2013 (56 in 2012 versus 46 in 2013). The recovery rate for unauthorized use cases was 98 percent (45 of 46 vehicles recovered). The areas for the highest reported incidents of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle were fairly similar to the locations of thefts. Most of these incidents of unauthorized use were due to domestic disputes or drug-addicted victims who had lent their vehicle to others to obtain drugs from a third party or as a form of payment.

Two areas in the city of Albany with the highest incidents of theft are the West Hill and the South End neighborhoods. The areas where stolen motor vehicles have been recovered are almost identical to the reported theft locations. Vehicle thefts in the city are typically crimes of convenience. Most of the vehicles stolen are not used in the commission of crimes. The number of thefts of non-working abandoned vehicles parked in lots, yards and other unmaintained properties is comparable to the prior three years. They are being stolen and sold for scrap, as metal prices remained high.

During 2013, the ACTF used different approaches to help reduce motor vehicle and personal property thefts from motor vehicles. In December 2013, the ACTF conducted a two-week informative detail, "Take Your Keys With You", intended to educate the public of the consequences of leaving vehicles running unattended. This was followed by a two-week zero-tolerance enforcement phase. The ACTF also addressed the increasing incidence of theft from motor vehicles. Outreach was conducted during special public events, which bring more people and cars into the city. Outreach locations were chosen based upon information gathered from the Albany Crime Analysis Center. These operations were run in areas that had higher instances of vehicle theft on specific days and times, which were consistent with the commission of these crimes. The ACTF also collaborated with NYS DMV investigators checking unregistered repair shops for stolen vehicles and vehicle parts.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	233	Reported MV Thefts	233
Misdemeanor Arrests	28	Recovered Stolen MVs	207
Felony Arrests	73	Value of Recovered Stolen MVs	\$1,706,066
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Number of "Owner Give-Ups" Identified	0

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	1	Motor Vehicle Accidents Responded To	4,501
Misdemeanor Arrests	0	Number of Accident Claims Cancelled	0
Felony Arrests	1	Due to Law Enforcement Investigation	
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Initiation	

Albany County Office of the District Attorney

In response to the increase in motor vehicle theft and no-fault insurance fraud within Albany County, the Vehicular Crimes Bureau of the Office of the Albany County District Attorney created the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit (MVTIFPU). This unit seeks to accomplish its goals by coordinating with law enforcement agencies in the area of education, training, detection, investigation and prosecution of cases involving motor vehicle theft and no-fault insurance fraud.

2013 MVTIF Related Activity

During 2013, the Assistant District Attorney investigated and prosecuted all cases of motor vehicle theft and related motor vehicle crimes while under the supervision of the Assistant District Attorney, Bureau Chief of the Vehicular Crimes Unit.

Notable Cases

- On March 8, two defendants stole a 2013 Honda CRV valued at \$25,379 from Rensselaer Auto Plaza by falsely representing themselves as individuals who were looking to test drive a vehicle. After the test drive, the defendants switched keys and returned to the car lot after it closed and stole a vehicle. The pair continued to maintain care, custody and control of said vehicle until April 17, driving it with a stolen dealer plate.

Between April 16 and 17, a defendant unlawfully stole a 2013 Hyundai Veloster Turbo from Fuccillo Hyundai valued at \$24,305. Once in possession of the vehicle, he drove to a gas station in New Scotland, put gas in the car and left without paying. The defendant was driving the vehicle with a dealer plate stolen from Orange Ford. An employee from Orange Ford, sent to the gas station to pay for the stolen gas, observed the defendant driving the stolen vehicle. The employee followed the vehicle to the Shop Rite in Slingerlands. The employee saw the defendant remove the license plate and walk towards New Scotland Avenue.

The defendant in question was also observed driving the Veloster at DePaula Chevrolet, in the city of Albany, on April 17 with the stolen license plate. An employee from DePaula attempted to speak with the defendant and retrieve the plate. The defendant sped away while the employee was clinging to the vehicle, causing minor injuries to the employee.

The main defendant in the crime pled guilty to one count of criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree and one count of grand larceny in the fourth degree. He was sentenced to 2½ to 7 years in state prison and an additional concurrent state prison term of 1½ to 4 years. The other defendant pled guilty to one count of grand larceny in the fourth degree and was sentenced to a state prison term of 1½ to 5 years in state prison.

- On July 27, on Sherman Street in Albany, a defendant was observed by a member of the Albany Police Department operating and in full possession of a stolen Honda Accord. Upon talking with the defendant, the officer discovered a knife. The defendant pled guilty to one count of criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree and was sentenced to 1½ to 3 years in state prison.
- On January 6, a defendant accepted \$3,800 cash from a victim who believed he was paying for a vehicle that was posted for sale on Craigslist. The defendant did not relinquish the vehicle to the victim after receiving the money. The defendant pled guilty to one count of grand larceny in the third degree and was sentenced to 2 to 4 years in state prison.
- On June 17, on Central Avenue in the Town of Colonie, a defendant was observed by two bystanders stealing a motor vehicle from a car dealership. As the defendant fled in the stolen vehicle, the two bystanders followed him in their vehicle and called the Colonie Police Department. Members of the department responded quickly and soon located and arrested the defendant, who was observed committing multiple vehicle and traffic violations. The defendant pled guilty to one count of criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree and was sentenced 1½ to 3 years in state prison.
- On March 3, a defendant broke into multiple vehicles on Bogart Terrace, Bassett Avenue and Dongan Avenue in Albany. The defendant broke the windows and removed car stereos from two separate vehicles. Members of the Albany Police Department observed the defendant in the vicinity of these break-ins. The defendant had two car stereos in his possession when approached by the officers. The defendant pled guilty to one count of auto stripping in the second degree and was sentenced to 2 to 4 years in state prison.
- A defendant pled guilty to one count of insurance fraud in the fourth degree and was sentenced to 5 years of felony probation. He also was ordered to pay \$29,000 in restitution.
- In July, a defendant was found in possession of a stolen tow truck at his garage in the Town of Altamont. The defendant pled guilty to one count of criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree and was sentenced to 6 months in the Albany County Correctional Facility.

Inter-Agency Cooperation and Coordination:

Intra-agency cooperation and coordination was used as a means to effectively fight motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud by both MVTIF ADAs in 2013. Collaboration between law enforcement, the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, insurance companies, loss prevention departments, defense attorneys, judges and victims ensured that cases of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud were thoroughly investigated and prosecuted.

- Conferences with law enforcement, DMV or loss prevention officers from rental car companies during 2013: **90**
- Conferences with judges and defense attorneys during 2013: **40**
- Conferences with witnesses during 2013: **9**
- Conferences with defense attorneys during 2013: **57**
- Conferences with victims during 2013: **27**

Trainings and Conferences Attended:

- **February 28:** Attended Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Conference in Rochester, NY.
- **April 29:** Attended Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Conference in Lake George, NY
- **July 10:** Presented at Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Conference Board Meeting in Albany, NY

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	58	Indictments	6
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	33	Misdemeanor Convictions	33
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	19	Felony Convictions	19
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVT Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVT Cases Plea Bargained	52

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Investigations Initiated	1	Indictments	1
Misdemeanor Arrests Prosecuted	0	Misdemeanor Convictions	0
Felony Arrests Prosecuted	1	Felony Convictions	1
Confidential Informants Developed	0	Warrants Issued	0
Number of MVIF Cases Taken to Trial	0	Number of MVIF Cases Plea Bargained	1
Amount of Funds (Restitution) Provided to the Insurance Industry		\$29,000	

New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association

The New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc. (NYACT) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to reduce auto crime and insurance fraud in New York State. NYACT offers educational and training programs for law enforcement, insurance special investigative units and insurance claims personnel. NYACT also provides useful information to New York State consumers. NYACT sponsors and manages many events, meetings and campaigns in auto crime prevention and insurance fraud detection and investigation.

Strategies Utilized in Combating MVTIF

NYACT utilized the following strategies to combat motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud:

Training and Education – NYACT focused on providing innovative and hands-on training through its seminars, meetings and conferences. A total of 12 trainings were held in 2013.

Technology for Greater Reach – Throughout 2013, NYACT continued to conduct webinars for law enforcement personnel, which included training information related to vehicle crime and insurance fraud.

Collaborative Planning – NYACT conducted collaborative training seminars in 2013. The collaboration participants included auto crime experts, experienced law enforcement leaders, NYS Department of Financial Services Frauds Bureau, NYS Attorney General's Office, FBI, DMV, NICB, Office of Medical Misconduct, NYPD Auto Crime Unit, NYS State Police and NYS Prosecutors.

Building Greater Connectivity and Networking – NYACT is an umbrella organization whose members include law enforcement, insurance carriers, the New York State Department of Financial Services Frauds Bureau, NYS Department of Motor Vehicles and many other state agency fraud units. NYACT creates an effective networking arena, a forum for sharing information, the opportunity for effective communications between agencies and a spirit of cooperation in all of the training programs. NYACT also cooperates with other not-for-profit organizations such as NEIAATI, NYSSIU and NYPTI – fostering strong networking relationships among the attendees.

NYACT training seminars provide access to new informational resources for law enforcement agencies that will aid in their investigations of crime, particularly insurance fraud. The seminars also foster the sharing of information and expertise.

Calendar Year 2013 MVTIF Related Training/Education

Throughout 2013, NYACT sought to provide a wide range of training opportunities – from primers to advanced training statewide.

February 12

Half-Day Training Seminar– Travelers Insurance, Melville, NY

This intra-agency panel presented information on vehicle theft and fraud after Hurricane Sandy. The panel discussed detecting, investigating and prosecuting crime after catastrophic events.

April 25

Joint NYACT-NYSSIU One Day Conference – Saratoga Springs, NY

April 30

Assisted Hosting the Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft & Insurance Fraud (MVTIF) Advisory Group – Queensbury, NY

May 14

Vehicle Arson Awareness Program (VAAP) – Montour Falls, NY

Conducted in conjunction with NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control and National Insurance Crime Bureau, this award-winning training program attracted attendees from across NY.

June 12

Half-Day Training – Allstate, Beacon, NY

This training provided important updates and skills for investigating vehicle theft and fraud. Topics included updates from the Office of the NYS Attorney General, NMVTIS, and MUAs.

July 26

Joint NYACT-NYSSIU Summer Mini-Conference – Hotel Thayer, West Point, NY

This joint meeting with NYSSIU provided attendees with information on handling questionable auto and first-party claims, how to investigate no-fault insurance fraud runners and other skills for special investigators.

September 17

Half-Day Training Downstate – Travelers, Melville, NY

This training provided attendees with information on defeating locks, updates from the NICB, data breaches, computer issues, insurance fraud, and HIPPA.

October 10

Joint One-Day Education Conference with NYSSIU – Turning Stone, Verona, NY

A training opportunity that offered very useful information and drew attendees from a large upstate area, along with other personnel from NYC/LI area.

November 12-14

NYACT Auto Crime School – NYS Police Academy, Albany, NY

This three-day school, taught by NYPD Detective Thomas Burke, offered trainees a primer on the conduct of successful automobile crime investigations.

November 14

Joint NYACT-NYPTI Training Event – MTA Facility, New York, NY

This training opportunity offered very useful information and attracted attendees from across the NYC/LI area.

November 18

Annual State Education Conference – NY Hall of Science, Queens, NY

NYACT's largest training event of the year offered a wide range of valuable training applying to the detection, prevention and prosecution of vehicle crime and insurance fraud.

November 20

Odometer Fraud Training – Westchester Police Academy, Westchester, NY

Hosted in conjunction with the NYS Police Auto Theft Unit, this training provided a presentation and diagnostic demonstration on odometer fraud.

NYACT 2012 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft & Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number of Seminars/Trainings/Conferences	12	Number of Webinar Trainings Produced	6

Number of Verified Attendees	1,017	Number of Verified Webinar Training Viewers	138
Number of Agencies Represented	428		
Number of MVT Articles Published	0	Number of MVIF Articles Published	0

New York Prosecutors Training Institute

The New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc. (NYPTI), a not-for-profit corporation, was created in 1995 through a legislative grant to the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York (DAASNY). NYPTI's mission is to enrich the quality and efficiency of justice by providing comprehensive continuing legal education, training, advice and assistance to New York State's prosecutors. In 2013, NYPTI continued to participate in New York's ongoing efforts to reduce motor vehicle insurance fraud and theft statewide by providing specialized training, research and support to prosecutors and law enforcement agencies across New York State. NYPTI continued to devote its resources to New York's aggressive battle of the complex crimes that destructively increase the costs of insurance rates, doing business and general goods and services in New York State.

Strategies Implemented

With NYPTI's support, prosecutors were trained and equipped to dismantle crime rings and protect consumers from higher motor vehicle insurance costs. NYPTI's programs featured presentations from experienced members of the prosecutorial and law enforcement communities, with the aim of coordinating and enhancing prosecutions of motor vehicle insurance fraud and theft. NYPTI also conducted state-of-the-art computer training which focused on using software to organize cases and enhance the trial presentation of complex motor vehicle insurance fraud and theft investigations.

Calendar Year 2013 Activity

Training

In 2013, NYPTI conducted training on motor vehicle insurance fraud and theft investigation and prosecution for 178 prosecutors, members of law enforcement and representatives of the insurance industry. The training was performed in three separate programs.

The first training program was presented as an approximately 20 minute webinar on March 27. Hosted online, the presentation offered a review of the layout of auto crimes resources on Prosecutors Encyclopedia (PE) and how to most effectively navigate among articles, court decisions, DMV forms and the site in general.

The second program was held in Manhattan on April 4. Hosted at the NYPD Police Academy, the course examined insurance fraud detection and investigation techniques implemented by state agencies and private industry, the information gathered as a result of those techniques and the ways prosecutors can access that information.

NYPTI's third program was a two-day course at its 15th Annual Summer College in Syracuse, which ran from July 30-31. This two-day course brought together prosecutors and members of the law enforcement community from around the state to discuss relevant issues in the areas of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The design of the course, including a banquet, fostered a group dynamic that encouraged participation by the attendees, interaction with the presenters, and networking opportunities.

NYPTI conducted a fourth training program in partnership with the New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association (NYACT) in Brooklyn on November 14. Hosted at the MTA New York City Transit Headquarters, the course offered techniques to combat motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud with a focus on dismantling the criminal organization.

NYPTI training programs provided attendees with high-quality presentations on relevant and substantive topics such as: detecting and investigating insurance fraud; SIU and prosecutors, no-fault insurance fraud; auto crimes on the horizon as a result of Hurricane Sandy; ethical considerations for prosecutors; written statements; fraudulent VINs; avoiding issues that may arise during an auto crime prosecution; owner give-ups; scrapyards and stolen vehicles from the investigators perspective; technology and auto crime; investigative techniques in insurance fraud cases; current trends in auto crime; getting medical information from a defendant; handling the enterprise corruption case; and ethical issues in auto crime and insurance fraud.

NYPTI distributed lecture materials to all attendees, either at each training or online, through Prosecutors Encyclopedia and the online registration system.

NYPTI also recorded all of the training programs and all will be added to the NYPTI CLE online site, <http://cle.nypti.org>. Copies of the materials are available upon request to prosecutors free of charge, and are available for direct download from Prosecutors' Encyclopedia (PE).

Legal and Technical Assistance

NYPTI further supported New York prosecutors by providing legal and technical assistance upon request and through the establishment and maintenance of NYPTI's PE and Online CLE. In fact, 40 lectures are available to be viewed through NYPTI's Online CLE site in the categories of insurance fraud and auto crime alone. In 2013, New York prosecutors viewed approximately 33 motor vehicle insurance fraud and theft related lectures through NYPTI's Online CLE.

NYPTI continued to add material to PE throughout the year, including all of the motor vehicle insurance fraud and theft course material along with a feature making it easier to navigate pages related to MVTIF topics. Since its launch, NYPTI has provided PE demonstrations and training to prosecutors so that they may use it to their maximum advantage, and share their knowledge, insight and sample pleadings with other users across New York State. Through its training programs, publications and legal and technical assistance, NYPTI continues to assist in New York State's fight against motor vehicle insurance fraud and theft by educating prosecutors and members of law enforcement and providing them tools to increase the efficiency and enhance the success of their investigations and prosecution.

2013 Grant Funded Motor Vehicle Theft & Insurance Fraud Activity: Snapshot			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Number of Seminars/Trainings/Conferences	4	Number of Webinar Trainings Produced	1
Number of Verified Attendees	178	Number of Verified Webinar Training Viewers	6
Number of Agencies Represented	38		
Number of MVT Articles Published	4	Number of MVIF Articles Published	4

Appendix – 2013 Statistics

Reported Incidents of Motor Vehicle Theft - 2013

Rank	COUNTY	MV Theft		Rank	COUNTY	MV Theft
1	Kings	2,606		32	Ontario	35
2	Queens	2,411		33	Livingston	33
3	Bronx	1,449		34	Tompkins	28
4	Erie	1,256		35	Chemung	27
5	Suffolk	1,176			Franklin	27
6	Nassau	888			Montgomery	27
	Monroe	886			Putnam	27
8	New York	742		39	Greene	26
9	Westchester	613		40	Tioga	25
10	Onondaga	542		41	Steuben	24
11	Albany	251		42	Madison	23
12	Richmond	226			Washington	23
13	Niagara	218		44	Orleans	22
14	Orange	216		45	Essex	19
15	Schenectady	196			Genesee	19
16	Oneida	167		47	Delaware	16
17	Rensselaer	134			Herkimer	16
18	Broome	130		49	Allegany	14
19	Rockland	91			Columbia	14
20	Jefferson	80			Lewis	14
21	Dutchess	79			Otsego	14
22	Oswego	78		53	Chenango	12
23	Cattaraugus	62			Cortland	12
24	Saratoga	61		55	Cayuga	10
25	Ulster	55			Seneca	10
26	Chautauqua	44		57	Schoharie	9
27	Sullivan	40		58	Warren	8
28	Clinton	39			Wyoming	8
	Fulton	39		60	Schuyler	7
30	St Lawrence	38		61	Yates	3
31	Wayne	36		62	Hamilton	0

*Watertown City Police Department (Jefferson County) is excluded due to reporting problems.

As of 08/05/2013, 40 law enforcement agencies submitted less than 12 months of UCR motor vehicle theft reporting to DCJS.

Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Suspected Incidents 2013

Rank	COUNTY	MV INSURANCE FRAUD	Rank	COUNTY	MV INSURANCE FRAUD
1	Kings	4,650		Essex	10
2	Queens	2,993		Fulton	10
3	Bronx	2,784		Genesee	10
4	New York	2,035	35	Clinton	9
5	Nassau	1,329		Franklin	9
6	Suffolk	807		Greene	9
7	Erie	496		Madison	9
8	Westchester	418		Orleans	9
9	Richmond	284		Steuben	9
10	Monroe	284	41	Cattaraugus	8
11	Orange	134		St Lawrence	8
12	Onondaga	117	43	Chemung	7
13	Rockland	107		Delaware	7
14	Albany	82		Herkimer	7
15	Oneida	57		Wayne	7
16	Niagara	51	47	Livingston	6
17	Dutchess	44		Otsego	6
18	Schenectady	37	49	Cortland	5
19	Ulster	35		Schoharie	5
20	Putnam	25	51	Schuyler	4
21	Saratoga	21		Seneca	4
22	Sullivan	17	53	Allegany	3
23	Broome	16		Chenango	3
	Oswego	16		Montgomery	3
25	Jefferson	15		Tompkins	3
26	Ontario	14	57	Hamilton	2
27	Rensselaer	13		Tioga	2
28	Chautauqua	12		Washington	2
	Warren	12	60	Lewis	1
30	Cayuga	11		Wyoming	1
31	Columbia	10		Yates	1