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Problem-Specific Guides Series
Problem-Oriented Guides for Police

No. 63

Export of Stolen Vehicles Across Land Borders

Gohar Petrossian
Ronald V. Clarke

Center for
Problem-Oriented Policing

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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of this publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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About the Problem-Specific Guides Series

The *Problem-Specific Guides* summarize knowledge about how police can reduce the harm caused by specific crime and disorder problems. They are guides to prevention and to improving the overall response to incidents, not to investigating offenses or handling specific incidents. Neither do they cover all of the technical details about how to implement specific responses. The guides are written for police—of whatever rank or assignment—who must address the specific problem the guides cover. The guides will be most useful to officers who:

- **Understand basic problem-oriented policing principles and methods.** The guides are not primers in problem-oriented policing. They deal only briefly with the initial decision to focus on a particular problem, methods to analyze the problem, and means to assess the results of a problem-oriented policing project. They are designed to help police decide how best to analyze and address a problem they have already identified. (A companion series of *Problem-Solving Tools* guides has been produced to aid in various aspects of problem analysis and assessment.)
- **Can look at a problem in depth.** Depending on the complexity of the problem, you should be prepared to spend perhaps weeks, or even months, analyzing and responding to it. Carefully studying a problem before responding helps you design the right strategy, one that is most likely to work in your community. You should not blindly adopt the responses others have used; you must decide whether they are appropriate to your local situation. What is true in one place may not be true elsewhere; what works in one place may not work everywhere.
- **Are willing to consider new ways of doing police business.** The guides describe responses that other police departments have used or that researchers have tested. While not all of these responses will be appropriate to your particular problem, they should help give a broader view of the kinds of things you could do. You may think you cannot implement some of these responses in your jurisdiction, but perhaps you can. In many places, when police have discovered a more effective response, they have succeeded in having laws and policies changed, improving the response to the problem. (A companion series of *Response Guides* has been produced to help you understand how commonly-used police responses work on a variety of problems.)

- **Understand the value and the limits of research knowledge.** For some types of problems, a lot of useful research is available to the police; for other problems, little is available. Accordingly, some guides in this series summarize existing research whereas other guides illustrate the need for more research on that particular problem. Regardless, research has not provided definitive answers to all the questions you might have about the problem. The research may help get you started in designing your own responses, but it cannot tell you exactly what to do. This will depend greatly on the particular nature of your local problem. In the interest of keeping the guides readable, not every piece of relevant research has been cited, nor has every point been attributed to its sources. To have done so would have overwhelmed and distracted the reader. The references listed at the end of each guide are those drawn on most heavily; they are not a complete bibliography of research on the subject.
- **Are willing to work with others to find effective solutions to the problem.** The police alone cannot implement many of the responses discussed in the guides. They must frequently implement them in partnership with other responsible private and public bodies, including other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private businesses, public utilities, community groups, and individual citizens. An effective problem-solver must know how to forge genuine partnerships with others and be prepared to invest considerable effort in making these partnerships work. Each guide identifies particular individuals or groups in the community with whom police might work to improve the overall response to that problem. Thorough analysis of problems often reveals that individuals and groups other than the police are in a stronger position to address problems and that police ought to shift some greater responsibility to them to do so. Response Guide No. 3, *Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems*, provides further discussion of this topic.

The COPS Office defines community policing as "a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime." These guides emphasize problem-solving and police–community partnerships in the context of addressing specific public safety problems. For the most part, the organizational strategies that can facilitate problem-solving and police–community partnerships vary considerably and discussion of them is beyond the scope of these guides.

These guides have drawn on research findings and police practices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia. Even though laws, customs, and police practices vary from country to country, it is apparent that the police everywhere experience common problems. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, it is important that police be aware of research and successful practices beyond the borders of their own countries.

Each guide is informed by a thorough review of the research literature and reported police practice, and each guide is anonymously peer-reviewed by a line police officer, a police executive, and a researcher prior to publication. The review process is independently managed by the COPS Office, which solicits the reviews.

For more information about problem-oriented policing, visit the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing online at www.popcenter.org. This website offers free online access to:

- The *Problem-Specific Guides* series
- The companion *Response Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools* series
- Special publications on crime analysis and on policing terrorism
- Instructional information about problem-oriented policing and related topics
- An interactive problem-oriented policing training exercise
- An interactive *Problem Analysis Module*
- Online access to important police research and practices
- Information about problem-oriented policing conferences and award programs

Acknowledgments

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The project team that developed the guide series comprised Herman Goldstein (University of Wisconsin Law School), Ronald V. Clarke (Rutgers University), John E. Eck (University of Cincinnati), Michael S. Scott (University of Wisconsin Law School), Rana Sampson (Police Consultant), and Deborah Lamm Weisel (North Carolina State University).

Members of the San Diego; National City, California; and Savannah, Georgia police departments provided feedback on the guides' format and style in the early stages of the project.

Kimberly Nath oversaw the project for the COPS Office. Phyllis Schultze conducted research for the guide at Rutgers University's Criminal Justice Library. Nancy Leach coordinated the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing's production process. Katharine Willis edited this guide.

The Problem of the Export of Stolen Vehicles Across Land Borders

Each year a large number of cars and trucks are stolen for export in regions of the United States bordering Mexico. Most of these vehicles are simply driven across the border where they generally remain. By contrast, few stolen vehicles are reportedly exported across the border with Canada.† This guide is therefore mostly concerned with the problem of vehicles stolen for export to Mexico, though it should also be useful to police dealing with the problems of exporting stolen vehicles across land borders elsewhere in the world.‡

There is no reliable measure of vehicle thefts for export in the United States. These thefts are included in the police statistics of unrecovered vehicle thefts, a broad category that includes many other kinds of vehicle theft, such as vehicles stolen for the sale of their parts. This means that local police may underestimate the scale of theft for export in their jurisdiction. The lack of data also makes it difficult for local police to analyze and deal with the problem.

This guide is primarily intended to help local police deal with theft for export, though it might also be of value to county or state agencies. It summarizes the factors that put local jurisdictions at risk of theft for export, and provides a method of estimating the size of their problem. It identifies information that police should collect when engaged in a problem-oriented project to reduce theft for export. Finally, it provides details on methods that have been developed to deal effectively with this problem.

What This Guide Does and Does Not Cover

This guide describes the problem of export of stolen vehicles across land borders and the factors that increase its risks. It includes a series of questions to help you analyze your local problem and reviews responses to the problem and what is known about these responses from evaluative research and police practice.

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† Analyses of the nationwide distribution of auto theft, discussed in the "Extent of the Problem" section of this guide, show little evidence of concentrations in border areas with Canada. This suggests there is little demand in that country for stolen U.S. vehicles.

‡ For example, many cars stolen in South Africa are driven across borders to other African countries. The demise of the Soviet system resulted in a large number of cars being stolen in Western Europe and exported across land borders to Russia and other Eastern European countries. The emerging market economies in those countries created a demand for cars that domestic producers could not meet, and criminal entrepreneurs moved in to fill the gap.

Export of stolen vehicles across land borders is but one aspect of the larger set of problems related to vehicle theft and the set of problems related to border crossings. This guide is limited to addressing the particular harms created by the export of stolen vehicles across land borders. Related problems not directly addressed in this guide, each of which requires separate analysis, include:

Stolen Vehicle Problems

- Export of stolen vehicles via seaports or airports
- Theft of and from vehicles in parking facilities
- Theft of and from vehicles parked on streets
- Theft of vehicles from rental agencies and dealerships
- Insurance fraud related to auto theft
- Carjacking
- Operation of chop shops

Border Crossing Problems

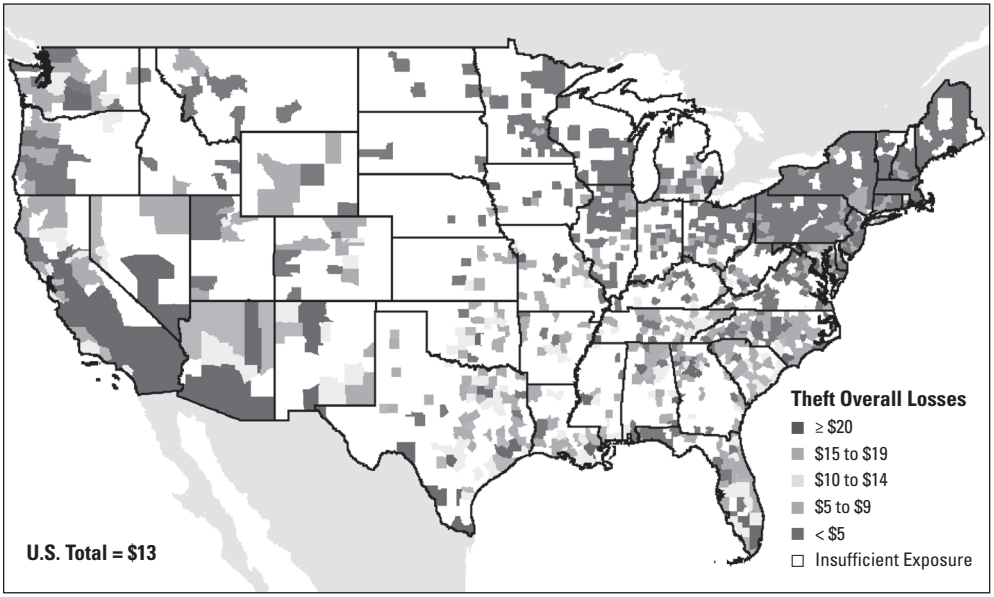
- Illegal border crossing
- Robbery and assault of border crossers
- Drug trafficking across borders
- Human trafficking

Some of these related problems are covered in other guides in this series. An up-to-date list of current and future guides is at www.popcenter.org.

The Extent of the Problem

There are no reliable statistics for the number of stolen vehicles that are exported across land borders because police-recorded crime subsumes these vehicles under the larger category of unrecovered vehicle thefts. Although the Uniform Crime Reports do not record the number of unrecovered stolen vehicles, in 2009 the value of these vehicles was reportedly $1.96 billion, with an average loss per theft of $6,505. A simple calculation of these numbers yields a figure of about 301,300 unrecovered vehicle thefts in that year.

Figure 1. Theft Average Loss Payments per Insured Vehicle Year 2000–09 Models in Calendar Year 2009



Source: Highway Loss Data Institute. (2009). "Insurance Special Report: Comprehensive Losses by County." No. A-78. Arlington, VA.

Apart from vehicles stolen for export, these unrecovered thefts include vehicles that are:

- Kept by the thief
- Given a new identity and sold on the domestic market
- "Chopped" for sale of their parts
- Taken by joyriders and "torched" (i.e., destroyed by fire) or abandoned and never restored to their owners
- Arranged to be stolen so the owner can fraudulently collect the insurance money

The number of unrecovered vehicles falling into these categories is not known. It is also not known how many vehicles stolen for export are driven across land borders and how many are exported by sea.

Despite the lack of hard numbers, there is much evidence that theft of vehicles for export across land borders—in particular the border with Mexico—is a substantial problem. Several research studies have found that the number of unrecovered thefts is higher, sometimes much higher, in regions of the country that are closer to the border. No known reason other than theft for export to Mexico can account for this disproportion of unrecovered thefts, which is documented in the following studies:

1. Aldridge (2007) reports that in 2005 about one third of all recorded vehicle thefts in the United States (413,864 out of 1,244,525) occurred in the four states bordering Mexico (California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas). Based on the number of vehicles registered in these four states, which according to the U.S. Census Bureau[1] is only 23 percent (57,634,000) of all vehicles registered in the United States, this proportion is substantially higher than expected. Aldridge also reports that California's vehicle theft rate was more than double the national average, but the vehicle theft rate in just the southern portion of San Diego County, which borders Mexico, was four times the national average. The San Diego Police Department Southern Division (directly across the Mexican border) reported a rate of 17.45 auto thefts per 1,000 inhabitants. The rest of San Diego County reported theft rates as low as 2.72 per 1,000 inhabitants.[2]

2. The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) publishes data on vehicle theft rates in Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). These are calculated by dividing the number of vehicle thefts in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database by the U.S. Census Bureau's population estimates. NICB reports show evidence consistent with theft for export: eight of the top 10 ranked MSAs in 2010 were in California, of which the majority were in southern or central California, close to the border with Mexico.

3. A report produced in 2009 by the Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI), a nonprofit research organization funded by automobile insurance companies, concluded that (a) theft losses in the Mexican border area have increased greatly over the last 8 years;† (b) these losses are generally concentrated in southern portions of Texas and Arizona; and (c) they are skewed more toward border areas when compared to overall vehicle thefts, indicating a prevalence of unrecovered thefts (see Figure 1 on page 9). According to this report, "Six of the 10 metropolitan statistical areas with the worst (highest) theft losses are along the border with Mexico, and one is near the border. The other three with the highest theft losses are port cities." The report's many maps clearly demonstrate that vehicle thefts are prevalent in counties near borders and ports. In addition, the report concludes that this pattern of concentration has increased in recent years, which suggests that theft for export is a growing problem.‡

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† This is consistent with other evidence reviewed by Cherbonneau and Wright (2009) that shows a growing concentration of vehicle thefts in western states, where theft rates have increased by 33 percent since 1999. During the same time period, theft rates in all other regions of the country have declined by 37 percent.

‡ Some law enforcement authorities believe this growth is fueled by an emerging "cars for cocaine" trafficking problem. A Division of Motor Vehicles office opened at the Port of Miami in Florida to help deal with this suspected problem (Leen 1985).

4. Block et al. (2011) conducted a geographic analysis to estimate the size of the theft for export problem. They found that vehicle thefts were overrepresented in high-traffic border areas when compared with levels of other index crimes. For example, three of the top five counties for vehicle theft shared a border with Mexico (Pima and Santa Cruz, Arizona and San Diego, California). At the state level, California and Arizona had about 110,000 more vehicle thefts than would be predicted by levels of other index offenses.[3]

Not all of these 110,000 stolen vehicles would have been exported to Mexico. For example, some of the vehicles stolen in California might have been shipped overseas. This figure also does not include thefts for export to Mexico from other states. However, the figure is broadly consistent with the estimate made for many years by the NICB that 30–35 percent of unrecovered stolen vehicles were exported† and it provides the best estimate available of the extent of the problem.

Federal and other agencies' concerted efforts in dealing with the problem of vehicles stolen for export to Mexico provide further evidence of its scale and importance. For example, the United States developed a model bilateral agreement for the repatriation of stolen vehicles (see United Nations 1997) and signed it with several Latin American countries. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) opened its stolen vehicle database to other countries (Davis 1999). The NICB (which is supported by the American insurance industry) has stationed officials in Mexico and other South American countries to assist in the process of repatriating vehicles. Various law enforcement agencies in border regions have formed task forces to deal with auto theft, including the California Highway Patrol, El Paso County Sheriff's Office, and the Texas Department of Public Safety. (See "Reponses to the Problem of the Export of Stolen Vehicles Across Land Borders" on pg. 25.)

Though difficult to identify, measure, and analyze, there is little doubt that the problem of vehicles stolen for export across the border with Mexico is significant in terms of the numbers of vehicles stolen and the total dollars lost. The problem affects many regions of the country and cannot be ignored.

† The NICB no longer publishes these estimates because of untested assumptions in producing them (Clarke and Brown 2003).

The Nature of the Problem

Because of the lack of data concerning the theft for export problem, there are only a few research studies on the nature of the problem. However, research does provide some information on who commits the thefts, how the vehicles are stolen and transferred across the border, and which models are most at risk. Following is a summary of this information.

Who Commits the Thefts

Research suggests that juveniles often commit vehicle thefts.† One study found that large organized theft rings, "frontera-rings," are involved in the business of transporting stolen cars from the United States to Mexico,[4] but they rely upon Mexican juveniles—who are brought to border cities—to steal the cars.[5] Other less sophisticated theft rings also rely on adolescents for "cross-border stealing."[6] In some cases, juvenile offenders operate largely independently[7] and "might steal a car in the afternoon and sell it that same evening in Mexico."[8]

Though there is little firm evidence of this, it's believed that both legal and illegal immigrants are involved in exporting stolen vehicles, as they may have the necessary contacts, resources, and knowledge of the market for vehicles. They are also known to be involved in many other forms of transnational crime, such as human smuggling and drug trafficking.

There is anecdotal evidence that some seasonal workers from Mexico steal cars to take back home (just as seasonal workers in Sweden are said to do[9]). They might subsequently return to the United States in the same vehicles, as there are occasional reports of cars known to be stolen for export subsequently being stopped by police in this country.

How the Vehicles Are Stolen

One careful study shows that border car thieves often cruise large parking lots, such as those used by city workers, commuters, or customers of large home improvement retail stores, looking for suitable cars to steal. They are secure in the knowledge that owners are likely to be away from their vehicles for several hours, which is long enough to get a vehicle across the border before its theft is discovered.[10]

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† This may be different from theft for export in other parts of the world. INTERPOL (1999) reports that "German authorities, for example, found that stealing expensive German cars was common among Russian organized crime groups. Some scholars argue that in Russia, for example, it is unlikely for many individuals to have the 'necessary expertise to steal cars, the skills to falsify documents, the connections to smuggle them across borders, falsify documents in Russia that allows registration of these cars, and also find buyers for them.'"

Thieves also might pay a small fee to car park attendants and security guards, who can provide valuable information about the location of particular models and may help in other small ways.[11]

How the Stolen Vehicles Are Transported Across the Border

Although some stolen vehicles are loaded onto trucks, most are simply driven across the border.† Thieves who steal cars near Mexico usually drive them across the border without changing their identities. If they cross the border before the car is reported stolen, it is highly likely they will avoid detection.

Which Vehicle Models Are at Risk

Certain vehicle models are at a higher risk of being stolen for export. Early studies found that these are models that "blend in" because they are also manufactured or sold legitimately in Mexico.[12]

A more recent study in Chula Vista, California, a city close to the Mexican border, found that five models accounted for 43 percent of the vehicles stolen. Three of these models were small pick-up trucks manufactured by Toyota, Nissan, and Ford.[13]

In 2009, five of the top 10 stolen vehicles in Arizona were pick-up trucks, compared with two out of 10 nationwide. Pick-up trucks and large sports utility vehicles (SUV) are sought after by Mexican criminal gangs, who use them as "load vehicles" to transport either illegal immigrants or illegal drugs from Mexico into the United States.[14]

† Moving stolen vehicles from South Africa to Zimbabwe often involves driving the vehicles to the border area where new drivers, who have better knowledge of border procedures and contacts in the destination country, take the vehicles through the border. In other cases, vehicles are driven across borders on dates and at times when border officials who are known to accept bribes are on duty at the border post (Irish 2005).

Factors Contributing to the Problem

Poor Vehicle Security

The routine installation of central locking systems and ignition transponders in recent years has greatly improved the security of new vehicles and has contributed to a large decline in vehicle theft, especially of new cars.[15] This improved security also may have reduced thefts for export across land borders, if, as it seems, many of the thefts are committed by juveniles; however, there are no reliable statistics to support this. On the other hand, when the security of new cars is improved, thieves will displace their attention to older models.[16] Because there are still many older vehicles available to steal, it may be a few years before improved vehicle security reduces theft for export to Mexico.†

Proximity to the Border with Mexico

In addition to the studies described above, following is more evidence that supports the strong correlation between auto theft rates and proximity to the Mexican border:

1. Vehicle models with the lowest recovery rates in border states are stolen from cities close to the border.[17]

2. In Texas, the cities of Brownsville, El Paso, and Laredo all have international bridges directly linking them to Mexico, and McAllen is less than 10 miles from the border.[18] Research suggests that between 80 and 90 percent of vehicles stolen from these border cities end up in Mexico.[19]

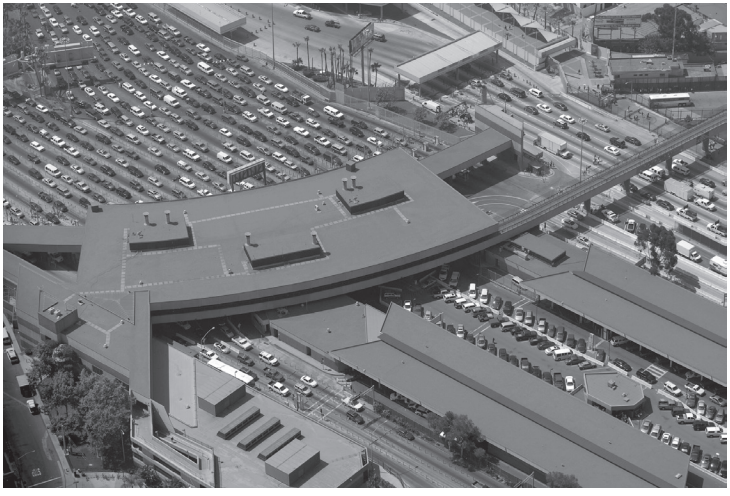
3. Tucson (Arizona) Airport Police report a major problem of vehicle thefts from on-site rental agencies. After renting a car (usually using a fraudulent or stolen credit card), the thief drives it across the border into Mexico before the rental company even discovers it was stolen.[20]

† In explaining the presence of old Toyotas on their list of the five most stolen vehicles in Chula Vista, California, Plouffe and Sampson (2004) learned from interviewing thieves who admitted taking cars into Mexico that: "Some targeted older Toyotas, as any old Toyota ignition key opened and started the vehicle, reducing the effort involved in stealing these vehicles. This last finding came as a surprise to auto theft detectives, who had believed that auto thieves used shaved keys. Offenders picking old Toyotas didn't even have to make the effort to shave an old key."

Difficulties of Checking Vehicles Crossing into Mexico

Many difficulties stand in the way of checking vehicles that cross the border into Mexico from the United States:

- **A vast number of vehicles use border crossings into Mexico every day.** According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, more than 70 million vehicles, carrying twice that number of passengers, crossed the U.S.-Mexico border in 2009.[21] Looking for stolen cars among this vast amount of legal traffic is like searching for the proverbial needle in the haystack.
- **A substantial legal trade of used cars exists between the United States and Mexico.** A large number of used cars are legally traded between the United States and Mexico. Some criminals involved in trafficking stolen cars hide behind this trade, masking their activities as legitimate business. In fact, the top two items exported from the United States to Mexico in 2009 were motor vehicle parts and motor vehicles, respectively.[22]
- **U.S. border controls are focused on arrivals, not departures.** Customs officers are responsible for levying duties on certain goods entering the country and keeping prohibited goods out. In the United States, this focus on arrivals has become more pronounced as fears of terrorism have increased.[23]
- **Language barriers make border control difficult.** Language barriers make it difficult for Mexican officials to check registration and ownership documents and to detect forged or altered papers.



An example of the daily vehicle congestion at a border crossing between the United States and Mexico.

- **Vehicle theft is not a high priority for law enforcement.**[24] Law enforcement action to reduce the export of stolen vehicles is eclipsed by the need to tackle other forms of organized crime (e.g., importing drugs and human trafficking).[25] Developing countries, such as Mexico, are faced with many crime problems more serious than the import of stolen cars and cannot be expected to give this high priority.

Strong Demand in Mexico for Vehicles Stolen in the United States

The export of stolen vehicles relies on a ready supply of attractive vehicles in a developed country, the demand for these vehicles in another, less developed country, and a ready means of transporting them from origin to destination.[26] These three conditions help explain the problem of vehicles stolen for export to Mexico. They also help explain the increase in car theft in Europe following the fall of the "Iron Curtain" in 1989, which brought the "wealthy half of the continent, where consumer goods are available in unlimited quantities, into close contact with the poor half," where these commodities are in high demand but not readily available.[27] Some estimates suggest that about 20–35 percent of the newer, expensive cars in Russia were stolen in Western Europe.[28]

Mexican Legislation Governing Import of Vehicles

To protect the national automobile industry in Mexico, the import of vehicles less than 4-years-old is prohibited. Older vehicles can be brought into the 20-kilometer border zone under permit after a 15 percent duty is paid.[29] Stolen vehicles exported to Mexico that do not meet these requirements are labeled as contraband rather than as stolen property. These cars are then confiscated and used by police and officials, rather than considered stolen and returned to the United States.[30]

Corruption

Disposing of a stolen vehicle in the destination country usually meets few challenges.† In Russia, for example, the false documents used to bring the car into the country from Western Europe are destroyed and a new set of illegal documents are produced. This is usually accomplished with the help of corrupt law enforcement and other officials.[31]

In Mexico, once stolen cars are in the black market for sale, a bribe to officials can often deal with the threat of confiscation.[32] Corruption exists not only inside Mexico, but also on the U.S.-Mexico border, where there is believed to be a "general understanding" between Mexican Customs officials and those who transport stolen vehicles.[33]

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† In South Africa, corruption (and intimidation) of officials in vehicle registration offices is one method of obtaining a new identity for stolen vehicles, many of which are exported to neighboring countries (Ndhlovu 2002).

Insurance Fraud

In Western Europe, insurance fraud is "one of the driving forces behind" vehicle theft for export.[34] In some instances, owners of luxury vehicles sell their cars to Eastern European criminals for a fraction of their value, do not report the 'thefts' to the authorities until the cars have crossed the international border, and then collect money from their insurance company. In such cases, the owners collect money both from the 'thieves' and the insurance company. In other instances, 'thieves' do not pay the owner, and he collects extra money from his insurance company because the insurance value of the car is greater than its actual value.[35]

Although some vehicles stolen for export to Mexico might have been stolen for insurance fraud purposes, there are two reasons why insurance fraud would play a smaller part in the United States than in Western Europe, Firstly, car owners in Europe carry insurance that lets them recover the full cost of the car if it is stolen. In the United States, not every comprehensive (full) insurance policy covers car theft, and even if it does, it is still not guaranteed that the owner will receive the full value of the car due to the depreciation of the car's value over time or other factors. Secondly, cars stolen in the United States are rarely expensive luxury models, and car owners in the United States rarely purchase full insurance for non-luxury cars.

Understanding Your Local Problem

The information provided earlier is a general description of the problem of theft of vehicles for export across land borders, in particular to Mexico. To be more effective in your enforcement and prevention efforts, you must combine the basic facts with a more specific understanding of your local problem. Analyzing your local problem carefully will help you design a more effective response strategy.

Stakeholders

The following groups have an interest in the export of stolen vehicles across land borders. Consider the contribution they might make to help you gather information about the problem and respond to it:†

- *Insurance companies and affiliated agencies* (e.g., National Highway Loss Data Institute and National Insurance Crime Bureau) can identify the most frequently stolen vehicles and assist in the recovery of stolen vehicles.
- *Local auto dealerships* can identify the most common vehicle models targeted in the jurisdiction and provide information about how easily they are stolen.
- *Neighborhood safety groups* can identify factors that contribute to the problem and assist in finding solutions; for example, by bringing pressure to bear on local businesses to improve parking lot security.
- *Customs and Border Protection* can assist in identifying and intercepting stolen vehicles (as discussed in the upcoming section "Responses to the Problem of the Export of Stolen Vehicles Across Land Borders").
- *Other local police agencies* can share information about auto theft patterns and car theft rings.

Asking the Right Questions

Auto theft for export is often hidden among the general category of unrecovered vehicle thefts. Therefore, you should be alert to certain conditions. Your jurisdiction is at an increased risk of vehicles stolen for export to Mexico, if you have:

- A close proximity to a border crossing into Mexico.
- Few vehicle checks conducted due to heavy traffic.
- Large immigrant communities with ties to Mexico and other Latin American countries.

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† For more detailed information on shifting and sharing responsibility, see Response Guide No. 3 *Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems.*

- An abundance of vehicles known as targets for export to Latin American countries.
- A more serious vehicle theft problem than other nearby jurisdictions, with a high ratio of permanent vs. temporary theft of cars. Statistics indicate the number of permanent thefts have been increasing in recent years.
- Many large parking lots where cars are left unattended by owners for lengthy periods of time and which are close to highways leading to the border.
- Organized theft rings operating in your jurisdiction.
- A disproportionate number of juveniles arrested for auto theft in your jurisdiction than in other nearby jurisdictions. These juveniles might work for organized theft rings.

To help you determine whether your jurisdiction experiences a significant number of thefts for export, request your crime analyst's help in calculating your jurisdiction's Location Quotients for Crime (LQC). These will show whether your auto theft rates, and, in particular, your rates of unrecovered thefts (assuming you have records of these) are particularly high. More information about calculating LQCs is in Appendix B.

Assuming you have a problem of vehicles stolen for export to Mexico, following are some critical questions you should ask when analyzing your problem. Your answers to these questions will help you choose the most appropriate responses, which are discussed later in this guide. Most importantly, these questions will help you determine the prevalence of the auto theft for export problem in your jurisdiction. (Those analyzing a theft for export problem in jurisdictions that are not close to the border with Mexico should adapt these questions to their own situations.)

Some of these questions may be difficult for you to answer, but you have an important source of information—the offenders you arrest. By carefully interviewing these offenders, you will learn the methods they use to steal cars and then get them across the border. Problem-Solving Tools Guide No. 3, *Using Offender Interviews to Inform Police Problem Solving* (available at www.popcenter.org) provides guidance for conducting such interviews.

Data Gathering and Analysis

- What data concerning auto theft for export are available within your jurisdiction?
- Is there a database that records information about auto theft for export in your region? Do you have access to it?
- If so, what type of information is collected in this database and how might it help you?

Incidents

- How are vehicles generally stolen (e.g., breaking in and defeating the ignition lock, carjacking, stealing keys, fraudulently renting from rental agencies)?
- In how many cases were thieves able to get the car into Mexico before it was reported stolen?
- What is the recovery rate of stolen cars in your jurisdiction?
- What factors contribute to the incidence of auto theft for export in your jurisdiction?

Location

- What locations are most at risk (e.g., residential driveways, commercial establishments, particular neighborhoods, streets, or parking lots)?
- Are there identifiable patterns and hot spots for vehicles stolen for export?
- Are there any large parking lots that seem to be hot spots for auto theft generally and theft for export specifically? Do they differ from other large parking lots in terms of typical usage, security, or distance to freeway entrances?
- What border crossing is most likely to be used by car thieves?
- What is the distance from where cars are stolen to that border crossing or to a major highway leading to that border crossing?
- What are the most likely routes used to move stolen vehicles to that border crossing?

Offenders

- What types of offenders seem to be involved in stealing vehicles for export?
- What proportion of offenders are juveniles? Do they belong to known gangs in your jurisdiction? Do they seem to be working for organized crime groups?
- In the case of known juvenile offenders:
  - Who are the most frequent offenders and what enforcement plan is being considered to target them?
  - Which ones are currently under court supervision and what are their special conditions that can return them to detention?
  - Can any illegal immigrants among them be detained at the border? If not, can your jurisdiction be notified that they have crossed the border?
- What proportion are professional vehicle thieves?
- Do offenders operate alone or in a group?

- What proportion are repeat offenders? What enforcement plan is being considered to target them?
- Do the offenders belong to gangs or organized crime rings, (e.g., "frontera rings")?
- In what other crimes are the offenders involved (e.g., drug trafficking, smuggling illegal immigrants)?
- What proportion of offenders are locals? What proportion are outsiders?
- Do the offenders reside primarily in the United States or Mexico?
- In what proportion of incidents are the offenders apprehended?
- How do the thieves get cars across the border to Mexico?
- What reasons do offenders offer for being engaged in auto theft for export?

Targeted Vehicles

- What kinds of vehicles are most at risk for being stolen for export?
- What are the security features of the models most at risk? What types of anti-theft or recovery systems are available on these targeted vehicles?
- How different are these models from those stolen for joyriding or any purpose other than export?
- Are these models legally available for sale in Mexico?

Current Responses

- What actions have police already taken to reduce the incidents of auto theft for export?
- What are the typical outcomes of criminal prosecutions of the offenders?
- What are the current practices regarding surveillance of the locations most at risk? How have these practices helped in preventing auto theft from these locations?
- What types of security measures are taken at borders to prevent stolen cars from crossing?
- How effective have these measures been in apprehending offenders?
- How many stolen vehicles exported from your jurisdiction have been repatriated? Last year? For the past 5 years?

Measuring Your Effectiveness

Measurement allows you to determine to what degree your efforts have succeeded, and suggests how you might modify your responses if they are not producing the intended results. You should take measures of your problem *before* you implement responses to determine how serious the problem is, and *after* you implement them, to determine whether they have been effective. You should measure effects not only in the target area, but also in the areas immediately surrounding it to see if there is any evidence of displacement or diffusion of benefits (for assistance, see Problem-Solving Tools Guide No. 10, *Analyzing Crime Displacement and Diffusion,* at www.popcenter.org). Such an analysis might suggest ways to improve your response if it has achieved limited results.

Below are potentially useful measures of the effectiveness of responses to the problem of vehicle theft for export:

- Reduced numbers of auto thefts, particularly unrecovered auto thefts
- Changes in the LQCs for auto theft and unrecovered auto theft that suggest the problems have reduced in your jurisdiction
- Reduced number of insurance claims related to unrecovered vehicles
- Decreased total costs of investigating auto theft for export
- Increased arrest rates of thieves en route to or at the border

For more detailed guidance on measuring effectiveness, see the Problem-Solving Tools Guide No. 1, *Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers*, at www.popcenter.org.

Responses to the Problem of the Export of Stolen Vehicles Across Land Borders

Once you have analyzed your local problem and established a baseline for measuring effectiveness, you should consider possible responses to address the problem.

The response strategies discussed below provide a foundation of ideas for addressing your problem of vehicles stolen for export across land borders. These strategies are drawn from a variety of research studies and published accounts by police agencies. Several of the strategies may apply to your community's problem. The responses you adopt should be tailored to local circumstances, and each response should be justified based on reliable analysis. It is often more effective to implement several different responses; therefore, do not limit yourself to only one response.

This guide focuses primarily on what local police can do, but you should recognize that law enforcement responses alone are seldom effective in reducing or solving the problem. Do not limit yourself, therefore, to considering only what local police can do to reduce the problem of vehicles stolen for export across land borders.

General Considerations for an Effective Response Strategy

In some cases, your jurisdiction might try to get other agencies to adapt their established practices in order to perform a stronger role in preventing the export of stolen cars. For example, the U.S. Border Patrol operates 71 traffic checkpoints along the southern border, of which 32 are permanent and 39 are "tactical." The Border Patrol uses these checkpoints to search for illegal drugs and vehicles being used to smuggle illegal immigrants into the United States (GAO 2005). Using these checkpoints to also detect stolen vehicles being taken into Mexico would provide a partial solution to the difficulties of checking cars at border crossings.

In thinking about the respective roles of the different agencies, it is useful to consider the three main stages in the process of exporting stolen cars across land borders: (1) the vehicle is stolen, (2) the vehicle is moved across the border, and (3) the vehicle is sold or otherwise disposed of. Local police can make their greatest impact at the point of the initial theft,[36] border agencies at the point of moving the vehicle across the border, and agencies such as the NICB once the vehicle is in the destination country.

In fact, the local police response to auto theft for export is closely linked to their response to auto theft in general. Responses discussed in two existing Problem-Specific Guides—No. 46, *Thefts of and from Cars on Residential Streets and Driveways*, and No. 10, *Thefts of and from Cars in Parking Facilities* (available at www.popcenter.org), are therefore relevant to this problem as well.

- Responses to thefts of vehicles from streets and driveways discussed in Guide No. 46 include:
  - Security measures that police can take, which include working with local government officials to improve street lighting, encouraging homeowners to use lighting around their homes, removing or trimming vegetation, and altering structures that give cover to thieves or facilitate their escape.†
  - Enforcement responses, which include increasing patrols by adding unmarked patrol units in theft hot spots, using foot and bicycle patrols, and using "bait" cars with GPS tracking technology.
  - Neighborhood newsletters and flyers, which can be used to educate citizens about ways to reduce the risks of theft. These might encourage car owners to secure their vehicles properly when leaving them parked, or to park them in their garages or driveways instead of on the street.
- Responses to thefts of vehicles from parking facilities discussed in Guide No. 10 include:
  - Hiring parking attendants or using dedicated security patrols, improving surveillance at entrances/exits, and improving lighting throughout.
  - Securing the perimeter by installing fencing, entrance barriers, and electronic access to the facility.
  - Arresting and prosecuting persistent offenders.

These guides are worth reading carefully. However, as shown below, some of the responses will assume special significance, or will require modification, to deal effectively with theft of vehicles for export.

† Also see Police Response Guide No. 8, *Improving Street Lighting to Reduce Crime in Residential Areas.*

Specific Responses to Reduce the Problem of the Export of Stolen Vehicles Across Land Borders

Local Police Responses

1. **Paying close attention to high-risk parking facilities.** Thieves looking for cars to steal for export often focus their attention on large parking facilities where cars are left unattended for long periods during the day. They also look for parking lots that are close to major roads leading to the border. In their analysis of targeted lots in Chula Vista, California, Plouffe and Sampson (2004) report that: "The highest-risk lots were generally located within one-tenth of a mile of a freeway. Medium-risk lots averaged less than three-quarters of a mile to a freeway. The lowest-risk lots of the 10 targets averaged over 2 miles to the freeway, emphasizing the importance of time to the border as a selection factor." You should perform a careful analysis of local parking facilities to identify those with high rates of vehicle theft, especially of unrecovered thefts. Problem-Solving Tools Guide No. 6, *Understanding Risky Facilities,* available at www.popcenter.org, can provide useful guidance in comparing parking facilities and in identifying risk factors.[37]

2. **Increasing public awareness.** Police might use the media to distribute information about models that are at a particular risk locally. This could be linked to crime prevention publicity campaigns that encourage vehicle owners to properly secure their parked cars and trucks, even during the heat of the day.† A campaign conducted in New South Wales by the National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA) involved disseminating leaflets with detailed information about high-risk locations and vulnerable models. The campaign was reinforced by extensive media coverage and through NRMA-sponsored discussions with neighborhood watch groups to raise awareness at the local level. The campaign was followed by a drop of about 20 percent in the number of thefts as measured by police data and insurance claims.[38]

† Crime prevention publicity campaigns have uncertain results (see Response Guide No: 5, *Crime Prevention Publicity Campaigns*, available at www.popcenter.org), but ones focused on particular models and very specific precautions might be more effective.

3. **Encouraging citizens to cooperate with police in vehicle checks.** The Citizens Against Auto Theft (CAAT) program, developed and implemented by the police department in McAllen, Texas, involved placing colored decals on windows of cars that were not to be driven during certain hours of the day or into Mexico to serve as an alert to law enforcement officials.[39] An evaluation of the program found that none of the 3,645 CAAT vehicles were stolen during 1990 and 1991. The program also served as a valuable public relations tool and reduced fear of theft among participating citizens.

4. **Encouraging use of vehicle-tracking systems.** LoJack® and OnStar® are examples of devices that owners can install on their vehicles that will identify their locations and assist in their recovery if they are stolen. Recovery rates as high as 95 percent are claimed for vehicles equipped with these devices,[40] and LoJack is claimed to have been effective when used by the Massachusetts State Police.[41] However, the effectiveness of these devices for detecting and recovering stolen vehicles along the U.S.-Mexico border is questionable for a few reasons. First, the systems are costly and car owners are likely to purchase them only if they own an expensive vehicle; few vehicles stolen for export would fall into this category. Second, the systems work only with participating law enforcement agencies and have a limited coverage area in both the United States and Mexico. Last, locating a stolen vehicle through LoJack might be useful only if the vehicle is still in the United States; once a vehicle is in Mexico, there may be little police can do to recover it. The "virtual fence" now used by LoJack might provide a partial solution to this problem. If the "fence" is breached, the system is activated and gives police trackers the opportunity to intercept the vehicle before it reaches the border. Despite this and other improvements that might make the systems more effective, their costs will limit their deployment in the effort to reduce the theft of vehicles for export to Mexico.

5. **Using "bait vehicles" with tracking devices.** More than 100 bait vehicles are being used by Southwest border states to assist in the prevention, disruption, and investigation of cross-border motor vehicle thefts.[42] These bait vehicles, which are equipped with remote control technologies, are placed in vehicle theft hot spots. In 2003, the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority (AATA) began a statewide program with more than 30 bait vehicles. By April 2005, the use of these vehicles had led to 100 arrests in Scottsdale, Arizona (though not necessarily for the theft of vehicles for export).[43]

6. **Working to establish a task force that focuses on the international trade in stolen cars.** Many local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies have formed motor vehicle theft task forces that work together to enhance investigations that would lead to reducing the number of vehicle thefts and increasing the number of arrests of car thieves.[44] In addition to investigating recovered vehicles, these task forces can also monitor chop shops and other facilities that might be involved in vehicle thefts. Examples of such task forces include the following:

   a. The Texas Department of Public Safety created the Border Auto Theft Information Center in 1994, which acted as a link between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement. The staff worked closely with the National Insurance Crime Bureau to identify stolen vehicles. Bilingual staff operated a hotline that was accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to law enforcement on both sides of the border. In addition, the program involved working with U.S. Customs to identify stolen vehicles, training Mexican agencies to identify stolen vehicles, and working with these agencies toward recovering stolen vehicles from Mexico.[45]

   b. In 2001, the El Paso County Auto Theft Prevention Task Force (Texas), a partnership between the El Paso Police Department and the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, sought to reduce the theft of vehicles for export through: (a) inspecting salvage and storage facilities, (b) interdicting vehicle shipments and delivery in both source and transit countries and, (c) disrupting and dismantling vehicle theft organizations through international criminal, civil, and regulatory enforcement.[46]

   c. As a result of expanding its Vehicle Theft Information Systems (VTIS) database, the California Highway Patrol discovered that from 1983 through 1992 approximately 20,000 stolen vehicles were not recovered and that many of these were exported either through seaports or across the Mexican border. To address the problem, the agency developed several programs, including the Foreign Export and Recovery Program, which targets the exportation of stolen vehicles through California's land borders and coastal shipping ports, and the Mexico Liaison Program, which works to recover U.S.-based stolen vehicles from Mexico.[47]

7. **Employing "DUI" checkpoints before the border.** DUI checkpoints have proven effective, not just in apprehending drunk drivers, but also in arresting individuals suspected of committing crimes, the more common of which are possession of stolen property, possession of drugs and drug paraphernalia, and motor vehicle theft. These constitutionally allowable police tactics would offer a partial solution to the difficulties of checking cars at border crossings. They might be especially effective given their random deployment. Vehicles driven by motorists who are unwilling to go through the checkpoint would be followed and stopped by teams expecting this response from car thieves.

Other Agency Responses

8. **Repatriating vehicles by treaty.** The United States has developed bilateral agreements for recovering and repatriating stolen vehicles with many Latin American countries.[48] However, the recovery process is long and cumbersome. The United States must first establish that a particular vehicle is being held by Mexican law enforcement authorities, and then the U.S. Consulate must submit a petition and vehicle documents to the Mexican federal court for review. Recovering the stolen vehicle is not possible until several months after these steps are taken.[49] Most importantly, current treaties do not require the return of the stolen vehicle if local courts award it to a third party in the country of recovery.[50] The NICB's repatriation services, which involve locating, identifying, and returning stolen vehicles found in Mexico, have also been widely used by vehicle financing companies. The program involves gathering information about these vehicles and cross-referencing it against the FBI's vehicle theft database. When a match is made, the financing company is notified, giving them the opportunity to have their vehicles returned to the United States. Although "repatriating" is a necessary tool in the fight against cross-border vehicle theft, there is a limited amount a local police agency can do to employ this technique.

9. **Employing automatic license plate readers (LPRs) at border crossings.** License plate readers can capture an image of the front and rear license plate and provide real-time vehicle information to the Customs and Border Protection network.[51] As long as the vehicle has been reported stolen, these readers make it theoretically possible for Customs and Border Protection to identify stolen vehicles. Unfortunately, reports of using the readers, at least in California, have not been encouraging. They are sometimes out of service and are easily foiled (for example, when plastic covers the plate or if the vehicle passes too quickly into Mexico).[52] In addition, customs officials are often forced to ignore the alarms from these readers due to the high volume of

vehicles crossing the border.[53] This does not mean LPRs will never be useful, as they are constantly being developed and upgraded. For example, mobile LPRs, which are now available, could be deployed randomly at busy crossings to keep offenders guessing about where the LPRs are located. They might also be more effective if they are used not at the border but on roads leading to the border by staff that could focus solely on their alerts.

Responses with Limited Effectiveness

10. **Intensively monitoring all border crossings.** At first sight, this would seem to be a vital preventive measure. However, the vast majority of vehicles crossing the border are not stolen and increasing border checks could be costly in terms of staff time, and might result in major delays and traffic jams. These delays could be seen as working against the provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In any case, there is no clear evidence that such increased checking would deter vehicle thefts. An experimental program implemented at the two international bridges in Brownsville, Texas, involved deploying patrol teams on the bridges at anticipated peak times. Vehicle theft arrest rates did not improve and local vehicle theft rates did not decrease.[54] In addition, there is always the danger of displacing the export of stolen vehicles to adjacent border sites.

Appendix A: Summary of Responses to the Problem of the Export of Stolen Vehicles Across Land Borders

The table summarizes the responses to the problem of auto theft for export, the mechanism by which these responses are intended to work, the conditions under which they ought to work, and some factors you should consider before implementing the suggested response. It is critical that you tailor responses to local circumstances, and that you can justify each response based on reliable analysis. As noted earlier, an effective strategy might involve implementing several different responses, and you are therefore encouraged to take this into consideration. Also, keep in mind that law enforcement responses alone are seldom effective in reducing or solving the problem.

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How it Works	Works Best if…	Considerations
Local Police Responses					
1	27	Paying close attention to high-risk parking facilities	Directs police attention to the lots that require more patrolling and that might be made more secure	…the analysis is conducted regularly and the highest-risk facilities are given priority; risk assessments account for the lot's distance to a freeway	Police must work closely with the facilities' owners and managers to ensure needed security improvements are made
2	27	Increasing public awareness	Citizens are made aware of the problem and their potential vulnerability	…public information campaigns focus on specific high-risk models and provide detailed advice about preventing theft	Publicity campaigns are often more valuable as a way of reassuring the community than of preventing crime
3	28	Encouraging citizens to cooperate with police in vehicle checks	Involves the community in efforts to reduce vehicle theft	…there is extensive community participation and initial successes are heavily publicized in the local area	The program can serve as a valuable public relations tool and can reduce fear of theft among participating citizens

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How it Works	Works Best if…	Considerations
4	28	Encouraging use of vehicle-tracking systems	The technology transmits real-time information to the police about the vehicle's location; this assists in recovery and serves as a deterrent to thieves	…the vehicle hasn't left the country; the technology works over a wide area and is used by many law enforcement agencies	The systems are not affordable for many citizens. The technology's effectiveness is reduced once the vehicle crosses the international border
5	28	Using "bait vehicles" with tracking devices	Bait vehicles with remote control technologies are planted in high-theft areas and tracked once stolen	…it results in the arrest of the thieves; potential thieves are made aware of the risk of choosing a bait car and are thus deterred from theft	The vehicles used might need to be changed regularly to avoid predictability
6	29	Working to establish a task force that focuses on the international trade in stolen cars	Agencies at the local, state, and federal levels cooperate to enhance investigations leading to arrests for theft of vehicles for export	…strong partnerships are forged not just between U.S. law enforcement agencies, but also with those in Mexico	Law enforcement priorities across agencies can be different; this might serve as a hindrance if common priorities are not established
7	30	Employing "DUI" check points before the border	DUI checkpoints have proven effective in arresting individuals for a variety of crimes, including motor vehicle theft. Vehicles failing to stop would be pursued	…the checkpoints are deployed at random times and at different points on roads leading to the border	These constitutionally allowable police tactics would offer a partial solution to the difficulties of checking cars at the border crossings

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How it Works	Works Best if…	Considerations
Other Agency Responses					
8	30	Repatriating vehicles by treaty	A formal stolen vehicle recovery method is used	…there is close cooperation among the U.S. Consulate, the FBI, and the NICB. The time of recovery and repatriation does not extend over several months	The delays in repatriation have sometimes resulted in law enforcement agencies on both sides of the border making use of informal agreements to recover stolen vehicles
9	30	Employing automatic license plate readers (LPRs) at border crossings	The readers provide real-time vehicle information to the Customs and Border Protection network, identifying stolen vehicles by cross-referencing it against a stolen vehicles database	…mobile readers are deployed in a random fashion. LPRs are deployed not just at the border but also on roads leading to the border	License-plate readers are sometimes inaccurate; many cars are driven across the border before their theft is reported
Responses with Limited Effectiveness					
10	31	Intensively monitoring all border crossings	Checking a high volume of vehicles at border crossings and on the international bridges at peak times	…this does not cause any significant border crossing delays and does not require extensive police or other resources	If it works at the specific border crossing, examine the possible displacement to nearby border crossings and bridges

Appendix B: Calculating Location Quotients for Crime

The fact that many vehicles are stolen in your area does not necessarily mean you have a theft for export problem; it could simply reflect a generally high rate of crime in your area. One method to better understand whether a theft for export problem exists is to calculate a location quotient for crime (LQC). Crime location quotients allow an analyst to compare the proportion of a particular crime with overall crimes in your jurisdiction and in a larger comparison jurisdiction. If analyzing vehicle theft within a municipality or county, comparisons to state or national averages are advised. By replacing the traditional population-based denominator with overall crimes as the denominator, the LQC determines whether an area has greater or fewer vehicle thefts than one would expect based on overall crime levels. One analysis applied LQCs to national Uniform Crime Reports data to demonstrate that areas in close proximity to Mexico and large ports have substantially higher vehicle thefts than predicted through overall crime.[55] Although the location quotient for crime cannot reveal the precise number of vehicles stolen for export, it is a useful tool to apply during the stage in which the analyst is scanning for problems.

If data allow for a distinction to be made between recovered and unrecovered vehicle theft, it is advantageous to use unrecovered vehicle thefts as the numerator and overall crime as the denominator. Therefore, jurisdictions that commonly experience thefts for joyriding or temporary transportation will not have high LQCs; only professional vehicle thefts will then be compared to overall crime.

The map in Figure 2 on page 38 illustrates the results of one LQC analysis. It shows that counties bordering Mexico and those that have major highways leading to a busy border crossing have a high crime location quotient value, indicative of a possible theft for export problem in those counties.

To calculate a Location Quotient for Crime, use the following formula:

LQC= (x/y)/(X/Y)

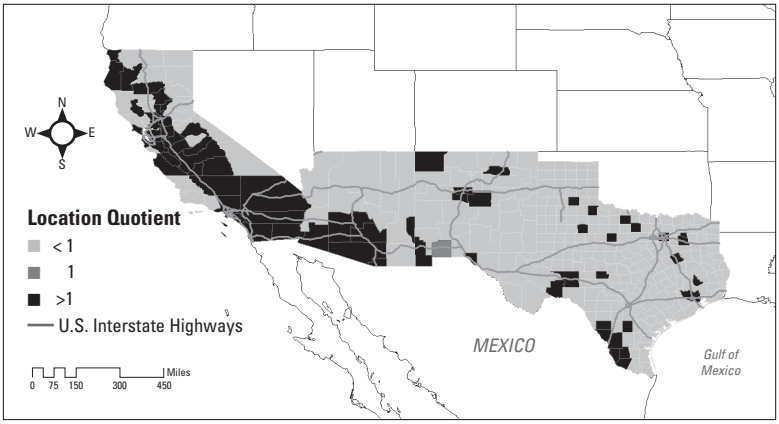
x = the total number of motor vehicle thefts within your jurisdiction (e.g., municipality or county)

y = the total number of all index crimes within your jurisdiction

X = the total number of motor vehicle thefts within your larger comparison area

Y = the total number of all index crimes within your larger comparison area

Figure 2. Location Quotient of Unrecovered Motor Vehicle Thefts for Counties in U.S. Border States, 2007



Source: Reprinted with permission from Block et al. (2011).

The values obtained from the calculations of the LQC are interpreted as follows:

1.00 – your jurisdiction has an average representation of vehicle theft (or unrecovered vehicle thefts) compared with all other crimes

> 1.00 – there is an overrepresentation of vehicle theft

< 1.00 – there is an underrepresentation of vehicle theft

Table 1 illustrates a hypothetical example of how LQCs can improve an analyst's understanding of crime by comparing location quotients to crime rates. When an analyst considers only vehicle theft rates, City B appears to have the largest vehicle theft problem. However, the crime location quotient takes overall crime into account to demonstrate that City C actually has the largest vehicle theft problem relative to its overall crime situation. If your jurisdiction has a high LQC value for vehicle thefts, further steps should be taken to differentiate whether this is likely due to theft for export or other forms of motor vehicle theft.

Table 1. Comparison of Location Quotients for Crime (LQCs) to Motor Vehicle Theft

	MVTs	Population	MVT Rate	Overall Crimes	LQC Value
City A	250	50,000	5.0	2,500	1.0
City B	400	40,000	10.0	8,000	0.5
City C	250	100,000	2.5	1,250	2.0
State Totals	10,000	20,000,000	5.0	100,000	—

Endotes

1. U.S. Census Bureau (2011).
2. Aldridge (2007).
3. Block et al. (2011).
4. Resendiz (1998).
5. Garcia and Garcia (2006).
6. Miller (1987).
7. Resendiz and Neal (2000).
8. Resendiz (1998).
9. Clarke and Brown (2003).
10. Plouffe and Sampson (2004).
11. Gant and Grabosky (2001).
12. Miller (1987); Field, Clarke, and Harris (1991).
13. Plouffe and Sampson (2004).
14. Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (2004).
15. Cherbonneau and Wright (2009).
16. Brown (2004).
17. Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (2004); Plouffe and Sampson (2004); Miller (1987); Ethridge and Sorensen (1993).
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19. Miller (1987).
20. Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (2004).
21. U.S. Department of Transportation (2009).
22. Villarreal (2010).
23. Plouffe and Sampson (2004).
24. Clarke and Harris (1992); Plouffe and Sampson (2004); Cherbonneau and Wright 2009); Shane (2010).

25. Small and Taylor (2005).
26. Clarke and Brown (2003).
27. Gerber and Killias (2003).
28. Gerber and Killias (2003).
29. Miller (1987).
30. Miller (1987).
31. Gerber and Killias (2003).
32. Resendiz (1998).
33. Resendiz (2006).
34. Gerber and Killias (2003).
35. Gerber and Killias (2003).
36. Plouffe and Sampson (2004).
37. Clarke and Eck (2007).
38. Clarke and Harris (1992).
39. Ethridge and Sorensen (1993).
40. Clarke and Harris (1992).
41. Ethridge and Sorensen (1993).
42. Aldridge (2007).
43. Aldridge (2007).
44. Ethridge and Sorensen (1993).
45. Texas Department of Public Safety (2002); Adger (2007).
46. El Paso County Auto Theft Prevention Task Force (2001).
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51. Williams (2008).
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53. Wright (2001).
54. Miller (1987).
55. Block et al. (2011).

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About the Authors

Ronald V. Clarke

Ronald V. Clarke is a University Professor at the School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University. He previously headed the British government's criminological research department, where he had a significant role in developing situational crime prevention and the British Crime Survey. Clarke is the founding editor of Crime Prevention Studies, and his publications include Designing Out Crime (HMSO 1980, with Pat Mayhew), The Reasoning Criminal (Springer-Verlag 1986, with Derek Cornish), Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies (Criminal Justice Press 1997), Superhighway Robbery (Willan Publishing 2003, with Graeme Newman), Crime Analysis for Problem Solvers (U.S. Dept. of Justice 2005, with John Eck), and Outsmarting the Terrorists (Praeger 2006, with Graeme Newman). He has chaired the selection committee for the annual Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing. Clarke holds a doctorate in psychology from the University of London.

Gohar Petrossian

Gohar Petrossian is a part-time lecturer at Rutgers University, where she teaches criminology, criminal justice research methods, crime analysis, social research, and statistics. Her research interests include crime prevention, spatial and temporal patterns of crime, and quantitative research methods. She is a doctoral candidate at the School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University-Newark, and holds a master's in criminal law and procedures from John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

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