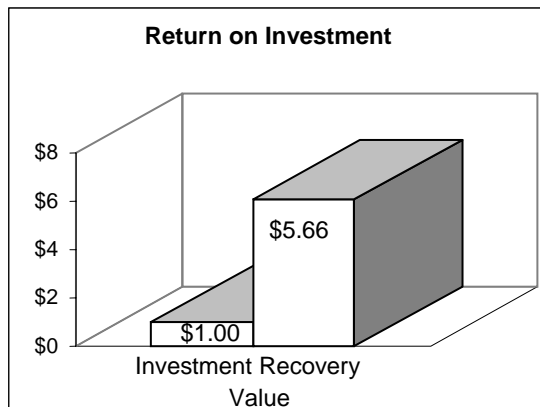


TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

- “Thieves Should Be Quiet”** The Southwest Michigan SCAR Team assisted a sheriff deputy who responded to a noise complaint because a stolen vehicle was in the driveway. Officers found three other stolen vehicles on the property but could not make contact with anyone in the house. With a quick search warrant, officers entered the house and found six people in the basement who confessed to the thefts and a B & E of a gas station where they had obtained their beer.
- “Paper Trails”** The Washtenaw Area Auto Theft Team investigated an elaborate scheme that was used to steal at least 24 vehicles. The theft ring would take a Secretary of State form that is used for impounded vehicles and forge valid vehicle identification numbers (VIN’s) for the cars they wanted. Armed with the appropriate paperwork, the ring members easily got duplicate keys made at area dealerships and then simply drove the cars away from apartment complexes. The investigation continues in four counties to identify all the victims: original owner, insurance company, dealership, and the new owners.
- “Fun Day Ruined”** The Downriver Auto Theft Team led the joint FBI/MSP investigation of the Highwaymen Motorcycle Club’s theft of vehicles. In a display of cooperation that is common to auto theft, the Western Wayne Auto Theft Team, the Monroe Auto Theft Team, and the Attorney General’s Office all contributed to this effort. On one occasion, search warrants were executed in four metro-Detroit locations, and the target was arrested along with the recovery of seven vehicles. On another occasion, a high-ranking member of the Club was arrested in Monroe County for operating a chop shop. A third event involved a federal search warrant on their Detroit clubhouse when 200 members were present for a family fun day. Officers seized 17 stolen motorcycles on that day, and club members complained to the media that their fun day had been ruined.
- “Key Ring”** The Macomb County Auto Theft Squad (MATS) investigated a major theft ring that was contacting vehicle owners advertised in the Trading Times. The ring got the owner’s name, address, and vehicle identification number. Then they provided false identification for the real owner and false ownership papers for the vehicle to a dealership parts department and obtained the keys to steal the vehicle. The MATS investigators have identified 50 GM vehicles stolen by this group, and three subjects have been arrested. Major portions of the case have been investigated by other ATPA grantees in the Wayne County area. A subject arrested in Inkster was connected to a dealership where he had keys made for 25 cars that were later stolen.
- “Neighborhood Improvement”** The Detroit Auto Theft Team investigated an eastside gang (Jefferson Boys) who were stealing vehicles and shooting at anyone who confronted them. On midnight surveillance, officers caught two armed gang members stealing two vehicles and arrested them after a short foot race. Officers recovered three other vehicles at the scene.

Return on Investment

During 2007, ATPA grantees achieved the following: 4,522 recovery incidents; 2,880 arrests; and nearly 2,400 vehicles etched. The law enforcement grantees recovered \$5.66 for every \$1 the ATPA invested.



TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS, Continued

- “Innovative Family”** The Attorney General/National Insurance Crime Bureau grant investigated a metro-Detroit area dealership and issued arrest warrants for ten individuals who were part of an auto insurance fraud ring linked to organized crime. The subjects used twelve auto repair shops in the Detroit area to enhance collision damages and defraud various insurance companies of millions of dollars. One man was charged with 40 felonies, his brother was charged with 34 felonies, and his mother was charged with 17 felonies.
- “Blame Santa!”** The Saginaw Auto Theft Team arrested an 11-year-old boy (on probation for previous auto thefts) and asked him why he steals cars. The young man responded: “I wanted the Grand Theft Auto video game for Christmas and didn’t get it. If I had that game, I would play it all day and never leave home or steal real cars”. The boy is spending this Christmas in the county juvenile center.
- “You Can Run...But You Cannot Hide”** The Oakland Auto Theft Team, coordinating with many other agencies, arrested two subjects who had gone on a countywide crime spree stealing 5 vehicles and breaking into 23. The pair beat up a man, robbed him of \$900 and his car keys at knifepoint, and then returned to steal his vehicle. A gas station clerk called in a tip about two suspicious customers, and the chase was on. The subjects were finally caught on the roof of a two-story house. Officers gave credit to great teamwork between citizens and many agencies for being able to obtain a 15 to 40 years prison sentence for these thieves.
- “Long Arm of the Law”** The Grand Rapids Team worked a case which involved an EBay purchase of a Volvo with a counterfeit \$21,5000 check. Officers tracked the vehicle to Newark, New Jersey, then to Germany, and then to Finland where it was impounded at the docks. A Russian man showed up to drive it to Russia but found it had been impounded. A woman then contacted Finnish police to complain that she had paid \$18,000 cash for the vehicle. The Auto Theft Team is working with Unitrin in making arrangements to return the vehicle to the United States.
- “Thief Leaves His Picture”** The Lansing Unit investigated two separate incidents of vehicles being stolen from a neighborhood. Both of the vehicles were later recovered within one block of the thefts. The thief made a third visit to the neighborhood by sneaking into the house to steal the keys and stabbing the homeowner who surprised him. During the assault the thief dropped his cell phone, and officers were able to obtain the thief’s name, address, and picture from the phone!
- “Ho Hum—Just Another Year”** The Western Wayne Auto Theft Unit had several notable investigations. They used the Automated Fingerprint Identification System to arrest three subjects who had stolen 50 vehicles in a month, they arrested two subjects who had stolen 14 vehicles from Ford’s storage lot in Dearborn, they closed down a chop shop and recovered ten Ford pickups, they arrested a man who failed to pay the rent on his self-storage unit (officers found the truck he had reported stolen in 2005 inside the storage unit), and they assisted the Monroe Auto Theft Squad in solving the key ring case.
- “Smile!”** The Southwest Detroit Business Association, an ATPA non-profit grantee, reported that their video surveillance camera videotaped two young males stealing two vehicles on consecutive days at the same location. The video was able to pick up a description of the two which was given to an ATPA-funded Detroit Police officer. This video will be used as evidence in the case.

The following table displays the performance of ATPA law enforcement auto theft consortiums.

YEAR	ARRESTS	\$ VALUE RECOVERED
1989-2002	34,165	342,027,230
2003	2,677	32,919,145
2004	2,719	33,819,435
2005	2,778	37,420,835
2006	2,957	49,220,230
2007	2,880	44,895,960
TOTALS	48,176	\$540,302,835

TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS, Continued

- **“Dad is a Thief and a Cross Dresser!”** The Dearborn Auto Theft Unit received information from Ohio State Police about a person who had stolen two trucks and led officers on high speed chases. In his last escape, the subject crashed the truck and fled on foot—leaving his two injured children (ages 2 and 4) behind. Dearborn officers had arrested this subject before on stolen car charges and were able to locate him. The subject was still driving a truck stolen in Ohio, but he was dressed as a woman!
- **“A Family Affair”** The Southfield Auto Theft Team investigated a case where the father, son, and daughter reported being awakened by the sound of barking dogs and observed the father’s 2005 Dodge Ram pickup being stolen out of the driveway. All three made statements to the fact that they had seen the car in the driveway that evening and that the son was the last to drive it. Oops! A quick LEIN check proved that the vehicle had been in a police impound lot for the past two weeks. All three were charged with Filing a False Police Report. The family that reports together, goes to court together!
- **“Membership Services?”** The Genesee County Auto Theft Unit investigated the retag of a 2003 GMC Yukon stolen from Detroit in 2004. The subject had been driving it around for the past three years registered as a Chevrolet Tahoe. AAA Michigan was happy to have the vehicle returned until officers told them the subject was a member. Officers found AAA trip tickets he had used to locate his vacation destinations while driving their vehicle.
- **“Don’t Forget Your Backpack”** The Hamtramck Auto Theft Team investigated a carjacking where a woman was shot three times and thrown out of the vehicle by the subject before he drove away in her truck. Officers found the unoccupied vehicle crashed into a tree in Detroit, and they began smiling when they discovered the suspect had left his backpack full of personal items in the truck. Within hours, officers knew the identity of the suspect. Media coverage and pressure from many surrounding police agencies caused the subject to turn himself in.

Vehicle Theft Rates

From 1986 to 2006, both Michigan’s population and registered vehicle fleet have grown 10% and 36% respectively. Despite these factors, Michigan’s theft rate per 100,000 population and per 100,000 registered vehicles has fallen dramatically.

THEFT RATE	1986	2006	% CHANGE
Population	787.5	492.4	-37.5
Vehicles	999.5	525.0	-47.5

- **“Call 911!”** The Muskegon Heights Auto Theft Team investigated a vehicle arson and solved the case by asking the emergency dispatch center if they had received any calls from the wooded area where the burned vehicle was found. 911 operators remembered a cell phone call from two girls who needed directions to locate their boyfriends in the wooded area. Officers were able to get the two guys to admit they had burned the vehicle and arranged for a ride home.
- **“Power of the Press”** An Ottawa County Auto Theft investigator was reviewing a rash of auto thefts and auto B & E’s over the last 45 days in the Hudsonville area, so they put out a press release advising vehicle owners to lock their vehicles and not leave their keys in the vehicle. The ten stolen vehicles worth \$120,000 had been recovered, but there were no real leads. Two people responded to the press release with information about two guys they had met at a party who were bragging about stealing so much stuff from unlocked vehicles that they couldn’t carry it, so they began stealing “nice” cars to transport their pile of loot. The auto theft officer quickly found an address for the two suspects. When he interviewed them, they admitted to stealing the ten vehicles. The two informants are sharing a \$10,000 reward from H.E.A.T.