

A Profile of the Illinois State Police's Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse



Prepared for

the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council

**Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Larry G. Trent, Chairman**

April, 2004



**ILLINOIS MOTOR VEHICLE
THEFT PREVENTION COUNCIL**

Introduction

Since 1992, the Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse (MVTIC) has provided analytical support and intelligence regarding motor vehicle theft to Council-funded task forces and other criminal justice organizations in Illinois and nationwide. The Clearinghouse is a support service unit located in Springfield, within the Illinois State Police, Special Operations Bureau, Special Programs Unit. The unit consists of two criminal intelligence analysts, one criminal intelligence specialist, and one support staff member. A captain assigned by the Illinois State Police directs the unit.

Program Summary

The MVT Clearinghouse responds to numerous requests ranging from geographic analysis of vehicle theft trends to in-depth statistical analysis and tactical case analysis. The unit has access to a multitude of intelligence resources that are utilized for inquiries regarding vehicles, vehicle thefts, and criminal offenders through statewide and national databases (Table 1).

Table 1
Databases Utilized by the MVTIC

Law Enforcement Agencies Data System (LEADS) Motor Vehicle File - Theft and recovery of motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts data from 1989 to present.
STAGIS (Illinois State Police Gang File) – Known gang members; search by name, alias, nickname; track movement by add-on records.
Offender Tracking System (Illinois Department of Corrections) – Search by name or alias; release dates, visitors, parolee information, identifiers, etc.
Experian (Person Locator) – Social Security Number used to identify addresses used when applying for credit; credit header information only.
VITAL (Violent Offender Information Tracking and Linking) – Links information on suspects, vehicles, weapons, and businesses involved in criminal activity. Includes photos of subjects, vehicles, tattoos, and gang signs and symbols.
FinCEN (Financial Crimes Enforcement Network)/Gateway – Financial information on large cash transactions by subjects and businesses reported on Currency Transaction Reports and Suspicious Activity Reports.
Illinois Secretary of State Records – Vehicle titles and registrations, title histories, corporation information, driver’s license photos, and salvage information.
Westlaw – Public records database that includes: person and business finder, professional licenses, military data, death claims by Social Security Number, property ownership, civil suits, etc. Before 2003, the MVTIC used LEXIS/NEXIS for public records.
National Insurance Crime Bureau – Vehicle claim information, export records, salvage records, manufacturer information, Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) verification and rebuilding.
ISO Claim Search – Vehicle claim information.
FOID (Firearms Owner Identification) – Firearm permits and firearm transfers.
Cook County Circuit Clerk – Case dispositions for cases in Cook County.
Public Aid/Employment – subjects wanted on warrant, missing persons, sex offenders, or public aid/ Medicaid fraud.
Carfax – VIN verification, title and registration activity, rental/lease usage, and odometer readings from emissions inspections stations, auto auctions, and other related sources.

The use of these databases allows MVT Clearinghouse staff to produce a variety of reports upon request, including statistical analyses of vehicle theft trends for specific jurisdictions, locations of vehicle theft 'hot spots' and other geographic patterns, vehicle title histories, link analysis, time series analyses, telephone toll analysis, flow charts, and subject profiles of vehicle theft offenders. In March of 2001, the Clearinghouse published the booklet, "Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse: An Overview of Services and Products." The report provided specific examples of products and services provided to the Council-funded task forces in Illinois and other law enforcement agencies upon request. This booklet was provided to all eight-hour and 36-hour motor vehicle theft class attendees. In addition, the Clearinghouse also provided instruction during the 36-hour Advanced Investigator's motor vehicle theft training.

On an ongoing basis, monthly reports are generated for task force areas detailing all thefts and recoveries in a task force area. This enables the task force to recognize a theft trend while it is occurring and proactively address the problem. Each task force also receives a quarterly report for their specified geographic area analyzing theft and recovery trends during the quarter. An annual report is also prepared for each task force area. These reports are utilized by participating agencies in each area.

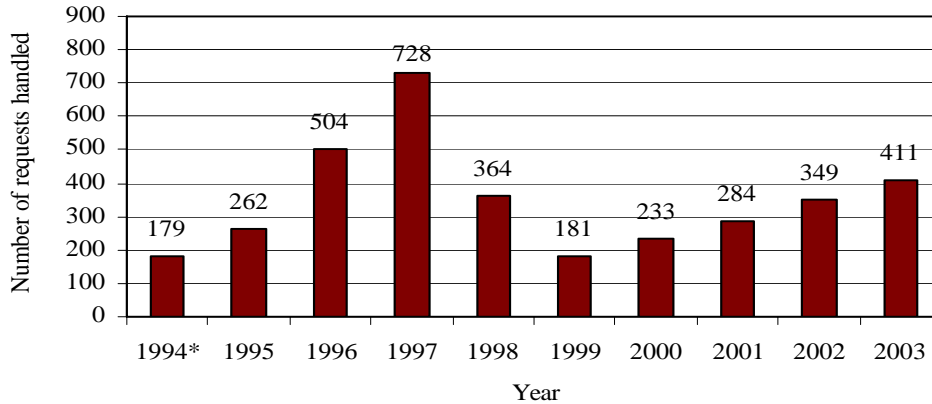
Additionally, the MVT Clearinghouse annually publishes the "Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Statewide Assessment," which includes theft and recovery trends, theft rates by county, and geographic analysis of the motor vehicle theft problem during the previous year. The report is distributed to the Council-funded task forces, the MV Council, the National Insurance Crime Bureau, and the Illinois State Police Training Academy.

Finally, the MVT Clearinghouse develops the "Motor Vehicle Theft Task Force Quarterly Activity Summary," which provides information on the performance of Council-funded task forces. The publication is distributed to the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council and Grant Review Committee.

Program activity

Through December 2003, the Clearinghouse responded to 3,495 information requests. Figure 1 shows the number of requests handled by the unit for each program year. There was significant decrease in request volume between 1997 and 1998. During 1997, the Clearinghouse provided analysis for several tactical cases, which produced several intelligence inquiries. Numerous Illinois State Police requests were attributed to statistical assessments prepared for the newly formed ISP regions due to a reorganization effort. Another factor for the decrease in 1998 may be the closing of the Lake County Auto Theft Task Force. The number of requests may have dropped before the task force's closing date, causing a decline in requests.

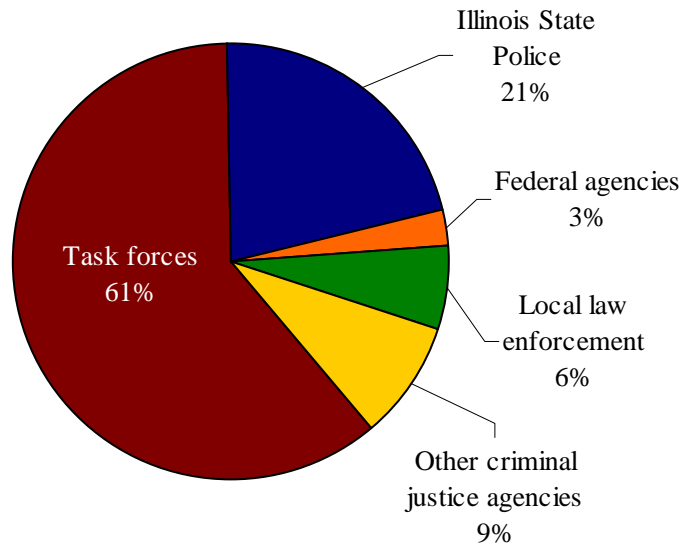
Figure 1
Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse
requests by year
1994-2003



*Includes requests from July 1992 through December 1994.
 Source: MVT Intelligence Clearinghouse Performance Reports

Information requests come to the MVT Clearinghouse from a variety of sources, including Council-funded vehicle theft task forces, Illinois State Police, federal agencies, local law enforcement agencies, and other criminal justice organizations. Figure 2 shows the percentage of requests handled for each type of requester.

Figure 2
Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse
sources of requests
1994*-2003



*Includes requests from July 1992 through December 1994.
 Source: MVT Intelligence Clearinghouse Monthly Performance Reports.

From January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003, the Clearinghouse received 411 requests for assistance. The Council-funded task forces submitted 300 requests, the Illinois State Police submitted 43 requests, and the remaining 68 requests were from federal agencies, local law enforcement, or other criminal justice-related agencies. Over the past year, the MVT Clearinghouse staff has also provided several training presentations explaining their services to law enforcement agencies and Council-funded task forces during the 36-hour motor vehicle theft training held throughout the state.

Funding summary

The Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act, which took effect on January 1, 1991, created the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council. The Council has the statutory responsibility to prevent, combat, and reduce motor vehicle theft in Illinois.¹

The act established the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund, a special trust fund in the State Treasury, from which the Council makes grants to eligible applicants for programs that address the problem of motor vehicle theft in Illinois. The act requires all insurance companies licensed to write private passenger motor vehicle physical damage coverage in Illinois to pay annually into this trust fund an amount equal to \$1 for each earned car year of exposure for physical damage insurance coverage during the previous calendar year. About \$6 million is collected each year.

Table 2
Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse
funding by program year
1992-2003

Year	Grant Amount	Expenditures
1993*	\$191,714	\$188,315
1994**	\$228,676	\$226,463
1995	\$170,199	\$150,402
1996	\$226,720	\$154,839
1997	\$235,440	\$185,427
1998	\$240,983	\$223,928
1999	\$256,592	\$234,674
2000	\$257,162	\$243,854
2001	\$255,546	\$245,751
2002	\$264,978	\$264,154
2003	\$279,330	\$199,437
TOTAL	\$2,607,340	\$2,317,244

*July 1992 to August 1993.

**September 1993 to December 1994.

¹ Chapter 20 Illinois Compiled Statutes 4005/2.

The Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse is funded from the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund. Table 2 lists the amount granted to and expended by the Clearinghouse for each program year. Amounts are for calendar years except where indicated.

Figure 3 summarizes the Clearinghouse's expenditures from 1992 through December 2003. Expenditures are divided into six categories:

Personnel – includes salaries, social security, and fringe benefits for program staff.

Equipment – includes computers, communication devices, and other equipment with a cost greater than \$50.

Commodities – includes consumable supplies (such as office supplies) and equipment costing less than \$50.

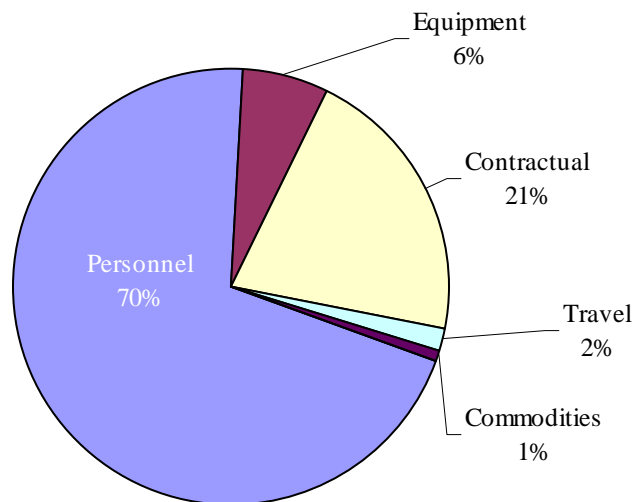
Travel – includes lodging, food, and transportation expenses incurred by program staff while conducting official program-related business.

Contractual – includes facility costs, utilities, telephone service, equipment rentals, and wages for hourly personnel.

Other – includes any costs not covered by the above categories.

Figure 3

**Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse
percentage of expenditures by category
1992-2003**



Conclusion

The Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse provides intelligence information and statistical analyses to Council-funded task forces and criminal justice-related agencies throughout Illinois and nationwide. Since the program began in July 1992, through December 31, 2003, the unit has responded to 3,495 information requests, an average of 318 requests per year. Out of the 3,495 requests received by the MVT Clearinghouse, Council-funded task forces submitted 2,130 requests. The MVT Clearinghouse publishes reports on motor vehicle theft trends in Illinois for the Council, Council-funded task forces, and training grantees, as well. The MVT Clearinghouse also provides critical information to support the vehicle theft task forces in vehicle theft investigations.



Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Telephone: 312-793-8550
TDD: 312-793-4170
Fax: 312-793-8422
www.icjia.state.il.us



Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Sheldon Sorosky, Chairman
Lori G. Levin, Executive Director