# NATIONAL INITIATIVES TO PREVENT AND COMBAT VEHICLE CRIME

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## ABSTRACT

South Africa experiences one of the highest motor vehicle theft and hijacking rates in the world. This negatively impacts on the safety and security of our citizens and the economy. Vehicle crime is one of the government's national priority crimes. Vehicle crime has been reduced owing to a long-standing partnership between the business sector and government.

The national motor vehicle crime prevention and combating strategy is holistic in scope- its primary aim is to reduce the demand for stolen and hijacked vehicles, based on the belief that this market fuels vehicle crime.

The core strategic imperatives necessary for a sustainable reduction in vehicle crime have been based on the known market and other enabling drivers of vehicle crime. Each of these known markets and other enabling drivers have well constructed and resourced preventative and combating approaches.

All preventative and combating approaches are also underpinned by a number of crosscutting initiatives, including ongoing and enhanced law enforcement, investigation and prosecution, improved information sharing and communications between stakeholders and ensuring the secure identity of motor vehicles.

This paper gives an overview of the national initiatives to prevent and combat vehicle crime as implemented by Business Against Crime South Africa and its partners.

The paper concludes that further success in this project necessitates the buy-in and commitment of all key stakeholders at the highest level, and the ongoing commitment over the short to medium term in all of the above-mentioned initiatives.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa experiences one of the highest motor vehicle theft and hijacking rates in the world. This negatively impacts on the safety and security of our citizens and the economy. Vehicle crime is one of the government's national priority crimes. Vehicle crime has been reduced owing to a long-standing partnership between the business sector and government.

The national motor vehicle crime prevention and combating strategy is holistic in scope- its primary aim is to reduce the demand for stolen and hijacked vehicles, based on the belief that this market fuels vehicle crime (please see Figure 1). No figures are available from which accurate statistics can be determined, but based on experience of the SAPS it is estimated that criminals use the following methods in the relative proportions shown below to disguise the ownership and identity of a vehicle:

- the re-registration of these stolen/hijacked vehicles (accounting for the disposal of approximately 50% of stolen and hijacked vehicles);
- their illegal export (approximately 30%); and;
- the chopping of these vehicles for subsequent sale into the second-hand parts market (accounting for approximately 20%).
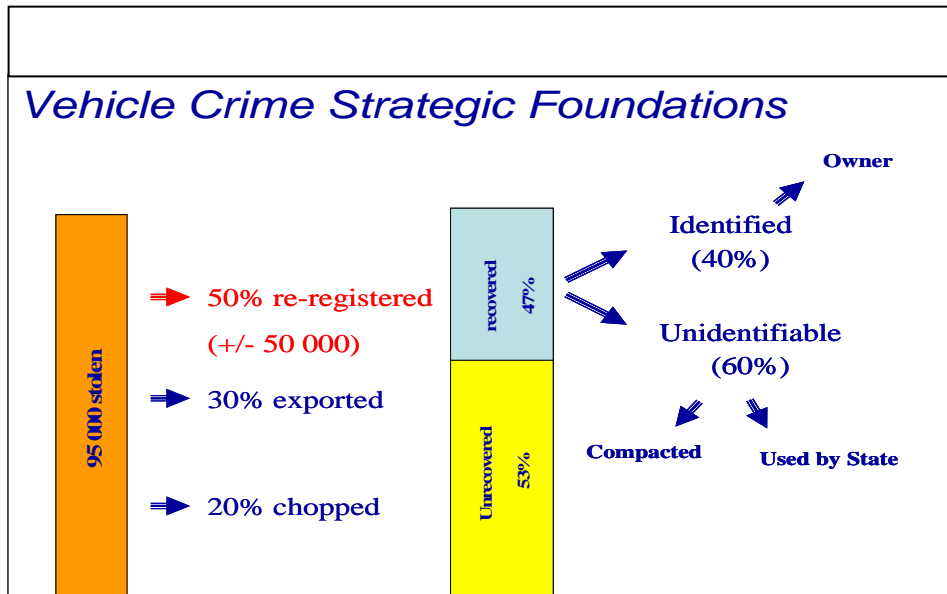


**Figure 1: Markets for stolen and hijacked vehicles**

The core strategic imperatives necessary for a sustainable reduction in vehicle crime have been based on the known market and other enabling drivers of vehicle crime. Each of these known markets and other enabling drivers scenarios has well constructed and resourced preventative and combating approaches.

The three vehicle crime focus areas of re-registration, export and second hand parts are also underpinned by a number of crosscutting initiatives, including ongoing and enhanced law enforcement, investigation and prosecution, improved information sharing and communications between stakeholders and ensuring the secure identity of motor vehicles. (Please see Figure 2 for the strategic framework for the vehicle crime project).
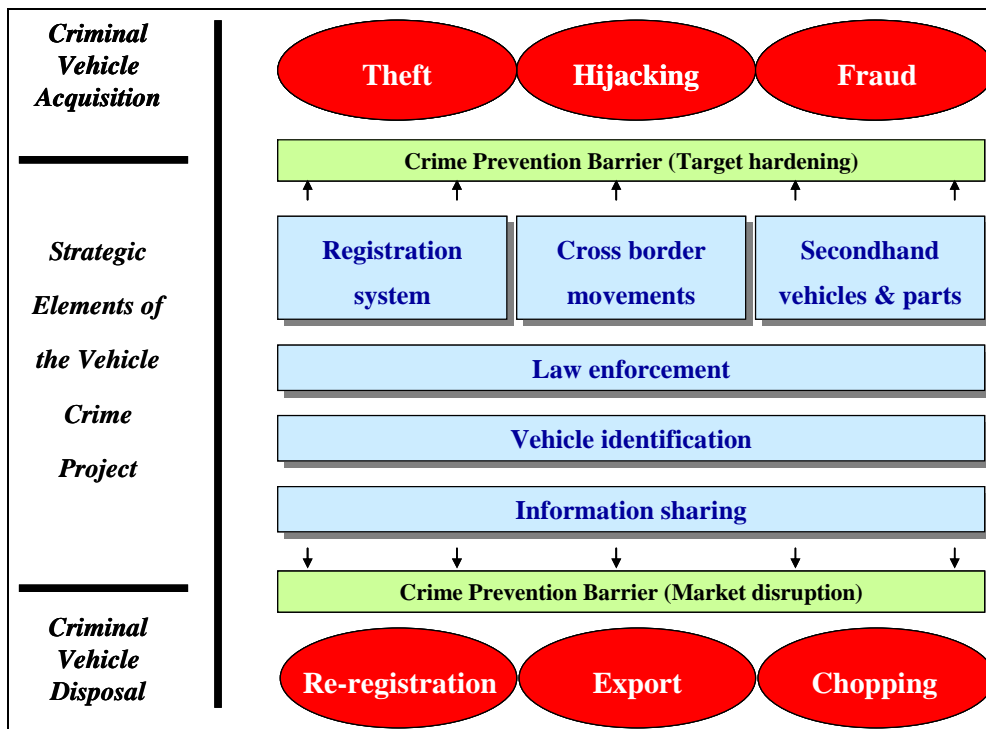
**Figure 2: Strategic framework for the Vehicle Crime Project**

## 2. REDUCING THE ILLEGAL RE-REGISTRATION OF STOLEN AND HIJACKED MOTOR VEHICLES (50% OF THE PROBLEM)

The integrity of the various components of the motor vehicle management system (comprising, mainly of motor vehicle registration and licensing, motor vehicle roadworthiness testing and police clearance) are integral to the prevention of vehicle crime and the negative impact it has on the country's economy.

Poor service delivery and fraud and corruption in the motor vehicle management system, is costing the country tens of billions of Rand annually. The illegal re-registration of stolen or hijacked vehicles is known to be the largest single mechanism through which the disposal of these vehicles is facilitated.

The illegal re-registration of stolen and hijacked vehicles and the illegal issuing of roadworthy certificates are facilitated by corrupt practices, inadequate controls and poorly defined business processes in the following functional areas:

- Vehicle Registration and Licensing;
- Police Clearance (and, linked to this, the SAPVIN process and Vehicle Safeguarding Units); and
- Vehicle Roadworthy Testing.

Fraud and corruption in these environments is regularly uncovered. An estimated 50% of all stolen motor vehicles are re-registered on the National Traffic Information System (NaTIS). This represents approximately 45 000 vehicles annually.

The above-mentioned problems fuel the cycle of crime, particularly motor vehicle theft and hijackings, and are also contributors to the high accident and death rates on our roads.

The impact of these practices extends beyond financial losses to individuals, organizations and the country, causing loss of life and trauma to citizens. Further, fraud and corruption is a fundamental contributor to the unacceptably high death rate on South Africa's roads (through unroadworthy vehicles and incompetent drivers being given legitimacy through corrupt practices and officials).

## 2.1 Vehicle Registration and Licensing

### 2.1.1 Problem definition
To "legally" sell a motor vehicle in South Africa, the motor vehicle must be registered on the National Traffic Information System (NaTIS). It is thus understandable that criminals will target NaTIS and will try to register illegal motor vehicles. They exploit inadequate controls, poorly defined business processes and corrupt officials.

The Best Practice Model (BPM) for motor vehicle registration and licensing has been developed as part of a national program aimed at improving service delivery and combating fraud and corruption in the motor vehicle registration and licensing environment.

### 2.1.2 Objectives
The objective of the BPM is to reduce the registration of illegal vehicles by the implementation of measures aimed at reducing the opportunities for fraud and corruption and improving service delivery.

### 2.1.3 The Best Practice Model as a Solution
The BPM has been designed specifically to:

- Reduce the opportunity for fraud and corruption
- Improve service delivery
- Increase revenue collection
- Increase levels of uniformity between the various agents
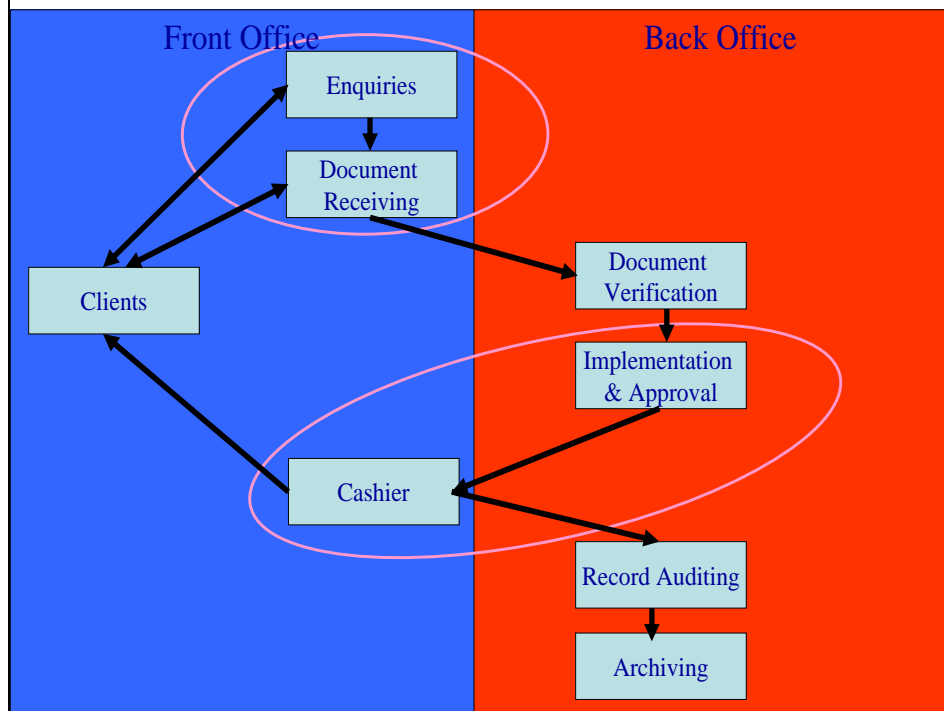- Improve levels of efficiency and effectiveness

The BPM encompasses business process improvements; integration of the management of all functions; and definition and assignment of responsibilities.

The BPM business process provides for the division of the functions into different stages in a front office and back office environment. The aim of this division is to ensure that more than one person must approve a transaction and the aim of the back office is to reduce the effect of intimidation by the public.

### 2.1.4 Conclusion
The implementation of the BPM at registering authorities and the national and provincial helpdesk has proven to be extremely successful, especially where adequately trained and competent staff and managers are employed. It is, however, necessary to implement the BPM at all registering authorities and helpdesks.

## Functions of the Best Practice Model

| Front Office | Back Office |
| --- | --- |

Enquiries

Document Receiving

Clients

Document Verification

Implementation & Approval

Cashier

Record Auditing

Archiving

## 2.2    Police clearance

### 2.2.1 Problem definition

Many years ago, the SAPS and the Department of Transport introduced the vehicle clearance process with the main aim of detecting stolen and other illegal vehicles (e.g. Illegal imported vehicles). The NaTIS record is also updated with the correct VIN and Engine number or with the SAPVIN (SAPS issued VIN and/or Engine number) if required. The clearance is done by trained police officers during a physical inspection of the vehicle.

Specific scenarios, where a high probability exists that the vehicle might be illegal, have been identified. The requirement for police clearance for these scenarios has been legislated. The NaTIS enforces these legislative requirements.

Vehicle Testing Stations, the only other institution that physically inspects vehicles, are also supposed to refer the vehicle for clearance if the VIN and/or Engine number do not correspond with the information on the NaTIS.

Thus, the police clearance can be seen as a last check to authorise the registration of high risk vehicles.

It is thus understandable that criminals will target the clearance process to find ways of getting clearance for illegal motor vehicles. Not withstanding the fact that the SAPS and the Department of Transport have successfully implemented many improvements over the years, criminals are still obtaining illegal clearances. This can mainly be attributed to the fact that registering authorities and police clearance offices work in isolation. Criminals can, for example, get a request for police clearance (legally or illegally) at a registering authority and obtain a clearance from any clearance office with the help of a corrupt police officer. The criminal will then apply for the registration of the vehicle at any registering authority.

## 2.2.2 The One-Stop-Shop as a Solution

The concept of a "one-stop-shop" is to place on one site a registering authority, a vehicle testing centre and a police clearance office, each fulfilling their designated and separate functions but having in place proper management, supervision and control to integrate the different business processes.

An important role for the "one-stop-shop" is to ensure that the vehicle in question does not leave the site until the request for clearance has been finalised and all problems resolved.

### 2.2.3 Objectives
The objectives of the 'One-Stop-Shop' are to optimise the detection of stolen and illegal vehicles, reduce fraud and corruption and improve service delivery to the public.

### 2.2.4 Conclusion
The implementation of the 'One-Stop-Shop' has proven to be successful. It is, however, necessary to implement the 'One-Stop-Shop' at all clearance offices and it is necessary for the SAPS to take control of the process.

## 2.3    NaTIS Improvements

### 2.3.1 Problem definition
As mentioned previously, to "legally" sell a motor vehicle in South Africa, the motor vehicle must be registered on the National Traffic Information System (NaTIS). It is thus understandable that criminals will target NaTIS and will concentrate on ways to register illegal motor vehicles.

The NaTIS is the main tool that is used to implement and to enforce legislative and procedural requirements country wide.

Many crime prevention measures have been implemented over the years on the NaTIS with great success. However, as measures are implemented, criminals become more skilful and constantly change their tactics to keep motor vehicle crime a lucrative business.

### 2.3.2 Objectives
The main objectives of improving the NaTIS is to constantly minimise identified opportunities for illegal transactions and to improve service delivery.

### 2.3.3 Proposed Improvements
The following NaTIS improvements, to name a few, have been identified:

- Online registration of vehicles by banks
- Online Notice of Change of Ownership
- Online licence renewals
- Electronic licensing (Electronic Licence Disc)
- Cross border movement of vehicles
- Biometric identification of NaTIS users
- Information sharing.

### 2.3.4 Conclusion
It is clear that to constantly use the NaTIS as an effective tool to reduce vehicle crime, it is important to understand the constantly changing tactics of criminals and to change the NaTIS and its procedures timeously to counter these tactics.

## 3. SECURING THE MOVEMENT OF VEHICLES THROUGH THE BORDERS OF THE COUNTRY (30% OF THE PROBLEM)

### 3.1   Cross Border Movement of Vehicles

*3.1.1 Problem definition*
An estimated 30% of all stolen or hijacked vehicles are illegally exported from South Africa, with the bulk of these passing through the land ports of entry/exit and border lines undetected. During the year 2006, this translated into a staggering 27 000 motor vehicles leaving the country through one of the 53 land border posts, across approximately 5 800 km of borderline, between border posts, or through one of the 8 major harbours. With some notable exceptions, the recovery rate for these vehicles from most countries in the region back to South Africa is less than 1% of those seized in joint operations by the SA Police Service with the police in such countries.

At an average value of R 80 000 per vehicle, a conservative estimate of the direct financial loss to South Africans as a result of the illegal export of stolen and hijacked motor vehicles is R2,16 billion per year.

Cross-border crime in South Africa, not only encompasses the illegal movement of stolen and hijacked vehicles, but also the movement of drugs, firearms, people and smuggled goods of all descriptions. Crime syndicates are well organised and sophisticated, and have links reaching across many countries both within the Southern African region and beyond. The effects are considerable: significant financial loss to the economy, personal trauma, corruption of our youth, loss of confidence in the government and the country, a feeling of insecurity, the proliferation of firearms destined for criminal use and a negative influence on tourism.

The relative ease with which these stolen and hijacked motor vehicles illegally leave the country contributes largely to the ongoing vehicle crime problem of the country. Whilst these market opportunities persist, there will never be a sustainable reduction in vehicle crime in the country.

The illegal export of stolen and hijacked motor vehicles is the second most attractive market opportunity for criminals – second only to the illegal re-registration of vehicles through various mechanisms at the motor vehicle registration and licensing offices nation-wide.

There is a real possibility that the illegal export of vehicles will increase as the illegal re-registration opportunities for these vehicles within the country are resolved at motor vehicle registering and licensing offices nation-wide. It is imperative, therefore, that the illegal movement of these stolen and hijacked motor vehicles be give attention as a matter of urgency.

Furthermore, vehicle financing institutions and insurance companies experience considerable losses through fraud. This includes:

- the illegal exportation of vehicles by the owners who then report them stolen in South Africa to claim insurance pay out;
- the financing of phantom vehicles which are reported stolen in neighbouring countries;

*The Border Police have not until recently been enabled to address enquiries to banks after hours regarding the registered titleholder of a vehicle and authority before it leaves the country and as a result many vehicles have been moved illegally over the border.*

*3.1.2 Proposed Solution*
Business Against Crime South Africa is assisting the SAPS in the following projects:

- Revision of the instructions and procedures to check vehicles when crossing the borders.
- Technology and systems required at border posts.
- Technology and systems required for the National Border Control Centre.

*3.1.3 Conclusion*
A review of the situation at ports of entry reveals that not much progress has been made over the past years with respect to the control of motor vehicles either leaving or entering the country. Whilst this is due to a number of factors, this situation cannot be left to continue unabated.

Business Against Crime South Africa believes that the proposed solution which includes electronic vehicle identification (i.e. Electronic Licence Disc), applied in concert with related systems such as automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) and application of microdots to vehicles will offer IT and other applications or solutions over a broad spectrum to SAPS and other members of the Border Control Operational Coordinating Committee (BCOCC) and that it would have a positive impact on border control service and delivery.

## 3.2    Illegal Importation of Vehicles

*3.2.1 Problem definition*
It is a well known fact that numerous motor vehicles (used and stolen) are illegally imported into South Africa on the pretence of being destined for neighbouring countries. The majority of South Africa's neighbours rely on passage through South Africa for their imports, which include second hand vehicles, hereinafter referred to as "In-Transit Vehicles". It should, however, be noted that a large number of these vehicles do not reach their destination and are ultimately registered in South Africa.

Organised criminals facilitate the illegal entry of vehicles into the South African market. These illegal imports have a negative impact on the South African economy owing to the loss of revenue and job losses in the SA motor industry. It leads to a direct loss to:

- South African Revenue Services;
- Customs and Excise;
- SABS;
- International Trade Administration Commission (ITAC);
- Department of Transport;
- South African motor manufacturers, importers and builders (MIBs) and related businesses; and
- Indirect loss of job opportunities.

Due to the fact that South Africa (and Southern Africa) is being used as the dumping area for unsafe and stolen motor vehicles, it leads to:

- unroadworthy vehicles travelling on Southern African roads;
- false roadworthiness certificates being issued; and
- direct loss to the general public who bought such vehicle if determined that the vehicle is a stolen or illegal imported vehicle and the vehicle is forfeited to the State.

*3.2.2 Objective*
The objective of this project is to reduce or limit the illegal import of vehicles on a sustainable basis through the development and implementation of appropriate interventions and administrative system improvements.

*3.2.3 Proposed Solution*
Initiatives to address this problem, to name a few, include the following:

- The flagging of all in-transit vehicles on NaTIS to stop the registration of these vehicles;
- The establishment of a vehicle inspection facility at Durban Port and ultimately all ports;
- The training of Customs and Police officials;
- The introduction of a temporary import permit system at ports of entry/exit;
- Sharing of the In-Transit Vehicle information; and
- Improved public awareness and education.

*3.2.4 Conclusion*
Although the above-mentioned initiatives proved to be successful, the implementation of the temporary import permits for Customs Union (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland) countries has been delayed on many occasions by SARS.


## 4. DISRUPTING THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN MOTOR VEHICLES AND PARTS (20% OF THE PROBLEM)

The illegal trade in motor vehicles, primarily through the manipulation of identities of accident-damaged vehicles and the sale of vehicle parts obtained by chopping stolen/hijacked motor vehicles, represents a significant market for stolen or hijacked vehicles. The strategy has centred on improving legislation and regulations in key areas as described below.

### 4.1    Deregistration of Vehicles (Wreck Management)

*4.1.1 Problem definition*
The integrity of the process in which vehicles are deregistered as permanently unfit for use (code 3), permanently demolished (code 4) or stolen is important to fight motor vehicle related crime and to improve road safety. One of the most prominent ways of re-registering illegal motor vehicles (rebirth of the motor vehicle) is to use records of motor vehicles that have not been deregistered accordingly.

The use of badly damaged motor vehicles after it has been repaired leads to unsafe motor vehicles on the roads, accidents and deaths. It is not only a legal requirement to deregister motor vehicles, but all title holders (government, banks, insurers, companies, private people, etc) do have a moral responsibility to promote road safety and fight crime.

However, many vehicles, especially those that are permanently unfit for use (code 3) and permanently demolished (code 4) are not deregistered. This is mainly due to that fact that vehicles that are code 3 and code 4 are worth less when sold.

It is also true that the deregistration of motor vehicles which are safely repairable results in significant commercial losses to the insurance industry. Historically, it has always been a problem to determine when a motor vehicle is "permanently unfit for use". The National Road Traffic Act (Act 93 of 96) and the National Road Traffic Regulations, 2000 do not define "permanently unfit for use".

### 4.1.2 Objective

The objective of this project is to limit the use of vehicles which are permanently unfit for use and permanently demolished by ensuring that these vehicles are deregistered accordingly.

### 4.1.3 Proposed Solution

A self-regulated industry protocol, which determines that all vehicles permanently unfit for use and permanently demolished be deregistered, has been finalised. The impact of this protocol is being monitored.

A procedure that allows for the registration of deregistered vehicles into the name of insurance companies has been implemented. This procedure limits the misuse of records of deregistered vehicles and limits the double discounting of vehicles.

### 4.1.4 Conclusion

The implementation of the above-mentioned has proven to be successful. It is, however, necessary for all insurance companies to follow them.


## 5.   VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION

### 5.1     Electronic Licensing

### 5.1.1 Problem definition

It is essential that appropriate and constant traffic law enforcement is practised for the purpose of preventing road accidents, damage to the road infrastructure and the issuing of false roadworthy certificates

More than 90% of fatal crashes are as a result of flagrant violations of the law, failure to abide by the rules of the road, failure to keep a vehicle in good condition, unsafe overtaking and failure to drive at appropriate speeds for the conditions.

With the current traffic volumes, the estimated 5 million vehicles leaving and entering the country annually, the inability to perform continuous law enforcement and the ease at which the current vehicle identifiers are removed, the ability to detect and apprehend transgressors and serious criminals is very limited, leading to a non compliant society that has no respect for the law. This is further confirmed by the fact that only 17% of all traffic fines are paid.

The law enforcement agencies cannot validate every vehicle. They do not have enough resources and they cannot stop every vehicle for a physical inspection of vehicle identification numbers. They need to identify the legal vehicles and focus the limited resources on the possible illegal vehicles without stopping the traffic flow (which has a negative impact on trade and tourism). This would be possible if they could identify vehicles without stopping them – i.e. by some trustworthy means of automatic (without human intervention) vehicle identification from a distance ("remotely").

### 5.1.2 Objective

The objective of the Electronic Vehicle Identification (EVI) is to reduce or limit vehicle related crime, to improve traffic law enforcement, improve traffic management and control, improve cross-border control of vehicles and improve law enforcement by providing a trusted, automatic and remotely retrievable identification for motor vehicles.

A further objective of the EVI is to enable all public and private entities to make use of electronic vehicle identification data.

### 5.1.3 Proposed Solution

EVI has been identified as an important method to reduce or limit vehicle related crimes.

The EVI Non-commercial Workgroup (NCWG) was established during January 2005 under chairmanship of the Department of Transport (DoT) to finalise the implementation of EVI. The NCWG researched different methods of tagging the vehicles, which included integrating the tag with the licence disc, number plate or fitting it directly to the vehicle. The NCWG found that the preferred method of implementation in South Africa would be to integrate the tag with the licence disc.

It will then be possible to rollout new licence discs in one year and it would also serve as authentication for the license disc which is otherwise easily copied. Research done by the CSIR concluded that a tag can be embedded into paper and can go through a NaTIS laser printer without damaging the tag. These tests were carried out using a standard tag with linear aerial that will not fit into the standard, round licence disc.

The NCWG concluded that embedding a suitable tag into a licence disc of acceptable dimensions, will not only meet the objectives but will also secure many problematic registering authority processes (e.g. licensing, registration, temporary driving licences, motor trade numbers, temporary and special permits, and face value document control) and will assist with the collection of licence fees.

### 5.1.4 Conclusion

The implementation of electronic licensing is of national interest. This solution will not only meet the requirement for automatic and remote vehicle identification but will also have many other advantages for a number of Government Departments which includes:

1. Department of Transport
2. South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL)
3. Local Authorities
4. South African Police Services (SAPS)
5. South African Revenue Services (SARS)
6. Department of Trade and Industry
7. International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa

### 5.2    Microdot Technology

### 5.2.1 Problem definition

The key challenge facing law enforcement (both the SAPS and Transport officials) remains the need to improve the identification of motor vehicles - especially in situations where the primary and secondary identifiers have been removed following the theft or hijacking. This deficiency contributes to the growth in chop shops across the country (which receive an estimated 20% of stolen or hijacked motor vehicles – both new and old), as well as the various forms of illegal legitimisation of stolen and hijacked vehicles. Microdot technology has been identified as a solution.

### 5.2.2 Objective

The objective of this project is to reduce or limit vehicle related crime by the application of thousands of small polymers which will uniquely identify the motor vehicle and is impossible to remove. These microdots will assist law enforcement agencies in identifying vehicles and vehicle parts.

*5.2.3 Proposed Solution*

Microdot technology enhances the identification of motor vehicles through the application of thousands of small polymers which have the vehicle VIN inscribed. Microdot technology, as a vehicle identification system, comprises of more than ten thousand tiny microdots which are laser etched with a unique number which identifies the motor vehicle, and sprayed on many different positions of the motor vehicle and its parts. The sheer number of dots, both in overt and covert locations, makes it very difficult to remove, thus serving as a lasting reminder of the original identity of the motor vehicle, and the parts.

Thus, microdots assist law enforcement agencies in identifying vehicles and vehicle parts during roadside law enforcement, police clearances, police investigations and in cases where vehicles and parts have been found in suspected chop shops.

Although the main function of microdot technology is to improve the ability to identity vehicles, criminals consider microdotted vehicles and its components as contaminated and they are therefore less desirable for theft. Actuarial evidence shows that motor vehicle theft and hijackings are reduced by more than 60%.

*5.2.4 Conclusion*

Business Against Crime South Africa is of the opinion that all stakeholders should take a proactive stance in this regard, and require the fitment of microdots as a condition of purchase.

## 6. INFORMATION SHARING

### 6.1    Problem definition

There remains an ongoing need to improve information sharing between key stakeholders, thus enabling all role players, whether in the private or public sectors, to contribute in their own way towards the fight against vehicle crime and to protect their own assets. This includes access to the information of stolen vehicles, statistics regarding vehicle crime and motor vehicle and driver licence information on the NaTIS.

It is important for the general public and businesses to be able to confirm the validity of vehicle and driver information before a vehicle is registered. Currently, information is not readily available to the general public.

### 6.2    Objective

The objective of this project is to reduce or limit vehicle related crime through providing or sharing of information of importance to vetted users.

### 6.3    Information sharing initiatives

*6.3.1 NaTIS Information*

The online NaTIS queries to insurance companies and banks have been implemented by the Department of Transport (DoT). Some of the banks and insurance companies have very successfully implemented the online queries.

However, the availability of information regarding vehicle registration and licensing, ownership details, vehicle status and roadworthy status, to other organisations and the public is still limited.

Although progress towards the envisaged National Vehicle Information Sharing System (NaVISS) has been relatively slow, this remains one of the priority initiatives.

*6.3.2 SAPS Information of Stolen and Hijacked Vehicles*
On 22 September 1995, the SAPS awarded a contract to Unicode for exclusive access to the SAPS Circulation System (Vehicles) information. This contract is currently under review.

The private sector, individuals that intend buying a vehicle and the SAPS are benefiting from this partnership in the battle against motor theft related crimes, including fraud. Business Against Crime South Africa is playing an important role in representing the industry and the public in making this information available to vetted users.

*6.3.3 Information of Vehicles In-Transit*
The majority of South Africa's neighbours rely on passage through South Africa for their imports, which include second hand vehicles, hereinafter referred to as "In-Transit Vehicles". It should, however, be noted that a large number of these vehicles do not reach their destination and are ultimately registered in South Africa. These registered vehicles are then sold to unsuspecting buyers.

With the establishment of the vehicle inspection facility at Durban Port a reliable source of information does exist. Business Against Crime South Africa is playing an important role in representing the industry and the public in making this information available to vetted users.

*6.3.4 Vehicle Crime Statistical Analyses*
The statistics regarding vehicle crime are important for the industry and the SAPS. Business Against Crime South Africa is performing an annual analysis of the vehicle theft and hijacking information. Although this information is not published, it is a source of important information to determine current trends of criminal activity.


## 7. ENHANCING LAW ENFORCEMENT, INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION

### 7.1   Problem definition
Effective law enforcement, investigation and prosecution are fundamental to a successful motor vehicle crime combating and prevention strategy, and underpin most of the individual strategies and interventions mentioned above.

### 7.2   Objective
The objective of this project is to reduce or limit all vehicle related crime through improving the arrest and prosecution rate and increasing the risk profile of offenders.

### 7.3   Initiatives

*7.3.1 Anti–Hijacking Initiative*
The issue of motor vehicle hijackings has received priority attention, initially efforts focused on Gauteng as this province accounted for more than 70% of hijackings nation-wide. The initiative, established in 2004, led to the creation of specialized SAPS Task Teams and Courts, focussed on hijackings cases.

The cross disciplinary and integrated nature of these teams led to a 32% reduction in hijacking during 2005. The prosecution rate increased above 80%. This initiative accounted for the bulk of the reduction in vehicle hijacking figures during 2005. The model is available for replication in other high risk provinces.

*7.3.2 Random Roadblocks*
Another success in Gauteng has been the introduction of random roadblocks by the SAPS, focused on the recovery of stolen/hijacked vehicles. These have yielded considerable successes and continue to be deployed in the province.

*7.3.3 Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)*
The aim of this project is to identify legal vehicles and focus the limited resources on the possible illegal vehicles without stopping the traffic flow (which has a negative impact on trade and tourism). This initiative has proven to be very successful in automatically identify illegal number plates, unroadworthy vehicles; unlicensed vehicles; stolen and hijacked vehicles by using ANPR technology.


## 8. CONCLUSION

The project has developed an impressive track record, whereby vulnerabilities and deficiencies in the management of vehicles in both the public and private sectors have been identified and reduced, vehicle related legislation and regulations enhanced, law enforcement improved and information sharing and coordination improved. These enhancements have contributed to the year-on-year reduction in vehicle crime since 1998/9, and have influenced to a large degree the response by both government and business to this crime type.

Despite these achievements, vehicle thefts and hijackings remain unacceptably high, with high costs to the country in both economic and human terms. Vehicle hijacking, in particular, remains one of the main causes of insecurity amongst the population, whilst poor service delivery and fraud and corruption continue to plague critical components of the vehicle management system in both the public and private sectors

Further success in this project necessitates the buy-in and commitment of all key stakeholders at the highest level, and the ongoing commitment over the short to medium term in all of the above-mentioned initiatives.