TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 3

Northamptonshire ......................................................................................................... 5
   Areas of Concern ........................................................................................................ 5
   Methods and Locations of Thefts ............................................................................... 5
   Targeted Commodities .............................................................................................. 5

Leicestershire .................................................................................................................. 6
   Areas of Concern ........................................................................................................ 6
   Methods and Locations of Thefts ............................................................................... 6
   Targeted Commodities .............................................................................................. 6

Essex .................................................................................................................................. 7
   Areas of Concern ........................................................................................................ 7
   Methods and Locations of Thefts ............................................................................... 7
   Targeted Commodities .............................................................................................. 7

Nottinghamshire .............................................................................................................. 8
   Areas of Concern ........................................................................................................ 8
   Methods and Locations of Thefts ............................................................................... 8
   Targeted Commodities .............................................................................................. 8

Cambridgeshire ............................................................................................................... 9
   Areas of Concern ........................................................................................................ 9
   Methods and Locations of Thefts ............................................................................... 9
   Targeted Commodities .............................................................................................. 9
Consumer goods were the most frequently stolen goods during the first quarter of 2017. Automotive parts, apparel, electronics, and food and beverage products rounded out the top five most frequently stolen types of goods during this quarter. In Cambridgeshire, however, thieves repeatedly targeted fuel trucks to steal petroleum.

Cargo trucks, particularly soft-sided vehicles, face the highest risk of theft in the United Kingdom, representing almost all incidents recorded in the country during the first quarter. Thieves in the country only periodically target company warehouses to steal goods. However, only 3 percent of incidents were thefts of trucks or trailers.

Nearly 76 percent of cargo thefts recorded by BSI in the first quarter of 2017 involved the slash-and-grab tactic, where thieves cut into the tarpaulins of soft sided trailers to steal goods. Thefts from hard-sided trucks and trailers was the second most frequently used type of theft during Q1. Thieves occasionally used more sophisticated tactics to conduct theft operations during the first quarter, including impersonating company employees or police officers. Additionally, BSI observed several violent theft incidents, including hijackings and moving truck thefts, where armed thieves threaten or carry out attacks on cargo truck drivers.

Incident data indicates that most highway thefts occur on the United Kingdom’s M1 motorway. Approximately 36 percent of all theft incidents that BSI recorded during the first quarter of 2017 occurred on this major transit route, which extends north-south from London to Leeds. The A14 highway, which connects to the M1 at Junction 19, was involved in the second highest number of thefts. Other roads and motorways of concern during Q1 include the A1, A45, M4, A43, and M25.

According to BSI data, most cargo theft incidents occurred during the middle of the week. Tuesday and Wednesday show the highest rates of cargo theft, accounting for a combined 43 percent of all incidents that occurred during Q1. Thursday and Friday also saw a significant amount of thefts. However, cargo theft rates dramatically drop once the weekend begins. This trend is likely due to driving restrictions in the United Kingdom that limit travel hours for weekend commercial driving.

Companies lost over an estimated £29 million ($37 million) due to cargo theft incidents in the United Kingdom during Q1. This equates to an average estimated loss rate of £56,242 ($72,319) per cargo theft incident. The theft of £4.9 million ($6.4 million) of luxury car engines from a trailer in Solihull, West Midlands represents the largest value cargo theft incident recorded by BSI in the United Kingdom in Q1 2017.

Andrew Round of NaVCIS reports that organized criminal groups are responsible for a significant amount of cargo theft in the United Kingdom. Thieves often receive insider information through business and logistics operators to track cargo movement.
High Risk Areas for Cargo Theft in the United Kingdom
Q1 2017 - Based on historical data and qualitative analysis

**Distribution of Cargo Theft**
- Northamptonshire: 25.4%
- Leicestershire: 15.8%
- Essex: 10.2%
- Cambridgeshire: 7.0%
- Nottinghamshire: 7.4%
- Other: 34.2%

**Cargo Theft by Day**
- Sunday: 4.0%
- Monday: 11.9%
- Tuesday: 19.3%
- Wednesday: 24.3%
- Thursday: 18.1%
- Friday: 17.7%
- Saturday: 4.6%

**Cargo Theft by Type**
- Slash and Grab: 75.9%
- Theft of Truck: 16.8%
- Theft from Trailer: 2.9%
- Other: 2.7%

**Top Commodities Stolen**
- Consumer Goods: 17%
- Automotive: 7.3%
- Apparel: 6.0%
- Electronics: 6.0%
- Food and Beverage: 6.0%
- Unknown: 47.4%
- Other: 10.4%

**Top Highways for Theft**
- M1: 36.3%
- A14: 16.1%
- A1: 6.3%
- A45: 4.5%
- M4: 3.6%
- Other: 33.6%
Northamptonsshire

Northamptonshire accounted for 25.4 percent of cargo theft incidents during the first quarter of 2017, the most out of any county in the United Kingdom. Thieves in Northamptonshire stole an estimated £4.1 million ($5.2 million) of goods, representing 14.1 percent of the value of all goods stolen in the United Kingdom during Q1.

Areas of Concern

The cities of Northampton, Kettering, and Watford accounted for 45 percent of all cargo theft incidents that occurred within Northamptonshire during Q1. Over half of these thefts occurred on the M1 motorway. The A14 roadway was also another significant area for cargo theft, accounting for nearly 27 percent of incidents.

The high rate of cargo theft in these three cities corresponds to a number of variables that often accompany a higher prevalence of incidents. Foremost, Northampton and Kettering both have notably high crime rates and are situated near the United Kingdom’s major roads and highways, providing criminals with ample opportunity to carry out thefts.

In one police operation, Northamptonshire Police have taken additional security measures to prevent cargo theft in major targeted areas, especially along the M1 motorway.

Methods and Locations of Thefts

Cargo thieves in Northamptonshire typically use the slash-and-grab tactic to steal cargo. Thieves frequently target parked trucks with soft-sided trailers and cut into the tarpaulins to steal goods. Organized criminals generally utilize this tactic since it is low cost, quick, and easy to conduct. Since the tactic requires little sophistication and time, thieves can target more trucks using the slash-and-grab method and select which goods they prefer to steal.

Thieves in Northamptonshire also stole goods from parked hard-sided trailers by cutting through door locks and seals. However, thefts involving this type of theft occurred much less frequently than slash-and-grab incidents, accounting for 20 percent of the thefts in the county during Q1.

Targeted Commodities

Thieves in Northamptonshire most frequently stole consumer goods, with tools and household items accounting for most stolen products within this category. Thieves in the county also commonly stole food and beverage items. The food and beverage industry in Northamptonshire has recently experienced significant growth, and an overall increase of these products being transported throughout the county likely explains the high rate of theft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Commodities Stolen</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Goods</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and Tobacco</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BSI recorded the second highest number of cargo theft incidents in the United Kingdom in Leicestershire during Q1, representing 15.8 percent of incidents. Companies lost over £2.7 million ($3.5 million) due to cargo theft during this time period, accounting for 9.52 percent of the total value of goods stolen in the United Kingdom in the first quarter.

**Areas of Concern**

The cities of Leicester Forest East, Castle Donington, Bardon, and Markfield saw the highest rates of theft in Leicestershire. All of these cities are concentrated along the United Kingdom’s major M1 motorway, which runs north-south through Leicestershire County. BSI data indicates that an overwhelming 72.7 percent of cargo theft incidents in Leicestershire occurred on the M1 motorway.

Leicestershire is located in the middle of the United Kingdom, with the primary M1 motorway running through the county. This central location has elevated Leicestershire as a major transit hub for cargo shipments. Leicestershire hosts several major retail and cargo distribution companies, particularly in Castle Donington, which make up the biggest economic sectors in the county. This industrial environment contributes to the significant amount of cargo that flows through the county, especially on the M1 motorway. Thieves commonly target Leicester Forest East due to the large influx of drivers parked at the Leicester Forest East service rest stop off the M1 motorway.

**Targeted Commodities**

Consumer goods are the most frequently stolen items from cargo trucks in Leicestershire, followed by automotive parts and food and beverage products. Thieves most likely target these commodities as they are transported by the locally-based transportation and logistics companies. Automotive manufacturing and engineering companies are another major sector in the county’s local economy, which likely explains the high rate of thefts involving automotive parts.

**Methods and Locations of Thefts**

Thieves in Leicestershire most frequently conducted cargo thefts during Q1 using the slash-and-grab method. Thieves also often broke into trailers by cutting locks and seals to steal goods. Drivers frequently use rest stops along the M1 motorway in Leicestershire for overnight parking, making the vehicles vulnerable targets for cargo theft especially if trucks are left unattended. BSI reports that thieves often operate in repetitive patterns and typically strike the same rest stops or locations multiple times a week.
Essex accounted for ten percent of all cargo theft incidents that BSI recorded in the United Kingdom during Q1. Companies lost an estimated £2.3 million ($3 million) of goods during this period due to cargo theft. This figure represents approximately 8.1 percent of the value of all goods stolen in the United Kingdom during the first quarter of 2017.

Areas of Concern

Most cargo theft incidents in Essex occurred within the county’s most southern cities. For instance Grays and the neighboring city of Purfleet, located in the south, experienced half of all cargo theft incidents in Essex. Basildon and the nearby city of Brentwood also saw a substantial amount of cargo theft incidents during this time period. This high rate of theft is likely attributable to the large concentration of industry in the southern part of Essex. The port of Tilbury and London Gateway Port are also located in this area, and the flow of cargo to and from these facilities provides thieves in Essex with ample opportunity for theft. BSI noted that cargo theft incidents that occurred in Essex during Q1 tended to be located along the M25, A12, and A13 routes.

In a police operation investigating organized crime groups, Operation Hollow, Essex Police arrested several organized criminals conducting cargo theft. In March 2017, Police arrested eight individuals that stole several shipping containers with high valued goods.

Methods and Locations of Thefts

Thieves conducted an overwhelming majority of cargo thefts in Essex using the slash-and-grab tactic. Thieves in Essex frequently targeted soft-sided cargo trucks parked overnight at rest stops. While trucks were generally attended, drivers were often sleeping and unaware of the thefts taking place in their own vehicle. Since Essex is a notable transportation hub, trucks are frequently parked close together, allowing thieves to quickly target multiple vehicles using this tactic.

Andrew Round from NaVCIS indicates that thieves often utilize the ‘around the corner’ theft tactic in the southeastern region of the United Kingdom, particularly cargo destined to London. This method involves thieves impersonating company employees in order to deceive drivers into diverting cargo to new locations for fraudulent collections. Thieves often receive insider information from corrupt business and logistics operators to track cargo movement and approach drivers before they reach their destination.

Targeted Commodities

Thieves in Essex most frequently stole consumer goods and apparel. Thieves also occasionally stole electronics and alcohol products. Besides having a generally easy resale, there is little evidence indicating that thieves have specifically targeted these commodities. Rather, criminals are more likely conducting opportunistic thefts of the large volume and high variation of cargo moving through Essex.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Commodities Stolen</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Goods</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and Tobacco</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nottinghamshire ranked fourth for the highest number of cargo theft incidents in the United Kingdom during the first quarter of 2017, accounting for 7.4 percent of all cargo theft incidents in the United Kingdom. Thieves stole approximately £1.2 million ($1.5 million) of cargo in these incidents, representing 4.1 percent of the total value lost due to cargo theft in the country during Q1.

Areas of Concern
Cargo theft incidents in Nottinghamshire are widely dispersed across the county. Worksop, Trowell, and Newark-on-Trent saw the highest rates of theft in comparison to other cities. Trucks traveling along the A1 roadway were particularly vulnerable to theft during Q1, with approximately 76 percent of all incidents that BSI recorded in the county taking place along this route.

Most of these cargo theft incidents occurred at unsecure parking on off-road laybys located along the A1 roadway. Cargo truck drivers are often forced to park at unsecure locations due to an insufficient quantity of secure parking locations or rest stops in the county. BSI finds that unsecure parking practices are one of the greatest factors contributing to the rate of cargo theft in the United Kingdom.

Methods and Locations of Thefts
Thieves mostly used the slash-and-grab tactic to steal cargo in Nottinghamshire. This is likely driven by the frequency of soft-sided trailers moving through the area. Additionally, the dependence upon unsecured off-road parking as a means for overnight rest makes these types of trucks particularly susceptible to theft. Nottinghamshire also experiences a substantial amount of cases where thieves target hard-sided trailers to steal goods. These cases account for about 23.7 percent of all cargo theft incidents that BSI recorded in the county in Q1.

Targeted Commodities
Consumer goods, followed by automotive parts and chemicals, were the most stolen commodities in Nottinghamshire. This is likely due to the fact that Nottinghamshire is the headquarters of several manufacturing companies, particularly in the automotive and chemical sector. Additionally, various enterprises for consumer goods are also a key part of the local industry. Thieves often stole cargo from trucks parked in unsecured location on the A1 roadway, particularly near the towns of Worksop and Norwell.

### Top Commodities Stolen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Goods</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BSI recorded the fifth-highest number of cargo theft incidents in the United Kingdom during the first quarter of 2017 in Cambridgeshire. Incidents in this county account for approximately seven percent of all incidents that occurred in the United Kingdom during this time. Companies lost an estimated £1.4 million ($1.8 million) of cargo from these thefts, representing about 4.83 percent of the value of all goods stolen in the United Kingdom.

**Areas of Concern**

The cities of Huntingdon and Fenstandon, located along the A14 roadway, saw the highest rates of cargo theft during Q1. Chatteris, situated slightly north of these cities, saw the next highest number of cargo theft cases. A significant amount of these incidents occurred along the A14 roadway, accounting for 73.3 percent of the cargo thefts in Cambridgeshire.

A number of cargo thefts in Q1 also occurred along the A1, A10, A13, and A141 roadways. Most incidents that BSI recorded in the county involved trucks parked at off-road laybys. As with similar counties throughout the United Kingdom, the lack of secure parking is a major contributor to the higher rate of cargo theft in Cambridgeshire.

**Methods and Locations of Thefts**

Thieves conducted most cargo theft incidents in Cambridgeshire using the slash-and-grab method, and only 20 percent of thefts were accomplished by breaking locks on hard-sided trailers. These thefts typically occurred off road at unsecured locations, such as laybys off of the A14 roadway. The insufficient quantity of secure parking along this major roadway makes cargo trucks parked at laybys vulnerable targets for theft. Thefts involving petroleum varied much more in location, occurring at parking lots, motels, and laybys.

**Targeted Commodities**

Thieves in Cambridgeshire most frequently stole consumer products and petroleum during the first quarter of 2017. Cambridgeshire police officials have previously noted that there are significant spikes in fuel thefts when oil prices rise. Cambridgeshire is particularly known for its growth in high-technology companies, notably in the Silicon Fen area. The absence of electronics as a major targeted good in the area underscores the likely high level of security these companies have implemented.

**Cargo Theft by Day**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Theft Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUN</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MON</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUE</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WED</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THU</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRI</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top Commodities Stolen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Goods</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fossil Fuels</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further questions contact NaVCIS Freight at freight@navcis.pnn.police.uk
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**Supply Chain Risk Exposure Evaluation Network (SCREEN)**, allows organizations to actively identify and monitor supply chain security, social responsibility, and business continuity threats and trends at a country level. SCREEN’s robust modules provide insight into geographic risk for over 20 proprietary risk indicators in more than 200 countries.

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