

**INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION**



**AUTO THEFT  
INVESTIGATORS**

*Resolution 2021-1*

***Raise the Level of Awareness and Understanding of the Importance of Vehicle Crimes***

*WHEREAS, the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators (IAATI) is a worldwide association of law enforcement personnel, insurance industry, and other related business members, and*

*WHEREAS, the use of the term "auto theft" misleads the general public, law enforcement, and our membership to believe auto theft is principally and primarily isolated as a property crime; and*

*WHEREAS, history has evidenced criminals to utilize a stolen vehicle to enable, facilitate or otherwise involve the commission of a variety of crimes, including heinous crimes of violence, crimes against persons, organized crime, drug offenses, and other property crimes; and*

*WHEREAS, there is a need to establish a clear term and definition which captivates the criminal events involved with a stolen vehicle beyond that of a property crime; and*

*WHEREAS, there is a need to offer, encourage and use this clear term and for law enforcement and the general public for accurate use and understanding; and*

*WHEREAS, it is necessary to educate law enforcement executives, their departments, and the general public as to the importance of auto theft being a "vehicle crime"; and*

***THEREFORE, the term "vehicle crime" should replace the term "auto theft" when referring to a stolen vehicle event involving one or more other crimes during the time when the vehicle was reported stolen to when it is recovered; and***

***THEREFORE, a definition of vehicle crime suggests any crime involving the theft of a vehicle, whether in whole or by parts; fraudulent sale, purchase, insurance or identification; or burglary of a car, truck, motorcycle, tractor-trailer, ATV, heavy equipment, any other motorized vehicle, or its cargo or contents; and***

***THEREFORE, a vehicle crime may also suggest the use of a stolen vehicle to enable, facilitate, or otherwise assist in the commission of other crimes, such as: Robbery, Burglary, Home Invasion, Shootings, Homicide, Drug Trafficking, Human Trafficking, Arson, Terrorism, Identity Theft, Vehicle Finance Fraud, Insurance Fraud and Schemes, Title Fraud and Tow Truck Schemes. In many instances, a stolen vehicle is either driven while committing some crimes or is the nexus of others; and***

*WHEREAS, it is necessary to educate law enforcement executives, their departments, and the general public as to the importance of and connection between vehicle crime and subsequent violent crime; and*

*WHEREAS, this awareness is important in order to prevent violent crime sprees and their repercussions and to ignite support vital to the sustainability and longevity of vehicle crimes investigative and prosecutorial units across the globe; and*

*WHEREAS, law enforcement executives should use the term "vehicle crimes" and understand why they should use it within their agencies and within their communities; and*

*WHEREAS, law enforcement needs to re-engage internal and external audiences in order to highlight vehicle crimes that have a tremendous impact on our communities; and*



WHEREAS, there must be a joint effort put forth to detect and thwart vehicle crimes; and

WHEREAS, international awareness of the importance of vehicle crime as it relates to community safety and the larger picture of predictive policing be implemented; and

WHEREAS, police executives should understand how vehicle theft and vehicle crimes drive other crimes in their jurisdictions; and

THEREFORE, law enforcement strategies should focus on four areas, to include:

- (1) articulating the connection between vehicle theft and other crimes,
- (2) preserving and encouraging funding for vehicle theft and vehicle crime prevention, combatting, detection, investigation, and prosecution,
- (3) defining the scope and magnitude of vehicle crimes and their impact in the community, and
- (4) engaging in-vehicle crimes intelligence, public awareness, and hardening targets; and

WHEREAS, armed with vehicle crime information based on accurate data, crime control strategies can be developed; and

WHEREAS, such vehicle crime prevention, combatting, detection, investigation, and prosecution strategies can be the catalyst in the prevention of vehicle theft, which often is the precursor to other serious and violent crimes; and

WHEREAS, additional vehicle crime strategies include treating vehicle crimes as a threat to public safety by directing patrol officers to take full and complete reports; while on patrol, paying attention to indicators of stolen vehicle activity, and providing investigative expertise and resources to quickly follow up on reports of vehicle theft and related crimes; and

THEREFORE, law enforcement agencies need to actively engage the public in crime prevention efforts to change behavior, take ownership of their part, instill prevention habits, and elevate public safety, e.g., "Lock your car – take your keys – every time"; and

RESOLVED, that the IAATI calls upon police executives, crime prevention officers, and public information officers to emphasize the fact that a stolen vehicle was used to commit a crime and show tangible reasons why the public should pay attention to preventing vehicle crimes;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAATI encourages police executives to lead the way, as the rank and file, and the community, need to see visible signs of support from the top; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAATI calls upon police executives to support vehicle crime reduction awareness initiatives in the budgeting process and engage the community, corporate, and other governmental agencies in the effort; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAATI calls upon police executives to raise awareness and understanding of vehicle crimes.

Signed:

MH Odendal  
President IAATI International  
February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Signed:

J Abounader  
Executive Director  
February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021