



Specialist Crime Directorate
SCD7
Serious & Organised Crime OCU

OPERATION GRAFTON
BUSINESS NEWS
Tel: 0208 246 9972

Issue 2

Period 1st December 2003 to
31st March 2004

Forward by Detective Inspector Paul E DOUGLAS

Welcome to the second issue of our Operation GRAFTON bulletin for the industry. I apologise for the fact that this particular report covers a four-month period however; this has occurred as a result of the need to attend to operational priorities. I am pleased to report that there has been a dramatic fall in the number of GRAFTON related crimes occurring during this reporting period but have made a point of including crimes which fall outside of the GRAFTON remit as these provide ample evidence that we cannot afford to be complacent.

Details of the operations undertaken by the GRAFTON team will once again not include any details concerning the use of police tactics. However, if you have information about any of the crimes listed please do not hesitate to contact us on the above telephone number.

CRIMES

On 26/03/2004, a high value load of HERMES product was delivered to a warehouse in London by DHL. Shortly after delivery, HERMES received a telephone call from a male claiming to be from DHL. He stated that there had been a fault with the shipment and quoted the house waybill number. The bogus driver then arrived at the London premises and collected the goods. There are no other details available at this stage. However, there have been a significant number of similar incidents in the last three weeks where courier drivers from various companies have been contacted and asked to redirect their load. Fortunately / unfortunately this is the first GRAFTON offence that has been successful in achieving its objective.

At approximately 10:30 am on 12/12/2003, an articulated lorry driver was driving his vehicle near to the Ivor Heath roundabout in Slough when he was forced to stop by a white Peugeot motor vehicle that had swerved across in front of him. The trailer of this lorry contained high value electrical goods, which were destined for the Dixon's Group of companies. As the lorry stopped the passenger in the Peugeot opened the victim's door and



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tried to pull him from the cab. The victim however, managed to kick the suspect in the chest, reverse the lorry and make good his escape with the property intact. The suspect was described as being a white Irish male, 5'10" tall, 30 years old with scruffy blonde hair and wearing a denim jacket. He was also believed to have been in possession of an unknown weapon, which he had concealed in a plastic bag. The driver was shaken but otherwise uninjured. CE1720268/03 refers.

On 31/01/2004, at 9am six male suspects, one armed with a semi automatic pistol, raided the premises of Omega Securicor in Feltham. Once inside, they tied up ten members of staff and used a forklift to load pallets of computer equipment and other property onto a stolen ten tonne truck. They then attempted to leave the premises using both this and another stolen vehicle. However, as they left they were intercepted by armed police officers who arrested the six suspects and recovered the stolen property. Nobody was physically hurt during the commission of this offence.

On 04/02/2004, a DHL courier van left the DHL depot at Heathrow on route to Beaconsfield. Having made two deliveries the driver then stopped in the Slough area where he stepped out of the vehicle in order to place a parcel into the rear of his van. On returning to the cab, a white male suspect jumped into the passenger seat of the vehicle and threatened him with a rounders bat. The 'victim' was subsequently forced to drive to Farnham Common, Surrey where he was directed to reverse up to a waiting white Mercedes Sprinter van. The driver was then told to get into the back of his vehicle and was punched in the face several times before being tied up. Two suspects then unloaded his vehicles contents into the waiting van and drove away. A member of the public freed the victim a short time later. CR1915705 refers.

Armed robbery – Menzies 5, Heathrow. Suspects gained entry to the warehouse where they assaulted staff and stole approximately £1.75 million in cash. The suspects then made good their escape via a car and lorry, which were both stolen from the Menzies premises. The suspects also discharged a firearm during the raid - no individuals were injured as a result. This incident is being investigated by Flying Squad officers and six arrests made shortly after the event. One suspect Glen CAMERON does however remain outstanding at this time.

OTHER CRIMES OF INTEREST TO OP GRAFTON

On 18/12/2003, at 01:59 am, a white Mercedes Box lorry VRM N25TPH, was used to reverse through the warehouse wall of the premises of 'A and T Computer Services', in Reading, Berks. The lorry was badly damaged and was left at the scene with the engine running. The value of the property stolen remains unknown at this time. EA8606084/03 refers.

Overnight 20-21/12/2003, a NOLANS TRANSPORT vehicle arrived at the premises of EXPEDITORS, Heston, Middlesex. Whilst parked outside the premises and awaiting the 7am opening of the warehouse, the rear doors of the container were forced open and approximately £30,000 of DELL computers stolen by the two suspects one of whom was driving a VW Golf with either a 'for sale sign' or child's sun shield in the rear passenger window. CR 0533893/03 refers.

On 22/11/2003, a part consignment of twelve SHARPE Z CAMCORDERS was stolen from building 588, Shoreham Road West, Heathrow. Value £12,000. These items were destined for the DIXON Group of companies. Heathrow CID is now investigating this incident. CR 1005861/03 refers.



On the morning of Sunday 28/12/2003, a silver Vauxhall Cavalier was seen by a witness being driven suspiciously around the car park of the GRIFFIN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE in Feltham. The occupants of the vehicle were subsequently seen to disable the Red Care Alarm system at the premises of POWER CORE. Immediate preventative security measures were put into place and as a result the anticipated "follow up" burglary failed to occur. On 30/12/2003, the vehicle concerned failed to stop for the police in the SW18 area. The Cavalier was later found abandoned within a short distance of where it had been seen. CR 0534201/03 refers.

On 11/12/2003, £780,000 worth of property was received from Austria at the premises of FORWARD LOGGISTICS in ASHFORD, Middlesex. Part of this shipment was subsequently released on receipt of payment by cheque to the company who despatched the property to the UK. However, shortly after direction was given to release the goods the cheque was withdrawn. The matter was reported to SURREY Police who managed to locate the lorry concerned and recover the property. The property was then restored to the company and the matter closed. There have been a number of other similar incidents in the London area.

£26,000 worth of computer chips were stolen from DELTEC couriers in Hounslow this week. The offence occurred after the box of chips had been left unattended on the manager's desk. CRIS 050217 refers.

Sixty DVD players were stolen from the premises of KENSINGTON FREIGHT in Slough. An employee was dismissed having been found with one of the items concealed under his jacket. He is however not thought to be involved in the outstanding loss.

£1m worth of Olympus cameras were stolen from a warehouse in Ealing during the early hours of Thursday 30/01/2004 after the suspects had disabled the company's Red Care Alarm system. GRAFTON officers are now liaising with Ealing CID in respect of this crime. CRIS 2503295/04 refers.

Overnight 31/01-01/02/2004, two shipments of computer equipment arrived at Heathrow via Singapore Airlines. The goods were later collected by lorry and taken to the SWISSPORT CARGO SERVICES transit shed. From there they were transferred via a GLOBAL TRANSPORT SERVICES driver to the premises of EXEL FREIGHT MANAGEMENT SERVICES in Hounslow. It was then discovered that a quantity of 'hard drives' had been stolen. The said items had been substituted for with both bricks and blocks of concrete. The value of the property stolen has still to be notified to the police. CRIS 1000582/04 refers.

Thirty-six cameras were stolen from the premises of EXEL at Heathrow (total value £36,000). Two individuals were subsequently arrested by Heathrow and GRAFTON officers in relation to this matter. A significant amount of property was also recovered.

Sixteen motorcycle suits worth a total value of £5000, were stolen whilst in transit from a Heathrow warehouse. GRAFTON officers have now traced these and a suspect has been arrested by the Heathrow Crime Squad. All of the outstanding property has been recovered.

On 09/02/2004, a 32-year-old UPS driver was connecting an empty trailer to his cab in Barking, when he was bundled into his van by a group of suspects who bound and gagged him. His vehicle was then driven to a golf supplies store in Chessington where



approximately £1 million worth of golfing equipment was stolen. The lorry was eventually dumped on the A10 in Hertfordshire where the driver was freed.
CRIS 5102656/04 refers.

Eight people have been arrested by Sussex Police on suspicion of stealing from passenger baggage at Gatwick Airport over a 12-month period. Officers recovered approximately £50,000 worth of property as a result of this enquiry.

During the w/e 27/02/2004, The Red Care Alarm wires were cut at the PERRYWOODS SPORTS CLUB in Redhill Surrey. It was the fourth time that the wires had been cut within a three-week period. Fortunately no "follow up" burglaries occurred at the premises concerned on either of these occasions. During the same week the Red Care Alarm wires were cut to a CASH and CARRY premises in Reading. On that occasion £100,000 of cigarettes were stolen. In addition, the premises of the DUKES MEADOWS GOLF CLUB were broken in to at Chiswick, West London. This offence resulted in £10,000 worth of golf clubs being stolen. GRAFTON is collating a number of previous incidents where golf clubs have been stolen. Please contact us if you have any information (no matter how small), which may help local officers with these investigations.

OPERATIONS

A GRAFTON operation, which was conducted against a team of armed robbers in the Heathrow area, resulted in two persons being charged with robbery and the attempted robbery of £2 million worth of computer chips. The police also recovered several stolen motor vehicles.

Flying Squad officers investigating a number of armed robberies and lorry hijacks in the Heathrow area have arrested and charged a number of individuals with these offences. The officers concerned also recovered a number of firearms during their investigations.

You may remember Operation GRAFTON'S first circulation of a photograph of an individual suspected of being involved in the theft of £100,000 worth of home cinema systems from the premises of SPA TRANS in October 2003. GRAFTON can now report that an individual has been arrested and charged with this offence. In addition, several other individuals have either been arrested or spoken to by GRAFTON officers and a quantity of stolen property has been recovered.

As a result of executing search warrants at business premises in East London and Hounslow, GRAFTON officers made a number of arrests and recovered property, which was reported as outstanding from two Heathrow warehouse burglaries. The officers also arrested a male at one of the venues when he was found in possession of a number of stolen computers, which had come from a 'walk in' theft at a hospital in Twickenham.

Following assistance provided by the industry, an individual was arrested by GRAFTON officers as he tried to export £75,000 worth of stolen computer chips from the country. The chips were all subsequently recovered and identified as coming from a Heathrow robbery.

A joint operation between HM Customs and Excise and Operation GRAFTON officers resulted in a number of persons being arrested for Excise related offences. The company concerned subsequently went into administration.

Following a GRAFTON partnership operation against two individuals a team of armed robbers was detained during their attempt to hijack a lorry, which was carrying a high value load. Further enquiries have now resulted in two of these persons being charged with conspiracy to commit murder in relation to an unconnected offence.

Reports were received at the GRAFTON offices concerning a vehicle that was seen acting suspiciously in the vicinity of warehouses circa Heathrow, which were known to contain high value property. GRAFTON officers conducted an operation against the individual concerned and he was subsequently arrested and charged with fourteen offences relating to warehouse burglaries.

As a result of enquiries into a theft of £3.5 million worth of computer chips at Heathrow, which occurred in 2002, Operation GRAFTON officers working together with the Heathrow Crime Squad and Thames Valley Police executed three search warrants. This resulted in the recovery of approximately £1 million worth of the outstanding property.

Following a GRAFTON operation an individual was arrested in the Thames Valley area on suspicion of conspiring to burgle an airport warehouse. In addition to recovering stolen goods the suspect was also linked to other Metropolitan Police area crimes via DNA and he was recalled to prison to finish a previously imposed three-year sentence.

An individual was arrested and charged by Grafton officers investigating theft of 'cash in transit' whilst he was employed within a Heathrow warehouse.

GRAFTON is currently aware of two incidents, one on the M25 and the other on the M1 at Toddington, where a dark coloured Vauxhall Omega containing three individuals wearing dark police caps stopped and attempted to negotiate their way into the cabs of courier lorries. The drivers became suspicious because of the manner in which they were stopped and because of the nature of the uniform being worn. Thankfully the drivers on both occasions refused access and drove away. There were no unmarked police units in the vicinity on either occasion.

OPERATION GRAFTON CRIME SUMMARY

2003 saw overall Grafton related crime (£50K+) rise by 21% compared with that of 2002. The majority of this increase occurred during the first quarter of 2003, when Grafton crimes rose by 28% compare to that of the first quarter of 2002. However, the last quarter of 2003, saw a drop in crimes of 50% when compared with that of the previous year.

There were a total of 57 Grafton crimes in 2003. The total financial losses for these offences were circa £25.3 million.

The total number of intelligence documents in 2003 exceeded eighty. Many of these have become the focus of further research and several have been developed into extended enquiries and operations.



Operation GRAFTON continues to make progress thanks to the cooperation of the industry. We take this opportunity to thank you for your support and hope that this initiative can continue to thrive as a result of your continued participation. If you have any information which may further aid our investigations into any of the above matters or wish to bring any matter to our attention please contact us on

Tel: - 0208 246 9972/3

Email: - operation.grafton@met.police.uk

Or alternatively you can call Crime Stoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. All calls will be treated in the strictest confidence.

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