

21-07 - Taskforce for Regional Auto Theft Prevention (TRAP)

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

NEWSLETTER

Field Operations Support Services



TASKFORCE FOR REGIONAL AUTO THEFT PREVENTION (TRAP)

The Taskforce for Regional Auto theft Prevention (TRAP) is a state-funded, multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency auto theft task force created to promote a coordinated effort and encourage maximum cooperation between law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies in Los Angeles County regarding auto theft.

Because TRAP is state-funded and staffed by multiple agencies, it is considered an outside agency and requires a specific protocol which is necessary to enable the proper routing and case handling for specific investigations TRAP may become involved with.

The following is a brief guide on the taskforce, including their roles, responsibilities and case handling protocol.

TRAP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Target, investigate, and prosecute individuals involved in vehicle theft, particularly those professional thieves who organize, direct, finance, or otherwise engage in commercial vehicle theft for profit;
- Identify locations used in connection with vehicle theft offenses, including legitimate "front" business locations (i.e., body shops and auto dismantlers) which operate as commercial "chop shops," and take appropriate action;
- Provide training and expertise for participating agencies throughout Los Angeles County; and
- Seek input and solicit cooperation from the private sector to coordinate a public deterrence program.

TRAP INQUIRIES AND RESPONSE

TRAP personnel can provide guidance and/or respond to a request from Department members, or other law enforcement agencies regarding the following:

- Any vehicle with an altered or missing Vehicle Identification Number (VIN);
- Any location suspected of, or confirmed by law enforcement as a “chop shop;”
- Any investigation leading to a large, sophisticated auto theft ring;
- Any suspect in custody willing to provide information leading to the recovery of multiple stolen vehicles;
- Any business or residence where multiple suspected or confirmed stolen vehicles are found; and/or
- Assist with surveillance on auto theft related cases and operations.

CASE ASSIGNMENT

Supervisors approving and assigning incident reports involving stolen motor vehicles, including heavy duty commercial vehicles, heavy duty construction equipment (backhoes, skip loaders, etc.) and motorhomes, are reminded that the incident reports are not to be assigned directly to TRAP, regardless of how TRAP assisted. The reports shall be assigned to the respective station’s detective bureau.

Special Request Distributions (SRD)

Any vehicle theft-related report, including those in which TRAP detectives were notified or assisted with, shall be assigned to the respective stations detective bureau and include TRAP in the SRD section of the incident report. TRAP will make the determination if they will or will not assume control of an investigation after receiving the SRD report, and/or conferring with the respective station’s detective bureau.

LARCIS Disposition codes

If TRAP assumes control of the investigation, the station detective shall clear the case in the Los Angeles Regional Crime Information System (LARCIS), utilizing the disposition code 112, (inactive/reassigned to another agency) and 50, (suspect/subject turned over to another agency).

Under no circumstances should LARCIS case status disposition code 110 be used when clearing a case in which TRAP has assumed investigative control.

The detective will include the TRAP detective’s name assuming control of the investigation and refer to TRAP’s file number in their supplemental report.

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