

TECHNICAL INFORMATION PAPER SERIES | MOTOR TRUCK CARGO SECURITY



MAKE SURE YOUR VALUABLE CARGO STAYS THAT WAY – YOURS.



CARGO THEFT

Combating cargo theft threats to your organization should consist of a “layered” approach, consisting of multiple deterrents.

ADDRESSING SAFETY AND THREATS

From organized crime rings to local neighborhood bad actors, the threat of motor truck cargo theft has remained constant over the years. Driven by the increased dollar values per trailer load, as well as decreasing cargo crime police investigations along with minimal criminal prison sentences in many states for cargo theft, cargo crime can become a real challenge.

In order to combat these threats, your organization should develop a “layered” approach to cargo theft which should not only be a formalized and written plan, but management and drivers trained in its use. This layered approach should include management programs, physical truck security and technology solutions. The amount of security layers will depend upon a variety of factors, including type of commodity, transit lanes being utilized and other risk factors.

Just about any commodity can be stolen anywhere or anytime, however in the U.S., the following statistics are interesting:

- **Commodities:** Food and beverage lead the list, followed by household goods/appliances and then consumer electronics.
- **Where:** California, Texas, Florida, Georgia and Illinois are typically the states that lead the nation in year over year thefts.
- **When:** Fridays are the most common day of the week for cargo theft, especially prior to long, 3-day holiday weekends.

continued



MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Appoint a corporate security person who's responsible for implementation of the plan. All drivers, including owner/operators operating under your DOT number, should undergo periodic cargo theft awareness training, be provided your written transit security protocols and sign that they have received such training.

Establish a corporate security plan, which should include items such as:

- Review routes/lanes to avoid high risk areas and truck stops – use crime data and drivers' knowledge.
- Maintain a list of approved/secured parking areas, after research with local law enforcement and/or qualified third parties. More and more facilities are providing "secured" parking for truckers in the U.S.
- Actions to take in the event of suspicious acts, driver illness, vehicle breakdown, accidents, detours, bad weather and refusal of delivery at drop-off point.
- For high-risk commodities, prohibit drivers to stop within 250 miles of pickup point, as thieves will often follow a load until the truck stops for food/fuel/restroom and then strike when the trailer is left unattended. Long-haul drivers should be rested, fueled and ready to drive for at least 4 uninterrupted hours when hauling theft attractive goods.
- Consider team drivers for high dollar valued loads so the risks associated with stopping and unattended trailers is minimized.
- Drivers should be minimally informed on what's being hauled and not allowed to share information to outsiders.
- Nationwide criminal background checks of drivers for the past 7 years, plus reference checks.
- Formal procedures to terminate drivers, including recovery of keys, access badges, etc.
- Subcontractors/owner-operators must be trained and required to adhere to any plan.
- Who to contact in the event of theft – management, dispatch, local police, insurer.
- Procedures for drivers to follow in the event of theft – photos, notifications, etc.

TRUCK PHYSICAL SECURITY

Physical security of the tractor and trailer are important aspects of any cargo safety program. Items to consider include:

- Vehicle keys and padlocks only available to assigned driver and senior management.
- High quality, theft-resistant stainless or case-hardened steel padlocks or similar on all accessible cargo doors. Padlocks' combination are to be unique and/or keyed separately. Electronic locks should have unique passwords able to be reset by dispatch. The use of plastic seals is not an equivalent to theft-deterrent locking devices.
- Tamper seals (ISO 17712 compliant) on all FTL shipments with procedures in place to track/document seals' chain of custody.
- Utilize trailer immobilization device(s) such as kingpin locks, brake line locks (glad hands), and/or landing gear locks if loaded, unattended trailers must be used.
- If loaded trailers must be left unattended (not desirable), back trailer doors against a hard wall or object to make door access difficult.
- For high valued, target commodity loads, tractor and trailer burglar alarm systems should be provided. These are available from several specialty vendors.

TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS – TRACTOR/TRAILER TRACKING

- Mobile phone or 2-way radio for communication between driver and dispatch.
- GPS technology capable of tracking tractor (most desirable tractor and trailer), with enabling of the "geo-fencing" feature for approved transit routes. GPS sending unit should be installed in a hidden (covert) area and ideally not disclosed to the driver.
- Reporting interval for tracking device location must be at least every 30 minutes (5 minutes for very high valued items).
- Tracking device should be able to report device tampering, vehicle stopping, tracker battery status and trailer door opening.

PICK-UP AND DELIVERY PROCESSES

Unless prohibited by the customer, the driver should witness truck loading and verify count. If prohibited or not possible, Bills of Lading should be marked “Loading not witnessed.”

Prior to delivery, “pre-alerts” should be performed when possible in order to alert the customer of expected delivery times, driver name, vehicle license plate details, cargo details (piece count), and trailer seal numbers (if applicable). This will help eliminate delays, detours and having to leave the load unattended prior to off-loading.

Another proactive step is to take photos of the driver and license plate, and copies of driver’s licenses for drivers picking up loads; hesitation by drivers to allow photos and ID checks may trigger a “red flag” to warehouse staff.

In the event a driver is notified of an unusual change in delivery destination while en route, a confirmation method should be developed with management to verify destination change is correct and not an attempt to detour/steal transported goods.



CARGO AT REST IS CARGO AT RISK



This remains true to this day. Unattended, loaded trailers present the greatest risk of loss in transit crime. The appropriate measures we’ve shared may help reduce theft-related losses, help prevent damage to your company’s reputation and reduce interruptions in the supply chain. Consult with the Risk Engineering department at The Hartford for further guidance and assistance.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR SAFETY.

Contact your Risk Engineering consultant to access resources 24/7 with policy number at [TheHartford.com/riskengineering](https://www.TheHartford.com/riskengineering)



Business Insurance
Employee Benefits
Auto
Home

The information provided in these materials is intended to be general and advisory in nature. It shall not be considered legal advice. The Hartford does not warrant that the implementation of any view or recommendation contained herein will: (i) result in the elimination of any unsafe conditions at your business locations or with respect to your business operations; or (ii) be an appropriate legal or business practice. The Hartford assumes no responsibility for the control or correction of hazards or legal compliance with respect to your business practices, and the views and recommendations contained herein shall not constitute our undertaking, on your behalf or for the benefit of others, to determine or warrant that your business premises, locations or operations are safe or healthful, or are in compliance with any law, rule or regulation. Readers seeking to resolve specific safety, legal or business issues or concerns related to the information provided in these materials should consult their safety consultant, attorney or business advisors. All information and representations herein are as of January 2021.

The Hartford® is The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc. and its subsidiaries, including Hartford Fire Insurance Company. Its headquarters is in Hartford, CT.

20-ML-551948 © January 2021 The Hartford