

# "Land Pirates" Threat To Truck Drivers



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Europol, the EU's police Agency, has reported that truck drivers on European roads are facing the same threat of hijack as shipping off the Somalian coast. Organised crime gangs, nick-named 'land pirates' by truckers, are behind the robberies and they view truck drivers as an easy target.

A spokesman for Staveley Head, one of the UK's leading HGV insurance providers, said "Many of the policyholders who have their truck insurance with us have Green Cards, or European travel extensions, to their policies and we feel they should be made aware of these recent statistics from Europol for their own safety. Hijacking on European roads is definitely on the increase and although Europol will do their part to counter these crimes, it is up to every truck driver to be as vigilant as possible."

It is the Eastern European countries, such as Poland, Hungary and Romania, which pose the greatest risk. Cargoes being targeted are those which are valuable and easy to dispose of or sell on. Alcohol, tobacco, computers, designer clothing and prescription drugs are high on the list but nickel and copper appear to be the most attractive target for the thieves.

The International Road Transport Union recently released a survey indicating that one in six truck drivers has been attacked in the last five years, and of those victims one in five had been targeted more than once. Nearly half of the crimes took place in truck parking areas.

Europol director Rob Wainwright said "Road-related cargo crime threatens the principle of free movement of goods across Europe." He went on to advise national police forces "Close co-operation and joint efforts are necessary, otherwise we will not be able to match criminals who are both innovative and cruel in their actions and behaviour."

If you want further information about this subject, or any aspect of lorry insurance or simply want a truck insurance quote Staveley Head will be pleased to assist.

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