



**Motor Vehicle Theft  
and Insurance Fraud  
Prevention Board**

# **2018 Annual Report**

**New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services**  
*80 South Swan Street, Albany, New York 12210*

[www.criminaljustice.ny.gov](http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov)

**New York State  
Motor Vehicle and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board  
2018 Annual Report**

This report is submitted by the Board as required by Section 846-1(3)(h) of the New York State Executive Law. The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services provides staff support to the Board.

Issued November 2019

**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
*Governor*  
State of New York

**Michael C. Green**  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*  
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services

**New York State  
Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance  
Fraud Prevention  
Board Members (2018)**

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*Executive Deputy Commissioner*  
New York State Division of Criminal  
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**James Potts**  
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**Yvonne J. Behan**  
*Director*

**Ronda N. Ross**  
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**Law Enforcement and Legal  
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**David Martin**  
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## I. Introduction

Motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud have a substantial impact on insurance rates in New York State and across the country. These crimes are highly sophisticated and cost law-abiding motor vehicle owners and insurance policy holders hundreds of millions of dollars in increased business expenses and significantly higher annual insurance rates.

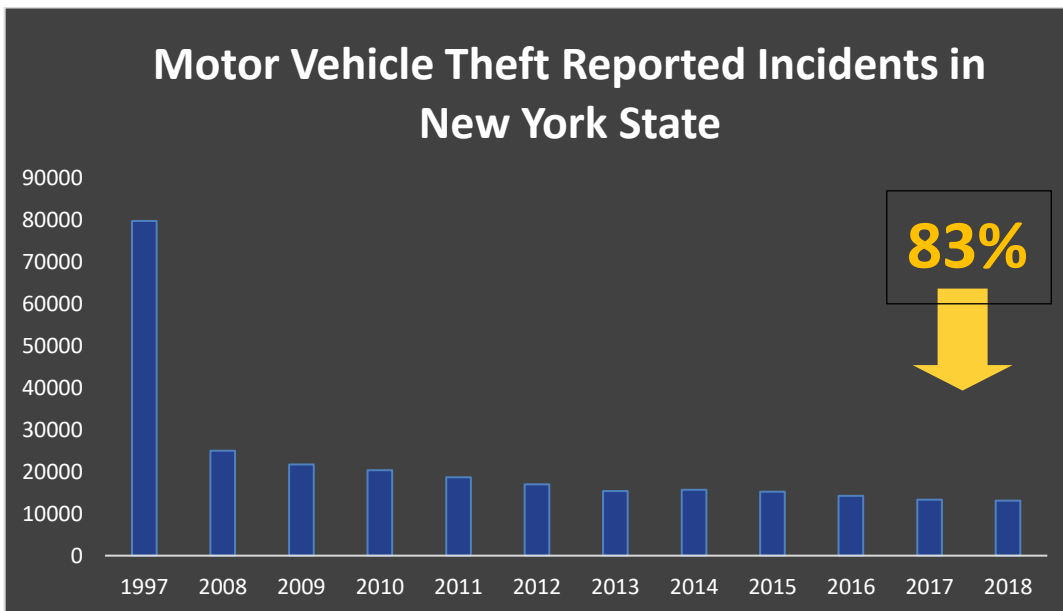
The *New York Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Demonstration Program* (MVTIFP) was created in 1994 by state Executive Law Article 36-A, and is designed to reduce the overall cost of motor vehicle insurance in the state by targeting theft and fraud. A 12-member *Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board* (board) – including representatives of law enforcement, consumers of motor vehicle insurance, insurance carriers, and relevant state agency representatives selected by the Governor and the Legislature – is responsible for overseeing the program. The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services provides staff support to the board and the program.

This 2018 annual report summarizes the activities of the board and the program and is published as required under Executive Law §846-1(3)(h).

The program is funded by a statutorily required fee assessed on each motor vehicle insurance policy issued in New York State. The 2017-2018 state budget appropriated \$3.7 million for the program, which was used to support grants to law enforcement agencies and other entities to combat theft and fraud during the calendar year 2018.

### A. Motor Vehicle Theft

Great strides have been made in reducing motor vehicle theft in New York. From 1997 through 2018, reported thefts were down 83 percent. In 2018, there were 13,075 motor vehicles reported stolen in New York State, representing a slight decrease from the 13,305 reported stolen in 2017.



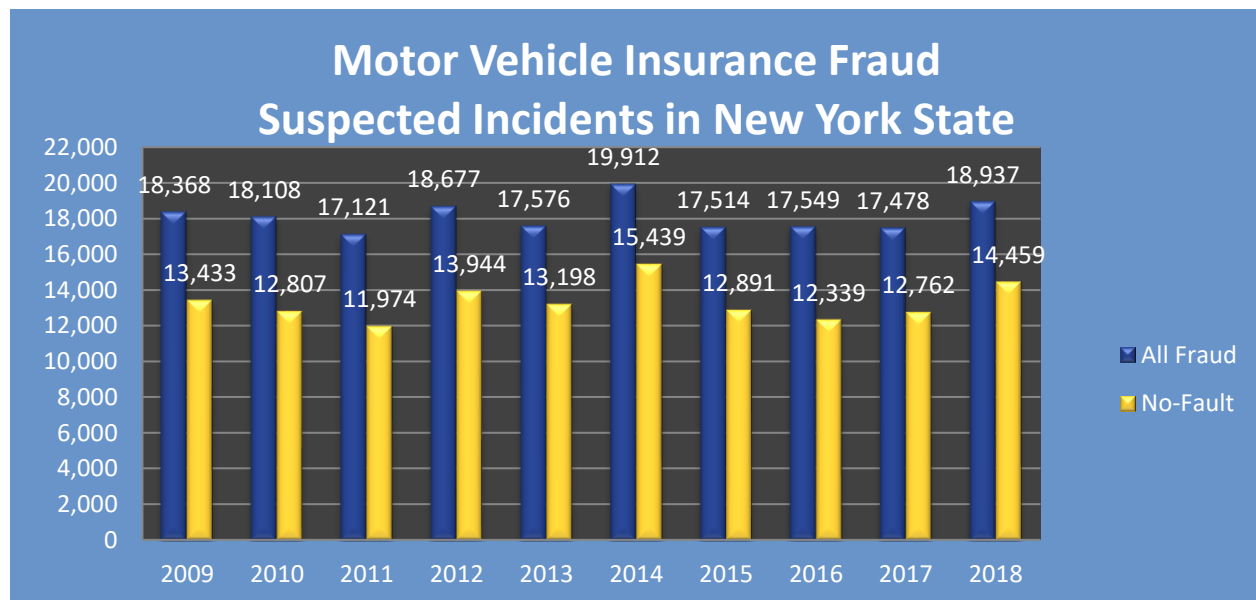
While much of the motor vehicle theft continues to occur in the New York City region, six non-New York City counties – Erie, Monroe, Nassau, Onondaga, Suffolk and Westchester – also rank among the top 10 counties for reported motor vehicle thefts. Six of the top 10 counties experienced decreases in incidents of motor vehicle theft from 2017 to 2018, while four experienced increases.

Motor Vehicle Theft 2017 vs. 2018 Top Ten Counties			
County	2017	2018	% Change
Kings	1,925	1,720	(10.6)
Queens	1,582	1,575	0
Bronx	1,356	1,312	(3.2)
Erie	1,140	1,172	2.8
Suffolk	1,088	963	(11.5)
Monroe	956	907	(5.1)
New York	638	742	16.3
Onondaga	574	711	23.9
Nassau	653	671	2.8
Westchester	583	457	(21.6)

## B. Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud

New York State drivers are statutorily required to have automobile insurance that includes coverage for the following:

- **No-Fault Personal Injury Protection:** To pay medical expenses, lost earnings and other reasonable and necessary expenses for a driver or passenger injured in, or a pedestrian injured by, their vehicle.
- **Liability:** To protect against the harm their vehicle – or any vehicle they drive with the owner’s permission – might do to other people and their property.
- **Uninsured Motorists:** To protect against the injuries that they, their family or their passengers might suffer in a hit-and-run accident or in an accident with an uninsured vehicle.



Insurance carriers reported 18,937 incidents of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud to the DFS Insurance Frauds Bureau in 2018, including no-fault, motor vehicle theft, motor vehicle arson, larceny from motor vehicles, motor vehicle vandalism, motor vehicle collision damage, falsified motor vehicle invoices and fraudulent motor vehicle insurance cards. This represents an increase in motor vehicle fraud reports of approximately 8 percent from 2017 to 2018.

No-fault motor vehicle insurance fraud remained the most reported form of insurance fraud, accounting for approximately 57 percent of the total insurance fraud reports documented, and 76 percent of all suspected incidents of motor vehicle insurance fraud reported. No-fault insurance fraud reports increased by approximately 13 percent, from 12,762 in 2017 to 14,459 in 2018.

While recent annual reports of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud remain below historic highs, they have consistently equaled or exceeded 2008 levels, warranting a continued focus on reducing the incidence of these offenses.

## **II. Program Goals**

The goal of the MVTIFP program is to provide an integrated means to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. The program provides funding for initiatives that include theft and fraud prevention education, and the establishment and maintenance of specialized law enforcement units to combat motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Eligible applicants for funding include local law enforcement agencies and not-for-profit organizations that administer one or more motor vehicle theft or insurance fraud prevention programs or driver safety programs conforming to a plan approved by the board.

As required by Executive Law Article 36-A, statewide Motor Vehicle Theft and Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Plans of Operation are updated periodically on recommendations from the board. These separate plans of operation include: assessing the scope of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud problems, including a regional analysis of motor vehicle theft and/or motor vehicle insurance fraud incidents and related activities, and analyses of various methods of combating problems associated with motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

Both plans of operation are available under [Annual Reports and Publications](#) and provide guidance on the types of projects supported by program funding.

## **III. Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board**

The Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention program is administered by a 12-member Board with the Division of Criminal Justice Services' (DCJS) commissioner or his or her designee serving as its chairman. All board members are appointed by the governor: three are recommended by the speaker of the state Assembly, three by the temporary president of the state Senate, and the remaining five by the governor. Members serve four-year terms and are not considered public officials. The board includes representatives of consumers of motor vehicle insurance, motor vehicle insurance companies, law enforcement agencies and the judicial system. The board must meet a minimum of four times annually.

The board is charged with developing and recommending coordinated plans of operation that provide for the statewide reduction of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Elements of the plans must include:

- Assessments of the magnitude and scope of the problems, including an analysis of theft and fraud by region

- Methods for combating the problems
- Development of a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process to fund local programs to combat both problems

Pursuant to the recommendations of the board, Executive Law Article 36-A authorizes the DCJS commissioner to:

- Execute contracts
- Accept grants and other contributions
- Make grants through an RFP process
- Appoint employees and affix compensation
- Request assistance and information from the New York State Police, police departments throughout the state, state Department of Financial Services, state Department of Motor Vehicles, state Office of Court Administration, any New York state agency or from any insurer
- Assist municipalities in the development of local programs
- Advise and assist the superintendent of Insurance pursuant to Insurance Law §2348 (this section now requires that rate filings reflect insurers' savings resulting from the program)
- Annually submit to the governor and chairs of the Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees a report on the board's activities, the activities of grant recipients and the results or impact of those activities

#### **A. Board Activity**

Board meetings in 2018 were conducted on March 13, June 20, September 19, and December 5.



## B. Programs Funded by The Board for Calendar Year 2019

In 2018, the Board approved the following award amounts for calendar year 2019:

<b>New York City</b>	<b>Award</b>
Bronx County District Attorney	\$329,991
Kings County District Attorney	\$250,873
New York County District Attorney	\$263,445
Queens County District Attorney	\$560,625
Richmond County District Attorney	\$ 50,144
New York City Police Department (NYPD)—Auto Crime Division	\$199,000
NYPD—Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad	\$100,000
NYPD—Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit	\$ 24,873
Fire Department of New York City	\$124,800
<b>New York City Suburban Region</b>	<b>Award</b>
Nassau County District Attorney	\$114,300
Nassau County Police Department	\$145,869
Suffolk County District Attorney	\$283,210
Suffolk County Police Department	\$123,556
Westchester County District Attorney	\$277,963
Yonkers City Police Department	\$122,414
<b>Capital Region/Hudson Valley</b>	<b>Award</b>
Albany City Police Department	\$33,000
Albany County District Attorney	\$65,050
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>Award</b>
Buffalo City Police Department	\$106,884
Cheektowaga Town Police Department	\$36,542
Erie County District Attorney	\$104,758
Niagara County District Attorney	\$109,443
Niagara County Sheriff Department	\$20,000
Niagara Falls City Police Department	\$23,400
<b>Finger Lakes Region</b>	<b>Award</b>
Monroe County District Attorney	\$87,000
Monroe County Sheriff Office	\$36,500
Rochester City Police Department	\$49,520
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>Award</b>
New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc.	\$65,100
New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc.	\$40,740

## IV. 2018 Grant Program Descriptions

### **New York City Region**

- Bronx County District Attorney's Office
- Kings County District Attorney's Office
- New York County District Attorney's Office
- Queens County District Attorney's Office
- Richmond County District Attorney's Office
- New York City Police Department Auto Crime Division, Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad and Patrol Borough Queens South Auto Larceny Fraud Investigations Unit
- Fire Department of New York City



### **Bronx County District Attorney's Office**

The Bronx District Attorney's Office Anti-Auto Theft Unit, in collaboration with individual New York Police Department (NYPD) precincts, has investigated both auto crime and insurance fraud since 1995 – the first year it received grant funding. The Bronx Anti-Auto Theft program received a grant of \$329,991 for 2018, which partially funded salaries of six assistant district attorneys, four investigators and a forensic accountant. The Anti-Auto Theft program aims to increase the number of successful prosecutions of defendants charged with grand larceny of a motor vehicle, criminal possession of stolen property, motor vehicle fraud, auto stripping and/or unauthorized use of vehicles, and insurance fraud.

### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Bronx District Attorney's Office owns several bait cars and a surveillance van used to enhance undercover operations. Working jointly with police precincts throughout Bronx County that have experienced an increase in car theft, the bait cars are positioned in high crime areas with plainclothes police officers stationed nearby. In 2018, prosecutors worked with Bronx precincts to conduct bait car operations and to use a license plate reader to supplement investigations. Joint operations between the NYPD and the district attorney's Auto Crime Unit led to the recovery of 99 vehicles in 2018, valued at approximately \$1,366,178.

Investigators and assistant prosecutors at the Bronx District Attorney's Office have maintained relationships and communications with collaborating partners in the fields of auto theft and insurance fraud. In 2018, investigators and prosecutors conferred with the following partner agencies: National Insurance Crime Bureau, the New York City Auto Crime Squad, Auto Larceny Unit and NYPD precinct commands, adjacent and remote local police commands, the New York State Police, the state Department of Financial Services, other prosecutors' offices both inside and outside of New York State, the state Department of Motor Vehicles, and special investigations units of major motor vehicle insurance carriers. In 2017, the Anti-Auto Theft Unit was moved from the Economic Crime Bureau to the Trial Division, further streamlining the vertical prosecution model for these cases.

The Bronx District Attorney's Office continues to investigate and prosecute insurance fraud cases. In 2018, the office worked with the New York State Police Auto Theft Task Force to investigate a scheme to enhance damages to vehicles in order to obtain more funds from insurance companies. The investigation is ongoing.

## PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	89	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	43
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	109	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	80
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	244	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

### Kings County District Attorney’s Office

The Kings County District Attorney’s Office (KCDA) received a \$250,873 grant in 2018, paying for part of the salaries of five assistant prosecutors, two senior prosecutors, one detective investigator and one deputy bureau chief, in addition to necessary training on advances in the field. Motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases are primarily handled by the Trial Division Zones, while the Investigations Division focuses on long-term investigations.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

In order to maximize impact, the district attorney’s office utilizes a three-pronged approach to fight motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The first prong focuses resources on the prosecution of street level motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The second prong calls for long-term investigations into organized schemes such as fraudulent vehicle theft claims, fictitious invoices from collision repair shops, fraudulent no-fault claims arising from staged accidents, fraudulent medical claims arising from exaggerated or non-existent medical treatment, and fraudulent durable medical equipment claims. The third prong focuses on identifying those who fund and benefit from organized motor vehicle crime, which allows authorities to pursue asset forfeiture and other financial penalties.

By collaborating with other agencies, the district attorney’s office utilizes joint resources and expertise to target, analyze and fight both existing and emerging criminal patterns. The office works with detectives from the New York City Police Department Fraudulent Collision Squad and Auto Crime Division, as well as with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) and insurance agency Special Investigative Units (SIU).

In 2018, the district attorney’s office noted an overall trend involving the theft of older model vehicles, which lack the technology of more modern vehicles. The KCDA utilizes a Zone Program, which breaks the borough’s 23 police precincts into five trial zones, allowing for a customized approach to identifying and prosecuting target crimes in specific areas. Utilizing surveillance, confidential informants, undercover operations, and search warrants, KCDA aggressively investigates and prosecutes motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud crimes. The Zone Program allows KCDA to identify individuals involved in targeted crimes in a given area and to determine relationships and associations between those individuals. Lower level offenders, such as runners, accident jump-ins, and accident stagers, are developed into confidential informants when appropriate in order to pursue higher level targets for prosecution. In addition, the Zone Program allows the office to notify the community of current or emerging crime patterns.

## PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	0	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	1935*
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	4399*
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	9601*	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

\*Agency wide (grant funded statistics not reported)

### New York County District Attorney's Office

The New York County (Manhattan) District Attorney's Office (DANY) received a \$263,445 grant in 2018, funding 13 part-time assistant district attorneys, a part-time investigative analyst, a part-time investigator and a part-time paralegal. This bolsters the district attorney's ability to investigate and prosecute crimes such as motor vehicle theft, unlicensed operation of motor vehicles, automobile-part theft rings, fraudulent insurance broker schemes, and to combat the production, possession, and use of counterfeit auto insurance and other motor vehicle related documents. Significantly, over the last three years the program has helped fund a major investigation into the tow truck industry, resulting in the filing of numerous indictments against 17 individuals and 10 companies.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

Members of the Financial Frauds Bureau, the Major Economic Crimes Bureau, and the Rackets Bureau conduct long-term investigations into sophisticated criminal schemes pertaining to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. Assistant district attorneys and support staff investigated and prosecuted several significant cases in 2018.

For the past three years, much of the New York District Attorney's Office's MVTIF grant funding has been used to support a large-scale investigation into the tow truck industry. In the spring of 2016, DANY, in collaboration with NYPD, NYC Sheriff's Office, NYS Department of Taxation and Finance, and the National Insurance Crime Bureau, began investigating allegations of illegal activity within the tow truck industry, including instances of coercion and insurance fraud. As a result of this two-year investigation, DANY developed cases against a group of individuals who operate numerous tow truck companies, alleging that they are creating geographic monopolies on towing business, falsifying business records to illegally acquire tow licenses, engaging in coercion and violence to maintain control over towing business, participating in insurance fraud by towing vehicles to auto body shops they control which enhance damages to vehicles, and engaging in money laundering to hide the proceeds of their illicit activities.

In February 2018, multiple individuals and companies were indicted for maintaining this unlawful monopoly on the towing industry. Seventeen individuals and ten companies were indicted on charges including Enterprise Corruption, Scheme to Defraud, Conspiracy, Offering a False Instrument for Filing, and other charges. Throughout 2018, grant-funded assistant district attorneys continued to investigate and build cases against these defendants.

In addition to the tow truck investigation, other assistant district attorneys continued smaller investigations into instances of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. In 2018, the Trial Bureau handled dozens of fraudulent document cases, many of which arose from routine car stops by NYPD patrol officers. Other Trial Bureau cases involved individuals who were arrested while driving stolen cars and who committed other offenses such as credit card fraud or identity theft.

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	25	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	14
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	10	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	19
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	20	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

**Queens County District Attorney’s Office**

The Queens County District Attorney’s Office received a \$560,625 grant in 2018, paying for three full-time assistant district attorneys, two supervisors and three full-time investigators assigned to the Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit. This unit is comprised of attorneys, investigators and paralegals with special expertise in auto theft and insurance fraud. The unit focuses on long-term investigations and the handling of specially selected cases for trial that target organized auto theft and insurance fraud activity. A major emphasis is placed on building enterprise corruption cases to ensure that the foundations of criminal activity are uprooted and to obtain the maximum sentencing possible. In addition, individual prosecutions are aggressively pursued.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

In 2018, the Queens District Attorney’s Office continued its strategy of combating auto crimes and insurance fraud through long-term investigative activity and targeting cases for specialized handling with stiff dispositions and sentencing. This approach involves strong partnerships and coordinated efforts with local, state, and federal law enforcement, prosecutors, governmental agencies and the insurance industry. The assignment of dedicated staff to enhanced investigative and prosecutorial initiatives as well as the review and targeting of cases for stiff dispositions and sentencing are important components of the strategy. Intensive investigative activity, including sting operations, development of confidential informants, surveillance and electronic eavesdropping are utilized. Other important components of the strategy include vertical prosecutions, intelligence gathering and sharing, crime analysis, and the use of state-of-the-art technology.

The following examples highlight some of the successful investigative and prosecutorial efforts in 2018:

As a result of one investigation, an individual pleaded guilty to third-degree arson and was sentenced to up to eight years in prison for setting fire to numerous vehicles during an arson spree during which he burned nine separate vehicles.

Another investigation involved the theft of 15 catalytic converters from vehicles parked throughout Queens. In most cases, the parts were sold to a recycling company in the Bronx the same day they were stolen. As a result of the investigation, the defendant pleaded guilty and was sentenced to jail time.

In an insurance fraud investigation, a Brooklyn man was sentenced to six months in jail for falsifying business records and other crimes related to a road rage incident. The defendant initially told police that he was the victim of a hit-and-run and accused a rival “Dollar Van” driver. The investigation showed that the defendant used his van to bump into the competitor’s vehicle and then filed the false police report. He was convicted of falsifying business records, making a punishable false written statement, offering a false instrument for filing, criminal mischief and falsely reporting an incident.

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	12	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	28
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	28	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	77
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	107	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$15,353

**Richmond County District Attorney’s Office**

The Richmond County (Staten Island) District Attorney’s Office received a \$50,144 grant in 2018, partially supporting four assistant district attorneys and one investigator. The Trials Bureau investigates and prosecutes all program felony cases; and the Criminal Court Bureau prosecutes cases with felony charges that have the potential to be pleaded down to a misdemeanor.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The primary goal of the MVTIFP program is to provide an integrated means to prevent and reduce incidences of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud in Richmond County. The district attorney’s approach to case reviews includes interviews of suspects and witnesses to gain intelligence about defendants’ typical methods and to learn about the latest technologies employed by criminals. The district attorney’s office works closely with its key partners to address insurance fraud-related crimes.

In 2018, 164 cases were prosecuted for motor vehicle theft-related activities: 58 misdemeanor arrests and 106 felony arrests. Many of the felony defendants faced multiple counts; some involved illegal drugs, and other cases included assaults.

In one notable case, a defendant was operating a stolen vehicle when he struck a civilian and pinned him against a house, causing his death. The defendant was charged with murder, grand larceny and criminal possession of stolen property. The defendant was indicted, and the case is pending in Supreme Court.

The office noted a considerable number of arrests involving vehicles taken by the owners’ relatives or friends without permission. Many of these cases seem to involve a link between domestic violence and unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. The investigators and attorneys are examining these cases for any trends that could aid in future investigations.

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	164	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	44
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	1	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	107
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	164	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

## New York City Police Department Auto Crime Division

The Auto Crime Division is part of the Criminal Enterprise Division of the Detective Bureau of the NYPD. Comprised of approximately 100 members, its mission is to reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud within New York City through a coordinated approach involving law enforcement, crime analysis and prosecution. The Auto Crime Division utilizes an integrated approach to prevent motor vehicle crime as well as to detect, investigate and prosecute these crimes.

### MVTIFP Activity in 2018

The Auto Crime Division utilizes several strategies in combatting motor vehicle related crime. The unit utilizes an in-house team of analysts to monitor trends and data related to auto theft and insurance fraud related crimes, and to disseminate such information throughout the NYPD and other neighboring jurisdictions to help determine locations for targeted enforcement.

Through investigations into social media and internet sale of stolen vehicles and parts, the Auto Crime Division has gained investigative leads into organized theft rings and has recovered numerous stolen vehicles and parts through buy-bust operations. The use of undercover officers and informants enhances these investigations. The division also maintains extensive interstate and Federal law enforcement contacts, which enable investigators to develop information on individuals outside of New York who use the internet for criminal activity.

The use of modern technology – including wire taps, GPS tracking devices, License Plate Readers (LPRs), cameras and smart phone technology – plays an important role in auto crime investigations. Smart phones allow investigators to obtain immediate information in the field, including important DMV, NICB, E-Justice and vehicle salvage records. In addition, advanced computers are used to view and enhance photos and videos, to assist in the identification of stolen vehicles or vehicles used in crimes. In 2018, the Auto Crime Division began steps to train its investigators in the use of Berla vehicle forensics technology. When the training is complete, every borough in the city will have access to investigators trained in the acquisition of data from vehicles.

In addition to its investigative work, the Auto Crime Division also maintains one of only two college accredited courses on Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud in the country. This four-day course is conducted twice a month and has trained 1,037 attendees in the fundamentals of auto theft and insurance fraud. In 2018, the Auto Crime Division also conducted what is believed to be the first Vehicle Identification Certification class in the country, awarding Advanced Certifications on Vehicle Identification from videos and photographs to 12 investigators.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

<i>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	5,428	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	3
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	5,428	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	3,454	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	3
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide*	3	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	498

\*This statistic was not tracked agency-wide, grant funded numbers are reported.

## New York Police Department Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad

The NYPD Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad (FCIS) received a \$100,000 grant in 2018. The grant paid for vehicle forensics equipment, training, overtime for uniformed members and costs incurred during investigations. The FCIS works alongside the Health Care Fraud Task Force (HCFTF) to combat no-fault insurance fraud at the state and federal levels, conducting both short and long-term investigations.

### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

In 2018, the FCIS worked in conjunction with numerous insurance companies to investigate individuals filing potentially fraudulent accident claims involving rental cars. FCIS has worked closely with the insurance investigators and NICB to identify the individuals involved in these accidents and determine any links between the claimants. Connections between those involved are established by surveillance, social media checks and interviews in an effort to identify as many of the fraudulent claims as possible. Many of the fraudulent accidents result in extended claims involving significant medical treatment. In those cases, the HCFTF investigates the manner in which individuals are receiving treatment for further indications of fraud.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

#### ***2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity***

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	NA*	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	32
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	NA	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	32
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	NA	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	30
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	NA	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	10

\*The FCIS responds solely to insurance fraud cases and does not track theft-related statistics.

## New York Police Department Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit

The NYPD Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit (ALFIU) is a specialized unit in Patrol Borough Queens South which was formed to combat auto theft fraud. The unit consists of six full-time employees: four investigators and two supervisors. The sole function of the ALFIU is to investigate reported vehicle thefts that have indications of fraud. The ALFIU received a grant of \$24,873 in 2018, which was used to purchase Berla vehicle forensics investigation equipment and associated training for unit members.

### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The ALFIU was specifically created to target fraudulent reports of auto theft in Patrol Borough Queens South. Unit investigators review all auto theft reports for indicators of fraud. When a case is selected for further investigation, the relevant parties from the insurance industry are contacted and insurance investigators and ALFIU investigators coordinate efforts to reveal any inconsistencies in the details of the reported theft. The ALFIU's collaborative program strategy to combat automobile fraud also includes routine communication with the Queens County District Attorney's Office for case development and to ensure that maximum charges are brought against perpetrators of insurance fraud. Additionally, unit members often provide assistance and guidance to patrol officers to improve efforts to detect and prevent auto theft fraud.



In 2018, the ALFIU purchased Berla vehicle forensics equipment and sent unit members to comprehensive training on the use of the equipment. This equipment allows investigators to retrieve a wide variety of data from vehicles, which can be used to assess the veracity of the reported theft. Investigators can use this data, along with witness accounts, video surveillance, LPR data and any other evidence generated, to challenge the claimant’s story. This often results in a withdrawal of the insurance claim and, when applicable, results in criminal charges.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b><i>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i></b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	4	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	255
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	726	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	48
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	585	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	74
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	69	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	106

**Fire Department of New York City**

The Fire Department of New York (FDNY) received a \$124,800 grant in 2018 to fund fire marshals assigned to the Auto Fraud Squad. The Auto Fraud Squad continues to screen all motor vehicle fires throughout the five boroughs of New York City to identify priority incidents, and particularly incidents of fraud. The focus of these investigations is forensic examination of the fire scene, evidence recognition and collection, and thorough document examination of the vehicle’s owners. The Auto Fraud Squad’s strategy is to employ all investigative techniques available in a coordinated effort to identify fraud.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

In 2018, the Auto Fraud Squad continued its focus on citywide vehicle fire activity, specifically focusing on incidents involving staged theft, arson, insurance fraud, conspiracy and associated crimes. The squad identified, investigated and brought to prosecution numerous incidents of arson and insurance fraud, resulting in convictions and/or denied or withdrawn insurance claims.

Members of the Auto Fraud Squad screened over 2,100 car fires in New York City in 2018. After screening, cases are selected for investigations that lead to denial of fraudulent insurance claims, arrest of those making the claims, as well as apprehension of those hired to torch the vehicles. The Auto Fraud Squad maintained a strong collaborative relationship with the NYPD Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit, the Queens District Attorney’s Office, and the New York State Department of Financial Services which led to successful investigation and prosecution of serial larceny and arson cases. Grant funding allows the fire marshals assigned to the grant additional work time to conduct canvasses for video and witnesses, and to screen relevant data from License Plate Readers, various city-controlled security cameras, and E-ZPass® records to enhance investigations.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

### 2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity

Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	317	Responses to Motor Vehicle Fires where Fraud Is Suspected	210
Total Arrests	39	Number of Fire Insurance Claims Cancelled Due to Initiation of Law Enforcement Investigation	19
Responses to Motor Vehicle Fires	2,180	Total Value of Claims Denied/Withdrawn	\$266,839

### **New York City Suburban Region**

Nassau County District Attorney's Office  
 Nassau County Police Department  
 Suffolk County District Attorney's Office  
 Suffolk County Police Department  
 Westchester County District Attorney's Office  
 Yonkers City Police Department



### **Nassau County District Attorney's Office**

The Nassau County District Attorney's Office (NCDA) received a \$114,300 grant in 2018, partially funding two assistant district attorneys, three investigators and an assistant dedicated to investigating and prosecuting theft and fraud cases. The office's Vehicle Theft and Fraud Unit was created in 2008 to prosecute motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases while working closely with members of the Nassau County Police Department, the National Insurance Crime Board and other law enforcement and insurance agencies in an effort to detect and reduce the incidence of these crimes.

### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Nassau County District Attorney's Vehicle Theft and Fraud (VTF) Unit investigates and prosecutes cases relating to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. Staff work with and act as liaison to other prosecutor offices, law enforcement, private entities and the public. The office's Just Ware Case Management System allows data analysis in tracking vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases to better follow and report these charges, analyze the types of offenses seen and the dispositions of these matters. The VTF unit works closely with the NCDA Technical Investigators on technical aspects of investigations, including monitoring and maintaining surveillance equipment and conducting forensic analysis of electronic devices.

In 2018, the VTF unit continued to monitor and supervise lower-level motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases handled by other prosecutors. VTF unit prosecutors handle all cases involving higher-level offenders and crime rings.

In one notable case, the VTF unit coordinated with the Bronx and Queens County District Attorneys' Offices to prosecute a defendant who was involved in the theft of catalytic converters from vehicles in all three counties. The unit obtained a top count felony plea in the case.

The VTF unit also coordinated with the Nassau County Police Department in the arrest and conviction of a defendant who stole three vehicles. Although the defendant had no prior convictions, unit prosecutors held the defendant to a felony and obtained a guilty plea to criminal possession of stolen property. The defendant was subsequently arrested for a new attempted vehicle theft, so the unit is recommending state prison on the original case.

In a notable insurance fraud investigation and prosecution, NCDA investigated a defendant who submitted a fraudulent insurance claim for over \$11,000 in vandalism damage to her vehicle. Investigators obtained video which contradicted the defendant’s claim and appeared to show her involvement in the crime. When confronted with the video evidence, the defendant admitted that the vehicle had extensive mechanical problems which she could not afford to repair. She vandalized her own vehicle so the insurance company would total it. The defendant pleaded guilty to insurance fraud and falsely reporting an incident

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	7	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	0
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	1	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	3
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	7	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

**Nassau County Police Department**

The Nassau County Police Department (NCPD) received a \$145,869 grant in 2018, which pays for overtime and training for officers, detectives, supervisors and intelligence analysts. This award allows police to conduct numerous operations designed to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Nassau County Police Department, in collaboration with the Nassau County District Attorney’s Office (NCDA), created strategies which are tailored to prevent and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County. The strategy is crafted as a continuum of activities, ranging from street level enforcement to investigations to prosecution. The NCPD strategy involves detectives, police officers, intelligence analysts and supervisors throughout the county incorporating intelligence-based policing to perform targeted and comprehensive enforcement and investigations.

During 2018, the department employed a variety of techniques to target motor vehicle-related crime. Intelligence analysts maintained data on motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud crime which they used to map the locations of car thefts and larcenies from autos. They created intelligence bulletins and other actionable intelligence that was utilized by officers and detectives to conduct targeted and enhanced enforcement and investigations. This included both overt and covert operations at locations where a high incidence of stolen autos and larcenies from autos have been occurring, such as railroad stations, malls and shopping areas. These efforts led to several arrests and vehicle recoveries.

Detectives also utilized grant funds to conduct a wide variety of enforcement and investigation activities, including but not limited to: regularly reviewing theft activity; examining stolen vehicle reports and field interviews for fraud indicators; checking national databases for recovery information (such as parking tickets, plate reader hits, ISO, CARFAX and NYSPIN); and indexing stolen vehicles with NICB.

NCPD identified and investigated several crime patterns, including the theft of high-end vehicles from

private residences, the theft of vehicles using fraudulent driver's licenses or identification, and the use of stolen or fraudulent credit cards to rent vehicles which are then used to commit other crime or are shipped out of the country.

In a case that highlights the collaborative efforts of NCPD, detectives and analysts identified a pattern of catalytic converter thefts which involved suspects crawling under cars in commuter parking lots. An intelligence bulletin was issued, and a patrol officer subsequently observed an individual hiding between two vehicles parked at the Massapequa railroad station. The officer questioned the individual who gave evasive answers and then fled the area. A Sawzall, hydraulic jack and catalytic converter were recovered at the scene, and the officer observed a partial license plate of the suspect's vehicle. Through investigation and information sharing with other agencies, a suspect was identified and a warrant was secured for GPS surveillance of the suspect's vehicle. Shortly after installing the GPS trackers, detectives received a tamper alert, indicating that the trackers had been removed. Detectives then secured a search warrant for the suspect's residence. Both GPS trackers were recovered, as well as several power tools, a floor jack and a catalytic converter. The defendant was charged with multiple felonies and misdemeanors which are pending.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b><i>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i></b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	125	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	44
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	428	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	234	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	39

### **Suffolk County District Attorney's Office**

The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office has a Financial Investigations & Money Laundering Bureau (FIMLB) that targets white collar crimes, including insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft. The district attorney received a \$283,210 grant in 2018, to fund four positions: two assistant district attorneys, a detective investigator and a paralegal.

The creation and maintenance of FIMLB has allowed investigators and prosecutors to strengthen resources and knowledge while achieving an increased level of coordination, experience and expertise in combating vehicle-related crimes. Presently, FIMLB prosecutes all cases generated by unit investigators related to insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft, as well as all motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases generated by the Suffolk County Police Department, the New York State Police, and the East End village police departments. FIMLB also handles referrals from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, the New York State Department of Financial Services, the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the Special Investigative Units of the insurance carriers.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The FIMLB successfully concluded several long-term and short-term investigations and prosecutions in 2018. The success of the Bureau's investigations relies heavily on collaboration between different law enforcement units and industry partners who understand that together, they can help reduce the incidents

of motor vehicle theft and fraudulent insurance claims. As a result of joint efforts, in 2018, the bureau recovered \$54,833 to insurers, the Department of Social Services, and other victims of insurance fraud. In addition, the bureau recovered \$111,677 in 2018, in restitution for victims of motor vehicle theft cases, including restitution paid directly to vehicle owners, dealerships and insurance companies.

The focus on investigation and prosecution of vehicle related crimes often leads to success in other areas. One successful investigation and prosecution involved a defendant in a tire and rim theft case. The defendant was convinced to work as a confidential informant and subsequently assisted in over 60 controlled buys of firearms. Those buys led to eavesdropping warrants resulting in the arrest of nine targets that were trafficking illegal firearms in Suffolk County. Seven of the targets have since pleaded guilty and been sentenced to significant prison sentences.

FIMLB also had a successful year in combatting motor vehicle insurance fraud. In one case, an insurance claim was filed on a classic 1974 Jensen Interceptor after it had been driven into a canal. Both the driver and the vehicle owner claimed injuries as a result of the accident and submitted for no fault/personal injury benefits. The owner also submitted a claim for the \$100,000 insured value of the vehicle. An investigation revealed that the vehicle was intentionally driven into the canal, and the owner was not in the vehicle at the time as reported in the insurance claim. Surveillance video from the area showed the owner jumping into the canal after the vehicle was already in the water. Both defendants were arrested and indicted for their roles, and prosecution is pending. The vehicle owner has agreed to pay the insurance company \$30,000 in restitution.

In another successful investigation, FIMLB, in collaboration with NICB, New York State Department of Financial Services and MetLife, placed a sting vehicle in an auto body repair facility that was suspected of enhancing damages to vehicles. Upon re-inspection by an expert, it was revealed that numerous parts had been fraudulently billed to the insurance company despite not having been replaced. In addition, several unnecessary repairs were made and billed. The owner of the facility was arrested in December, and prosecution is pending.

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	14	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	59
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	5	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	80
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	78	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$82,393

**Suffolk County Police Department**

The Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD) received a \$123,556 grant in 2018, to pay for the overtime needed to operate the program and for training. The department employs an intelligence-based and data-driven approach to investigating motor vehicle and insurance fraud crime. The department utilizes the Property/Auto Crime Unit (PAC) to maintain a centralized approach and dedicated command focused on motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

In 2018, 1,059 vehicles were reported stolen in Suffolk County, 186 less than in 2017. The vehicle recovery rate increased to 79 percent. The department continued its collaboration with the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office as well as with NICB, NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, and other area police departments. Unit detectives attended collaborative meetings held by the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office and the Nassau County District Attorney’s Office.

Detectives conducted numerous vehicle theft investigations, resulting in 46 felony arrests for charges including Auto Stripping, Grand Larceny, Criminal Possession of Stolen Property, Burglary, Possession of Forged Instruments, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing. One felony arrest stemmed from a long-term investigation into an individual who stole over \$200,000 worth of tires and rims from car dealerships. This arrest resulted in 22 separate charges. In addition to the felony arrests, investigations led to 11 misdemeanor arrests for a variety of charges.

Detectives collaborated with other agencies, including NYS Department of Motor Vehicles and insurance companies, to investigate incidents of insurance fraud. In 2018, 11 insurance fraud investigations were initiated resulting in 20 felony arrests for charges including Filing a False Instrument, Identity Theft, and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property. The PAC also conducted a collaborative meeting with DMV investigators and NYPD Auto Crime regarding an individual who was fraudulently purchasing and leasing cars to individuals throughout Queens and Long Island. The meeting was an important information-sharing session which led to the apprehension of the suspect. The case is ongoing.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b><i>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i></b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	163	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	11
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	1,059	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	842	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	1
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	2	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	39

### **Westchester County District Attorney’s Office**

The Westchester County District Attorney’s Office received a \$277,963 grant in 2018, to fund an Auto Crimes Unit with a senior assistant prosecutor and two police investigators. Since 2015, a crime analyst was added to the unit and works in partnership with a similar squad at the Yonkers Police Department. In addition to pursuing its own investigations, the unit provides daily assistance to the 42 police departments operating within the county on a variety of levels, including conducting extensive investigations with the local agencies.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Westchester County Auto Crimes Unit (ACU) observed several loosely categorized trends in auto theft in 2018:

The first trend involves organized car theft rings who commit identity theft to steal cars from dealerships and rental agencies for resale domestically and abroad. In one such case, two individuals engaged in a scheme to steal vehicles from dealerships. One defendant supplied the other with forged driver’s licenses and other identifying information, such as Social Security numbers, to be used to purchase vehicles. Investigation revealed that many of these stolen vehicles were later exported to Africa. Both defendants pleaded guilty to Identity Theft.

The second trend in auto theft involves the theft of vehicles from owner’s driveways. ACU conducted a

significant investigation into the theft of five high-end vehicles from driveways in southern Westchester County. The investigation began when police encountered two individuals backing out of a driveway in an attempt to steal a high-end vehicle. One defendant was driving the target vehicle and the other was driving another high-end vehicle which had been reported stolen out of New Jersey and was used to transport the defendants to the location. The defendants both fled at a high rate of speed, both striking police cruisers. One vehicle flipped, while the other continued to flee. Both drivers were apprehended, one in possession of a handgun and evidence of additional stolen vehicles. Subsequent investigation, involving collaboration with NYPD, local police agencies, New Jersey police agencies as well as the use of LPR technology, search warrants, subpoenas, and cell site orders, determined that the defendants were part of a gang responsible for the theft of five additional vehicles in Westchester and several others in New Jersey. The investigation and prosecution are ongoing.

The final trend involves the opportunistic theft of vehicles, parts and personal items from vehicles located within the criminals' cities of residence, including the theft of vehicles left unattended while running or with keys inside.

In addition to the trends highlighted above, the ACU continued to work collaboratively with neighboring law enforcement and District Attorneys' offices, hosting five local collaborative meetings to which all 42 police agencies in Westchester County were invited, as well as representatives of New York City and Connecticut law enforcement agencies, NYS DMV, Carco Group and General Motors.

#### **PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b><i>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i></b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	12	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	4
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	4	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	37
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	189	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

#### **Yonkers City Police Department**

The Yonkers Police Department received a \$122,414 grant in 2018, to pay for a full-time detective and overtime to support additional hours needed for complex investigations, as well as officer training expenses. The department investigates reports of stolen vehicles, cars with stolen parts, altered VINs, bogus registration and inspection stickers, and out-of-state dealer plates or other suspicious tags. The department works closely with other agencies, such as the New York City Police (NYPD), New York State Police (NYSP), and other local jurisdictions to combat auto crimes across the City of Yonkers.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

Yonkers Police Department continued its commitment to hosting a designated specialized auto crimes unit within the Detective Division, funding a full-time detective to conduct the work of combatting motor vehicle theft and pursuing fraud investigations. The unit works closely with the NYPD, NYSP, the District Attorney's office, NYS DMV and NICB to shut down chop shops, recover stolen autos and parts, and arrest the offenders. In 2018, the assigned detective worked over 161 hours of overtime to conduct investigations, intervene in auto theft plots, and apprehend auto theft offenders. In 2018, the City of Yonkers had 156 reported motor vehicle thefts and recovered 103 stolen vehicles. The auto crimes unit initiated 50 theft investigations and one fraud investigation, resulting in 22 felony arrests for theft and/or

insurance fraud.

The auto crimes unit continued the department’s technology-driven approach to investigating motor vehicle crimes. The assigned detective installs temporary surveillance cameras and license plate readers in critical motor vehicle crime locations, allowing these areas to be monitored during late night and early morning hours. The detective also installed a license plate reader on an unmarked vehicle used for patrols. These strategies have both proven valuable to the success of investigations.

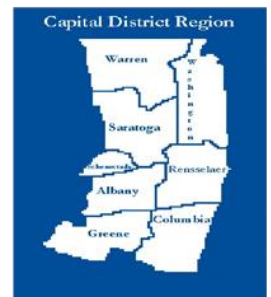
The Yonkers Police Department continued to see a rise in motorcycle theft in 2018. In many cases, offenders use a truck to lift the motorcycles from the street or from dealer lots. The auto crimes detective secured an abandoned motorcycle from a tow yard for use as a bait bike. The bait bike, which is equipped with a GPS tracking unit, is placed in high-theft areas and monitored with covert pole cameras. The city has also seen an increase in the theft of wheels from vehicles and has similarly combatted this problem with the use of a bait car and surveillance cameras. The bait bike/car and surveillance cameras have led to multiple successful investigations and arrests.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	50	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	1
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	156	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	1
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	103	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	1	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	22

**Capital District Region**

Albany City Police Department  
 Albany County District Attorney’s Office



**Albany City Police Department**

The Albany Police Department received a \$33,000 grant in 2018, to pay for police overtime and training for officers assigned to its Auto Crimes Task Force (ACTF). The task force consists of 36 members, including patrol officers, detectives, sergeants and lieutenants. The task force operates within the department’s Criminal Investigation Division and is supervised by a detective lieutenant and a detective sergeant. The primary objective of the task force is to investigate all auto-related thefts and auto-related insurance fraud.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

During the 2018 calendar year the Albany Police Department has worked to solidify and expand its core group of officers and detectives who comprise the ACTF, further developing the skills and specializations of current members. The ACTF has utilized several approaches in deterring auto-related theft. Using information gathered by the Capital Region Crime Analysis Center (CRCAC), the task force works in



concert with the Traffic Safety Unit as well as the Neighborhood Engagement Unit to stay up-to-date with current trends and to investigate crimes and crime sprees that may extend beyond normal day-to-day duties of the task force members.

During the second quarter of 2018, a multi-region crime series occurred involving the use of fraudulent identification to steal rental vehicles. The stolen rental vehicles were recovered in various locations around the state. A multi-agency meeting was held in Westchester County that resulted in additional surveillance details by the involved law enforcement agencies. As a result, numerous arrests have been made and over 20 vehicles have been identified as having been obtained by fraud.

Another crime series that was identified was the theft of several early model Hondas. In most cases, the suspect entered the vehicle by breaking a window and then breeched the steering column to steal the vehicle. The investigation identified approximately 15-20 attempted vehicle thefts, with six vehicles successfully stolen. Two suspects were arrested, and a third is still being sought for questioning. The investigation revealed that the individuals were stealing the vehicles to strip and sell the parts, then scrap the remaining metal. Without a concerted effort to identify vehicle crime patterns, each of these vehicle thefts would likely have been treated as individual crimes that would not have been linked to the suspects.

The grant funding allows members of the ACTF to work outside of normal shift hours to thoroughly investigate vehicle crimes, including surveillance, follow-up interviews and coordination with outside agencies. In 2018, ACTF partnered with agencies including New York State Police, Albany County Sheriff’s Office, Colonie Police, Yonkers Police, Suffolk County Police and Westchester County Police to investigate vehicle crime.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	90	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	213	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	197	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	13

**Albany County District Attorney’s Office**

The Albany County District Attorney received a \$65,050 grant from DCJS in 2018, which paid for a part-time assistant district attorney and a part-time supervisory prosecutor. This enabled the office to address appropriate cases through the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit. The unit coordinated with law enforcement agencies in the areas of education, training, detection, investigation and the prosecution of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Unit of the Albany County District Attorney’s Office continued efforts to build quality investigations and prosecutions through collaboration with area law enforcement agencies. The assigned Assistant District Attorney continued to meet with representatives of Albany Police Department, Colonie Police Department, Albany County Sheriff’s Office, New York State Police, and New York State DMV to discuss investigations and prosecutions.

The office continued to utilize a vertical prosecution strategy for new and pending cases involving auto

theft, resulting in a number of felony convictions in the past year. The office used a coordinated approach between law enforcement, crime analysis and the district attorney’s office to detect, prevent, and prosecute these crimes. In one notable case, a defendant led police on a chase in the village of Green Island after refusing to pull over for a traffic violation. The defendant crashed the vehicle into a fence and lamp post. Investigation revealed that the vehicle belonged to the Albany County Office of General Services. Video footage was retrieved showing the defendant driving the vehicle out of the county parking garage. The case involved collaboration with Green Island Police, Albany Police and the Albany County Sheriff’s Office. This case has not yet been indicted as the investigation is ongoing, but the defendant has also been charged for an unrelated robbery.

Another case involved collaboration with NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, New York State Police, and various local law enforcement agencies. The three defendants conspired to obtain over \$200,000 in financing, and subsequently bought four luxury vehicles at various dealerships in Albany County using forgery and identity theft. Indictments have been secured and the case remains pending.

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	0	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	9
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	24
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	49	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

**Western Region**

- Buffalo City Police Department
- Cheektowaga Town Police Department
- Erie County District Attorney’s Office
- Niagara County District Attorney’s Office
- Niagara County Sheriff Department
- Niagara Falls City Police Department



**Buffalo City Police Department**

The Buffalo Police Department received a \$106,884 grant in 2018, to pay for detective overtime and travel and training costs to enhance the program’s effectiveness. Due to organizational restructuring in 2018, motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud investigations are now handled by detectives in the department’s five patrol districts and are overseen by the Investigative Services Captain. In addition, the Neighborhood Engagement Team has begun community education on auto theft prevention to strengthen the department’s proactive approach to vehicle crime.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

In 2018, the Buffalo Police Department restructured its Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention (MVTIF) program. In the first quarter of 2018, the department experienced an unprecedented spike in reported auto thefts. The department performed an extensive review of how auto theft investigations were handled, which resulted in the elimination of the dedicated MVTIF detective position and a shifting of investigative duties to detectives in each of the five patrol divisions under the supervision of the Investigative Services Captain. It was determined that much of the spike in active theft cases was due to imperfect reporting procedures, whereby unfounded cases and recovered vehicles were not removed in a timely manner. The department took steps to improve case follow-up, resulting in the

removal of 241 cases, allowing detectives more time and resources to focus on viable investigations.

In 2018, there was a slight increase in reported thefts, but that was accompanied by a significant increase in both clearance rates and arrest rates for vehicle theft, suggesting that the new strategy is having positive results.

In addition, the department has begun a new public awareness campaign to educate the public and promote auto theft prevention. In December, the Neighborhood Engagement Team distributed over 6,000 fliers to inform residents of the risk of leaving vehicles running unattended and advise them of a new policy of ticketing unattended vehicles. In total, 55 summonses were issued, including three to individuals who reported their cars stolen while left running unattended.

The police department is also working closely with the Erie Crime Analysis Center (ECAC) to track motor vehicle crime trends and to map hot spots for vehicle theft and recoveries to help identify potential crime rings and vehicle chop shops, and to better direct resources. The department is also establishing working relationships with the NYS Department of Financial Services, NICB, NYS DMV Investigators, and local insurance companies to develop strategies to address insurance fraud.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	115	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	785	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	681	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	217

**Cheektowaga Town Police Department**

The Cheektowaga Police Department received a \$36,542 grant in 2018, for police overtime and training. Ten of the agency’s 19 detectives handle motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

The police department has one detective assigned to lead the Auto Theft Squad. This detective coordinates motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud investigations for the bureau and assigns cases to other detectives. This strategy has been in place for several years and has successfully reduced motor vehicle theft and fraud cases in Cheektowaga.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Cheektowaga Police Department has continued to focus its grant activities on investigations into motor vehicle thefts and larcenies of property/auto parts from motor vehicles and fraudulent activities including insurance fraud, forged vehicle identification numbers and forged titles. Grant funds were utilized to provide 542 hours of overtime to our detectives to work on these investigations and combat motor vehicle related crime.

The police department has a strong commitment to working with other agencies. Inter-agency cooperation and intelligence sharing are main components of grant activities. A close working relationship with outside agencies proves to be beneficial for both Cheektowaga and the surrounding municipalities. In 2018,

examples of such inter-agency collaboration included: fraud investigations with several different insurance carriers; a stolen trailer investigation with the Peel Police Department in Canada; an investigation into stolen inspection stickers with NYS Department of Motor Vehicles; a car larceny investigation with Guilderland Police that spanned several jurisdictions; and cases with Cheektowaga Police, Buffalo Police and Niagara Falls Police, in addition to regular meetings with the Erie District Attorney’s Office, Buffalo Police and Buffalo Fire Marshall’s Office. The department also works with the Erie Crime Analysis Center to identify trends and patterns to assist in directing resources.

In investigating auto thefts, crime scene detectives photograph and process every recovered stolen motor vehicle, submitting any evidence collected to the Erie County Central Police Services Laboratory for further processing. In 2018, 48 vehicles were processed.

The police department also began a community awareness and education program in response to thefts of vehicles left running unattended and thefts of property from unlocked vehicles. A flier was developed and distributed to advise the public of the risk of theft of unattended vehicles as well as some simple deterrents to auto theft. Detectives also routinely surveilled locations such as gas stations and convenience stores, and when unattended vehicles were observed, detectives advised the owners not only of the risk of theft but of NYS VTL law regarding unattended vehicles.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	103	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	9
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	102	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	2
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	113	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	4
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	6	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	15

**Erie County District Attorney’s Office**

The Erie County District Attorney’s Office received a \$104,758 grant in 2018, to pay for a full-time assistant district attorney and for training. The assistant district attorney assigned to handle motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases is supported by the staff of the Special Investigations and Prosecutions Bureau. The prosecutor works closely with detectives from the Buffalo and Cheektowaga police departments, while also meeting with other law enforcement agencies throughout the area to collaborate with ongoing investigations. The prosecutor vertically prosecutes the more serious motor vehicle theft crimes as well as all the insurance fraud cases in Erie County.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The district attorney’s office continued its centralized, consistent approach to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. Vertical prosecution and close collaboration with local law enforcement agencies allowed for tactical prosecutions focused on repeat offenders rather than single-instance offenders. The assigned assistant district attorney reviews all vehicle theft and insurance fraud files, aiding in the identification of repeat offenders and common schemes or trends in criminal activity. The assigned attorney attends various trainings and meets regularly with program partners, providing knowledge of trends, best practices and agency contacts that aid investigation and prosecution of vehicle crime.

A common denominator in nearly all the theft cases in 2018, was that vehicles were stolen with the keys.

As a result, the district attorney's office worked with local law enforcement to distribute public service fliers to increase key awareness and security.

In addition, the district attorney's office had several significant prosecutions which directly impacted motor vehicle crime. One defendant engaged in a crime spree from late June to early July, during which he burglarized homes and business, committed store robberies, and stole cars on a near daily basis. He was directly responsible for 19 crimes involving stolen vehicles, and his guilty plea covered 19 felony and 11 misdemeanor charges. He ultimately pleaded guilty to three violent felonies and two misdemeanors and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

### PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	130	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	4
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	31
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	0	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

### Niagara County District Attorney's Office

The Niagara County District Attorney's Office received \$109,443 in grant funding in 2018, which was used to support a Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit consisting of a full-time assistant district attorney and a full-time investigator. The assistant prosecutor and investigator collaborate with all law enforcement agencies operating within the county as well as other insurance fraud investigators. Investigations by law enforcement agencies are referred to the assistant district attorney for vertical prosecution to ensure all cases are prosecuted to the fullest extent possible.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Niagara County District Attorney's Office continued its efforts to identify, combat and deter motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. The dedicated motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud prosecutor and criminal investigator continue to attend all related training offered by DCJS, the New York Prosecutors Training Institute (NYPTI), National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), and International Association of Auto Theft Investigators (IAATI).

Regionally, district attorney's office staff continued to observe the trend of stolen unattended motor vehicles. To address this trend, the office promoted a public service announcement campaign, including newspaper and media interviews, to advise the public of the risks associated with leaving vehicles running unattended or leaving vehicles unlocked with keys inside. The campaign included statistics regarding the number of vehicles stolen under such circumstances and included regular updates highlighting recent preventable thefts involving unattended vehicles.

On the county level, the district attorney's office has assembled a task force with the Niagara County Sheriff's Office, NYSP and several local police agencies to address a series of thefts of motorcycles and vehicles, many of which were part of expensive insurance claims and were later found burned. Through the sharing of information and resources, the task force developed primary suspects organizing these thefts and has installed pole cameras and a bait motorcycle in targeted areas to develop further evidence. The Niagara County Crime Analysis Center has aggregated the theft data to identify prime areas where the suspects are operating. The office has also begun coordinating with the NYS Department of Financial Services earlier in these cases and has assisted DFS in confronting suspects, resulting in the withdrawal of insurance claims.

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	164	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	12
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	34	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	55
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	140	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$29,759

**Niagara County Sheriff Department**

The Niagara County Sheriff's Department received a \$20,000 grant in 2018, to pay for staff overtime and necessary training. The Stolen Vehicle Task Force within the sheriff's office includes deputies, supervisors, and investigators tasked with reviewing cases, trends, and field intelligence to combat theft and fraud. The sheriff's office continues to collaborate with other law enforcement agencies to reduce theft and fraud throughout Western New York.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force, along with road patrol deputies and investigators from the Criminal Investigation Bureau continued to work diligently to curb motor vehicle theft, larcenies of vehicle parts and accessories, and insurance fraud in 2018. As in recent years, the number of vehicles stolen remains at record lows. The Sheriff's Office received only 30 reports of vehicles stolen.

Through review of patrol reports and field intelligence, the office's crime analyst mapped the major areas of occurrences of theft; and suspects were identified and disseminated to other local law enforcement agencies. In addition, the analyst monitors social media for potentially stolen vehicle parts, resulting in two separate "buy" operations to recover stolen property. Investigators review crime reports and intelligence from the Niagara Crime Analysis Center daily to determine how to assign cases and direct patrols.

In 2018, a major investigation was conducted into a potential insurance fraud scam involving a series of arranged thefts and arsons of vehicles on the Tuscarora Reservation. Collaboration with partners in Niagara County directly led to the arrest of a major stolen vehicle/trailer ring operating in the northwest part of the county and the arrest of a prolific burglary and vehicle larceny suspect in the northeast.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	14	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	30	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	1
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	24	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	1
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	19

**Niagara Falls City Police Department**

The Niagara Falls Police Department received a \$23,400 grant in 2018, to pay for staff overtime and training. The Motor Vehicle Theft and Fraud Unit is managed as a special operation by the captain of the Criminal Investigation Division with emphasis on investigations and appropriate follow-up. In addition, the unit collaborates with the Traffic Division to identify suspicious accident reports and possible fraud cases.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Niagara Falls Police Department, with the support of the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud grant, was able to provide city residents with 400 hours of overtime by detectives with a specific caseload of stolen motor vehicle investigations, 112 hours of surveillance by plain clothes officers to support the detectives with their investigations, and 55 hours of overtime for the Detective Lieutenant to complete necessary documentation for court proceedings specifically pertaining to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	162	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	9
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	147	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	9
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	140	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	1
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	1	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	59

**Finger Lakes Region**

Monroe County District Attorney’s Office  
 Monroe County Sheriff’s Office  
 Rochester City Police Department



**Monroe County District Attorney’s Office**

The Monroe County District Attorney’s Office (MCDA) received \$87,000 in 2018, to fund an assistant district attorney and travel expenses. The assistant district attorney evaluates cases and prosecutes both felony and misdemeanor offenses. The attorney works closely with law enforcement and is aided by DA investigators who interview witnesses, serve subpoenas, gather and organize evidence, and work with law enforcement to help solve crimes and build cases for prosecution.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

Monroe County has a Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force, with representation from the district attorney’s office, the Rochester Police Department, and the Monroe County Sheriff’s Office. These agencies coordinate efforts to reduce motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud and assist outside agencies with investigations. Monthly meetings are held with the task force members and other police agencies to share information on trends, crimes and investigations related to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. At each meeting, new referrals received by the NYS Department of Financial Services Criminal

Investigations Unit are reviewed by task force members and assigned to investigators working under the grant.

When prosecuting motor vehicle related crimes, the District Attorney’s Office severely restricts plea reductions in felony cases, particularly for repeat offenders, and works to maximize restitution to insurance providers when possible. The MCDA uses a vertical prosecution model for all motor vehicle related cases to ensure that these prosecution priorities are followed.

**PROSECUTORIAL OFFICE STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	176	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	6
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	70
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	47	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

**Monroe County Sheriff’s Office**

The Monroe County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO) received a \$36,500 grant in 2018, to pay for overtime to investigate theft and fraud cases and fund necessary training. The sheriff’s program collaborates with other members of the law enforcement community in Monroe County, including the Monroe County District Attorney’s Office, the Rochester Police Department, New York State Police, the state Department of Financial Services, and the state Department of Motor Vehicles to reduce motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within the county. The sheriff’s office participates in the Monroe County Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force, assigning a sergeant and three investigators to the task force

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The Monroe County Sheriff’s Office utilizes grant funds to conduct motor vehicle theft, auto stripping and insurance fraud investigations. In 2018, MCSO responded to 157 reported motor vehicle thefts and recovered 104 stolen vehicles. Investigative efforts resulted in 25 felony and 10 misdemeanor arrests for motor vehicle theft offenses. Members of the MCSO MVTIF Task Force investigated 10 cases of possible motor vehicle insurance fraud.

The MCSO continues to identify and track emerging crime patterns, including motor vehicle thefts and auto stripping cases. These patterns are communicated during monthly meetings of the Monroe County MVTIF Task Force to further identify patterns that may be occurring in other jurisdictions throughout the county. In addition, MCSO works with the Monroe Crime Analysis Center (MCAC) to better map and track emerging crime patterns.

The MCSO also continued to conduct proactive details in areas where patterns of vehicle theft and/or auto stripping have been identified. These details often involve the use of both marked and unmarked units to interdict vehicle thefts and auto stripping incidents.

For example, in the summer of 2018, MCSO and the Town of Greece Police Department experienced a pattern of motor vehicle thefts in the western part of the county. The thefts appeared to be linked to a rash of burglaries. The identified pattern involved four suspects who went from house to house in rural or residential areas, entering garages, sheds and other outbuildings looking for property to steal. A pattern of vehicle thefts also emerged, with the suspects stealing cars, trucks, motorcycles, dirt bikes and ATVs. Many of the vehicles had been left unsecured with the keys inside. Based on the general locations of the thefts, a proactive overnight detail was established, initiating traffic stops on roads identified as possible



thoroughfares where suspects were travelling to commit the burglaries and thefts. In late July, three of the four suspects were arrested after stealing dirt bikes from a garage. A stolen Jeep Cherokee, likely used by the suspects to get to the area, was found near the scene.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

<b><i>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i></b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	14	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	10
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	157	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	2
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	106	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	1
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	12

### **Rochester City Police Department**

The Rochester Police Department received a \$49,520 grant in 2018, to pay for overtime for investigations, specialized equipment and training in the latest motor vehicle crime trends. The Auto Theft Unit, under the command of the department’s Special Operations Division, is responsible for coordinating investigations into motor vehicle related crime initiatives and utilizes personnel from other divisions within the department as needed.

#### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The department’s auto theft grant manager coordinates investigations involving motor vehicle related crime, utilizing personnel from various divisions within the department. As a result, theft investigations are not directly linked to grant funding. The investigator is assigned to the multi-agency Monroe County MVTIF Task Force, which also consists of investigators from the Monroe County District Attorney’s Office, the state Department of Motor Vehicles-Field Investigations Division and the state Department of Financial Services Criminal Investigations Unit.

In 2018, grant funding allowed the Rochester Police to focus on targeted details and investigations. Based on internal data, most vehicle thefts in Rochester occur when the owner leaves the vehicle running unattended. The Monroe Crime Analysis Center (MCAC) collected data from stolen vehicle reports to determine geographic hot spots and identify neighborhoods with the highest rate of stolen cars. Targeted details were conducted to locate unattended vehicles, educate the owners about the risk of leaving the vehicle unattended and prevent potential thefts.

In collaboration with the department’s Traffic Unit, funds were used to conduct License Plate Reader details in identified target areas to apprehend and prosecute offenders operating or possessing stolen vehicles.

Finally, task force members continued to attend trainings to remain current on trends and techniques in vehicle crime investigation. A task force member also presented Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud training to the department’s 38 new police recruits.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Investigations Initiated – Theft	1	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	546	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	3
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	478	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	8
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	3	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	10

### **Statewide**

New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc.  
New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc.

### **New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc.**

The New York Anti-Car Theft & Fraud Association, Inc. (NYACT) is a statewide not-for-profit educational organization whose mission is to reduce auto crime and insurance fraud in New York. The association received a \$65,100 Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud grant from DCJS in 2018, which was used to produce training webinars, seminars and conferences. The association also offers educational and training programs, collaborative sharing opportunities, and online resources for law enforcement personnel and for insurance special investigation units and claims personnel. The association provides information to consumers in the areas of motor vehicle theft and fraud, and continues to sponsor and manage training events, meetings and outreach efforts in auto crime prevention and insurance fraud detection and investigations throughout the year.

### **MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

The association's training efforts in 2018, concentrated on both vehicle crime and insurance fraud, providing effective professional and hands-on training in theft and fraud investigation and deterrence. NYACT continues to expand its outreach by improving cooperative working relationships with other associations and with New York State agencies.

In 2018, NYACT assisted DCJS with two regional meetings as well as the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Annual Symposium. NYACT also provided 11 additional training meetings and conferences in 2018, which included attendees from law enforcement agencies, prosecutorial offices and representatives from the insurance industry.

The association continues to focus its efforts on the following areas:

**Training and Education** The most effective efforts at combating motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud result when both law enforcement and insurance investigation personnel are aware of the latest techniques and information. NYACT focused on providing innovative and hands-on training through its seminars, meetings and conferences.

**Collaborative Planning** There is a wealth of knowledge and experience within NYACT's membership and affiliated agencies. The association taps into this professional community in joint planning of training seminars for speakers and courses and in sharing its organizational capabilities. This collaborative

community includes auto crime experts, experienced law enforcement leaders and other knowledgeable professionals from the state Department of Financial Services-Insurance Frauds Bureau, the state Attorney General’s Office, the FBI, NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, National Insurance Crime Bureau, New York City Police Department Auto Crime Division, New York State Police and state prosecutors.

**Expanding and Improving Communication** NYACT expanded its communication outreach to law enforcement agencies and affiliate organizations across the state through an improved web presence and greater electronic communications. Law enforcement feedback about online needs and interests was solicited at every training session.

**Building Greater Connectivity and Networking** As an umbrella organization, NYACT fosters an effective networking arena and forum for sharing information with members including law enforcement agencies, insurance carriers, the state Department of Financial Services Fraud Bureau, the state Department of Motor Vehicles, and many other state agency fraud units. The association also cooperates with other not for profit organizations such as the Northeast Chapter of the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators, New York State Special Investigative Units and New York Prosecutor’s Training Institute to encourage a strong networking relationship among them.

The NYACT Annual State Education Conference and the NYACT Vehicle Arson Awareness Program (VAAP) are examples of how these efforts come together. These events allow law enforcement and insurance industry personnel to learn from outstanding law enforcement, legal, state government and insurance company sources. At the VAAP programs, hundreds of professionals are exposed to state-of-the-art investigative information and processes, as well as live demonstrations and the opportunity for hands-on investigation.

The spirit of cooperation fostered at the conferences and training events continues through the communication networks that are established among law enforcement investigators long after the program concludes. The association’s training classes offer attendees the ability to access many different agencies that they may not have contact with during the normal course of business. The association’s training seminars have opened new information resources to law enforcement that will aid in their investigations of insurance fraud and other crimes through the sharing of information and expertise.

**TRAINING ORGANIZATION STATISTICS**

<b>2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</b>			
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Seminars, Trainings & Conferences	12	Webinar Trainings Produced	0
Verified Attendees	1,459	Verified Webinar Viewers	142
MVT Articles Published	0	MVIF Articles Published	0
Webinars for Law Enforcement Agencies	21	Webinars for Prosecutorial Offices	0

**New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc.**

The New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc. (NYPTI) received a \$40,740 grant in 2018, to enhance training for prosecutors and law enforcement professionals in the areas of motor vehicle theft and fraud without cost to participants. Each year the institute hosts approximately two dozen conferences; in 2018, these were attended by more than 2,500 prosecutors.

**MVTIFP Activity in 2018**

In 2018, NYPTI continued to employ a senior attorney with over 35 years of experience as a prosecutor to direct the motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud programs. The attorney coordinated two training

presentations and authored three articles on motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud in the Empire State Prosecutor (ESP) magazine.

The training course titled “Deflating Motor Vehicle Theft and Fraud” featured multiple presentations, including a description of the investigation and prosecution of a complex insurance fraud case, an update in legal issues related to search and seizure of vehicles, and a review of new technologies applied to the operation and theft of cars. The second training course, titled “Road Mapping Prosecutions,” emphasized basic issues related to insurance scams, identity theft and legal requirements for charging vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases. In addition to the live presentations, thirteen recordings of the presentations were uploaded and made available to prosecutors through NYPTI CLE Online.

Additionally, the senior attorney served as a coordinator for assistant district attorneys seeking out prosecutors in other jurisdictions to discuss legal developments relating to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. In 2018, NYPTI responded to requests for assistance on 10 motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

Finally, NYPTI continues to update and expand the Prosecutor’s Encyclopedia. In 2018, prosecutors accessed 184,239 motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud related documents.

**TRAINING ORGANIZATION STATISTICS**

***2018 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity***

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Total</b>
Seminars, Trainings & Conferences	2	Webinar Trainings Produced	0
Verified Attendees	91	Verified Webinar Viewers	0
Agencies Represented	39		
MVT Articles Published	3	MVIF Articles Published	2
Webinars for Law Enforcement Agencies	0	Webinars for Prosecutorial Offices	0

## V. Appendix—2018 Statistics

<b>2018 Reported Incidents of Motor Vehicle Theft</b>						
<b>Rank</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>MV Theft</b>		<b>Rank</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>MV Theft</b>
1	Kings	1,720			Madison	33
2	Queens	1,575		33	Tomkins	30
3	Bronx	1,312		34	Clinton	29
4	Erie	1,172			St. Lawrence	29
5	Suffolk	963		36	Fulton	26
6	Monroe	907			Ontario	26
7	New York	742		38	Montgomery	25
8	Onondaga	711		39	Herkimer	24
9	Nassau	671		40	Cortland	23
10	Westchester	457		41	Franklin	22
11	Niagara	274			Steuben	22
12	Schenectady	273		43	Livingston	21
13	Albany	227		44	Orleans	19
14	Richmond	185			Tioga	19
15	Oneida	159		46	Columbia	18
16	Broome	146		47	Delaware	16
17	Orange	142		48	Chenango	15
18	Dutchess	131			Warren	15
19	Rensselaer	130		50	Otsego	14
20	Ulster	81			Putnam	14
21	Oswego	80			Washington	14
22	Chautauqua	77		53	Allegany	13
23	Saratoga	68		54	Seneca	9
24	Rockland	67		55	Lewis	8
25	Cattaraugus	46			Wyoming	8
26	Genesee	45		57	Greene	7
27	Cayuga	44		58	Essex	6
28	Jefferson	42		59	Schoharie	5
29	Wayne	39			Yates	5
30	Sullivan	37		61	Schuyler	4
31	Chemung	33		62	Hamilton	0

Appendix—2018 Statistics (continued)

2018 Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Suspected Incidents						
Rank	County	MV Insurance Fraud		Rank	County	MV Insurance Fraud
1	Kings	5,415		32	Allegany	13
2	Queens	3,315			Columbia	13
3	Bronx	2,303		34	Genesee	12
4	New York	2,018			Ontario	12
5	Nassau	1,915		36	Delaware	11
6	Suffolk	1,184			Greene	11
7	Westchester	538			Wayne	11
8	Erie	385		39	Chemung	9
9	Richmond	376			Livingston	9
10	Monroe	214		41	Chenango	8
11	Albany	202			Clinton	8
12	Orange	154			Lewis	8
13	Onondaga	114			Steuben	8
14	Rockland	73			Tompkins	8
15	Niagara	63		46	Cattaraugus	7
16	Dutchess	50			Cortland	7
17	Ulster	45			Herkimer	7
18	Oneida	38		49	Fulton	6
19	Schenectadv	35			Madison	6
20	Saratoga	32			Washington	6
21	Cayuga	30		52	Franklin	5
22	Jefferson	29			Warren	5
	Rensselaer	29			Wyoming	5
24	Broome	28		55	Hamilton	4
25	Chautauqua	26			Otsego	4
26	Oswego	25		57	Schoharie	3
27	Putnam	23			Seneca	3
28	Sullivan	21		59	Orleans	2
29	Montgomery	18		60	Schuyler	0
30	Essex	14			Tioqa	0
	St. Lawrence	14			Yates	0