



P.A.T.R.O.L. Auto Theft Task Force
Preventing Auto Theft Through Regional Operational Links
33325 8th Avenue South, Federal Way WA 98003



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Distribution

Type of Incident: **\$1.5 Million in Recovered Stolen Property**
Possession Stolen Vehicles / Theft 1st / Possession Stolen Property 1st

Location: **Sumner WA**

Date: **August 21, 2014 through October 8th (Investigation On-Going)**

Press Contact: **Commander Eric Drever, Tukwila PD / PATROL ATTF / 206-391-7866**

On August 21st, 2014, P.A.T.R.O.L. Auto Theft Task Force Detectives were alerted to a semi-trailer/Cargo theft that had occurred during the evening hours in Sumner Washington. Investigation revealed that suspects from an organized Southern California Cargo Theft Cartel had marked nine semi-cargo trailers, which were loaded with high value items, for stealing at a later time. The suspects then used six stolen semi-tractors to take five of the marked cargo trailers. Four cargo containers were left behind during the theft, due to one of the suspects crashing a truck and effectively blocking their exit.

After several weeks of intense covert surveillance and investigation involving multiple assisting agencies and eight search warrants, Task Force Detectives were able to locate and serve warrants on two storage facilities and a warehouse containing a large portion of the stolen items. Recovered, were 6 semi-tractors, 1169 large screen LCD TVs, 1727 Laptop Computers, 124 Refrigerators, and numerous other items that had been stolen from large retailers. The total recovery is valued over 1.5 Million dollars.

One suspect, believed to be the leader of the Cargo Theft Cartel, was arrested and booked during the investigation. Most of the cartel is believed to have fled back to Southern California and Mexico. The investigation is ongoing.

The P.A.T.R.O.L. Auto Theft Task Force is a multi-jurisdictional team. Over twenty different Police agencies in King and Pierce Counties have signed an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement supporting the Task Force's mission:

“To aggressively pursue and prosecute prolific offenders related to auto theft through multi-agency cooperation”

Currently there are four Detectives and a Sergeant from King and Pierce County Departments that make up the Task Force, along with a Crime Analyst and a Police Commander who oversees operations. The entire Task Force wages, benefits, equipment, training and expenses are paid by a State awarded grant from the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority (WATPA).



Storage Unit – 1169 Large Screen LCD TVs



Storage Unit – 1727 Laptop Computers



Storage Warehouse – Refrigerators and misc. property