

Police warning after spate of thefts from commercial vehicles



Police are encouraging motorists to be vigilant following a spate of thefts from commercial vehicles in and around the Capital.

The most recent incidents occurred overnight between January 5 and 6 when a total of eight Mercedes vehicles were targeted for their exhaust systems and catalytic converters, resulting in extensive damage estimated at around £1000 – £3000 per vehicle.

Prior to these reports a further four incidents of a similar nature and all involving Mercedes commercial vehicles were made to police between December 30 and January 4.

Local officers are today urging van owners to take extra care, especially those who drive a Mercedes vehicle.

Sergeant Paul Greig of the Vehicle Crime Team said: “Unfortunately, this is a problem that has been reported to police forces across the UK.

“Mercedes vans are, in particular, being targeted by thieves who in turn are stealing parts that contain precious metals.

“I must stress that it is solely Mercedes commercial vehicles that are affected, specifically vans or taxis, and there is not any suggestion at this stage that Mercedes cars are at risk.

“The most recent thefts were reported right across the Capital and I urge anyone who has any information, or who wishes to

report suspicious activity in their area, to please contact police on 101 or the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

"I also advise van owners to take every possible precaution in order to deter thieves, such as parking in an area covered by CCTV and/or security lighting.

"In addition, motorists should consider what is known as 'defensive parking'. This can, for example, include parking in a spot that restricts someone from gaining access to get under the vehicle. It is also worth considering purchasing specialist security products that can be fitted to the catalytic converters in order to make them more secure."