

Police hold training events to identify stolen agricultural plant and vehicles



Police officers from across Scotland are being brought up to speed on how to identify stolen agricultural plant and vehicles in a series of training events being run across the country this month.

Following on from a similar series of training events last year, more than 70 police officers from across the country will learn how to identify stolen agricultural vehicles and plant, in a bid to further reduce the impact of crime in rural areas.

The theft of agricultural vehicles is one of the key priorities identified by the SPARC (Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime) group and quad bikes, all-terrain vehicles, and trailers are the most common items to be stolen.

The first of the four awareness training events aimed at giving police officers the skills to identify suspicious or stolen agricultural vehicles is being run tomorrow (Tuesday November 15, 2016) in Turriff, Aberdeenshire.

The training events in Aberdeenshire, Perthshire and Lanark are being delivered by a Police Officer from the National Agricultural Vehicle Intelligence Service (NAVCIS) and an agricultural vehicle specialist from NFU Mutual insurance company, which is funding the three days of training.

Inspector Jane Donaldson, Police Scotland's rural crime co-

ordinator said: “Our focus on rural vehicle crime has already seen an overall reduction in the theft of quads and ATVs, and significant reductions in previous hot spot areas of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire. We acknowledge, however, that the theft of a vehicle routinely used as part of a business will have a significant impact on the day-to-day productivity of that enterprise. We are committed to reducing these thefts further and ensuring the way we investigate these crimes is consistent and reflects best practice.”

Clive Harris, NFU Mutual’s agricultural vehicle security specialist said: “Working in partnership with Police Scotland is enabling us to share our experience as the insurer of most of Scotland’s farmers to help stop farm vehicles being stolen – and bring thieves to justice.”