

Motion on Metal Theft

Councillor Roger Horton, Centro (West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority)

Proposes that:

“The Local Government Association in lobbying Government and Members of Parliament to introduce new legislation to help combat the serious impact of metal theft on our local communities including home owners, churches and local highway authorities.

Discussions with our partners Network Rail and the British Transport Police have highlighted the alarming amount of rail service delays which are caused through the theft of cabling and other materials. The economic impact of this both for the West Midlands and nationally is significant; causing travel delay for passengers, disruption to businesses and an increased safety risk through signalling and telecommunications failure.

Centro therefore seeks legislative reform to tighten and enhance practices at metal recycling facilities to help improve and support the reduction of metal theft. Centro welcomes the voluntary code of practice developed by the British Metal Recycling Association (BMRA) and Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) as a basis for this reform. This includes the following crime reduction measures:

- The introduction of digital recorded CCTV systems at the entrances and/or weighbridges of recycling centres that is retained for 28 days. Where such systems have been installed posters advertising the fact will clearly be displayed on the premises.
- Requesting identification from persons disposing of metals who are not already known to the recycling centre. The identification requested to include name, address and post code. A record of the method of identification produced will be recorded including unique identifying reference number where applicable i.e. driver number in the case of driving licence or customer number if utility bill or similar document is produced. Cash should not be paid to persons unknown to the recycling centre or where identification cannot be produced.
- The maintenance of accurate records required by the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964. This will include ensuring that names, addresses and vehicle registration number are complete and accurate.
- Suspicious persons will be reported to the local police force for the area concerned.
- Suspicious transactions will be reported to the local police force for the area concerned. “

Item 9

LGA Comment

The Local Government Association shares Centro's concerns about the serious impact metal theft has on vital local services. Disrupting the market for stolen metal requires a range of preventative and enforcement measures to be put in place, and local authorities are well placed through their knowledge of sites that are targeted and the less reputable dealers to make it more difficult for stolen metal to be disposed of. Such measures must not place an additional burden on councils and those in the voluntary code of practice rightly seek to address measures at metal recycling facilities. The Group's Safer & Stronger Communities Board will therefore consider how current practice relating to metal recycling facilities can be tightened, whether through legislative or other means.