



Commercial vehicle security

Ray Coleman, Managing Director of Lantern Discovery Specialists, considers the benefits of an anti-theft device for UK hauliers...

At Lantern Recovery Specialists PLC (LRS), we have been forced to review the way we approach our security due to a bout of thefts that have affected our fleet. Thieves have been targeting our recovery vehicles while our drivers have been transporting cars. The recovery industry is unique because the engine of the recovery vehicle needs to be running to operate the hydraulics, thus making it easy for thieves to jump into the cab and drive the vehicle away, often with an expensive car on the back. However, any distribution or recovery company in the UK, moving high value cars or cargo, can be affected by theft and therefore an effective security system is paramount for all companies.

The task of finding a system was given to the Transport Manager and after several months of reviewing almost all systems on the market, we have now found a mechanical security device called the 'Meck Lock System'. This system protects our vehicles while the engine is running, offering us excellent security on the road and unbeatable protection while the vehicles are in the yard at night. We are in the process of fitting the system to our entire fleet of 80 vehicles. The strength of the system is that it protects everything from our cars up to our transporters and heavy recovery vehicles. The system is key operated and very user-friendly, and although it requires the driver to activate the system, this forms part of their training and becomes contractual to focus them on security issues. Although the insurance industry focuses on passive systems, this type of system does not meet the requirements of what we need. More proactive involvement is required between insurance companies and their customers to ensure that the systems they recommend are installed actually achieve the basic security requirement of stopping theft.

There are significant implications for the industry at large as theft, whether if it is for the cargo being hauled or for the recovery unit itself, affects the way we all do business and our reputations. Prevention is always better than cure and although all our fleet vehicles are fitted with a tracking system, Meck Lock eliminates the possibilities of finding one of our vehicles two or three days down the line, vandalised with the casualty vehicle or cargo missing. This saves us money and time, and also enhances our reputation within

the industry as a secure and reliable transport company. There are obvious applications for all sectors of the industry that need to have a reliable security system that stops theft in the first place. Although there are many systems on the market, I would recommend to the management of all transport companies that they closely analyse what they want a security system to achieve and where a security system can potentially make savings. It is possible to spend thousands of pounds on security and still not achieve the basic requirement of stopping the theft in the first place.

The public sector can also benefit from systems such as Meck Lock, with many councils demanding that their vehicles are fitted with a security system prior to delivery. With many vehicles being left in unguarded sites overnight, they are prone to the opportunist thief and joy riders. A system that stops both these types of thief is required to ensure public vehicles are not used within local districts to cause accidents and damage. As with my company, tracking and electronic systems will not necessarily achieve this.

There is no doubt a good security system adds value to the service we offer to our customers and enhances our reputation within the industry. We have always been proactive in business and it is this attitude that has helped us secure a new Isuzu contract for all UK deliveries. By focusing on the total package we offer our customers, it has enabled us to develop and grow our business through the enhancement of our reputation.

I believe a simple review of security systems can help all hauliers in the UK. For a small investment in a cost-effective security system, companies can protect their reputation, customer base and insurance premiums – and we have found the returns from this investment to be significant.



Ray Coleman
Managing Director
Lantern Discovery Specialists Plc.
Antrobus House
18 College Street
Petersfeilf
Hampshire GU31 4AD
Tel: 01730 261678
info@mecklocksystem.co.uk
www.mecklocksystem.co.uk