



## **Operation Catcher - Advice to companies, operating vehicles within the M25, who are the victims of deliberately induced road collisions.**

The Metropolitan Police area is one of a number of regions within the UK that is experiencing a high level of deliberately induced road collisions.

Organised criminal groups are targeting companies who operate vehicle fleets within the M25 area by deliberately causing collisions in order to defraud their insurers. Operation Catcher is a Metropolitan Police initiative, intended to identify an offence when it happens, prosecute the offenders and, as a result, reduce the incidence of this type of crime.

### **What are the features of an induced collision?**

- The criminals will use two cars to target their victim. These cars will get ahead of the Company vehicle in steady moving traffic, the first will then brake hard or make an unexpected manoeuvre, this will cause the second car to brake hard (often using the handbrake to avoid alerting the intended victim) and result in a collision.
- The first car will make off while the second, now damaged car will stop. The occupants of this second car will make a point of blaming the car that has made off and appear to sympathise with their victim - you.
- The criminals are most frequently from the Asian community - Afghan, Bangladesh or Pakistani. (Not exclusively but a common feature in London)
- There will often be at least three occupants in the car.
- Driver details are often already written down and insurance and registration documents are carried in their car.
- The driver will speak English while the other occupants do not.

It should be noted that these features are a guide only and all elements may not be present at every induced collision.



**What action should the driver take if they genuinely believe they have been the victim of an induced collision?**

- Your first action is to immediately call the Police on the non-emergency number **0300 123 1212** and say that you believe you have been involved a deliberately induced collision - give the index number of the other vehicle.
- You **MUST** tell the operator that you need an **OPERATION CATCHER** response. The sooner you call us the more time we have to get to you. Do **NOT** inform the other vehicle you have called the police as they will probably leave the scene.
- Make a mental note of who was driving; it is very important you can identify this person to the police.
- Exchange details as you would normally do but take your time; this will give the police time to get to you. Take details of **ALL** occupants - you can say that this is company policy because of recent experience of personal injury claims.
- Make a note of the car that drove off and make a note of where you first saw it - this will help the police trace it later.

We will do our best but can't guarantee to get to every call before the exchange of details is complete. In these circumstances it would be helpful if drivers could:

- Photograph damage to other vehicle and photograph driver.
- Retain any papers supplied by the other driver in a plastic bag and avoid any unnecessary direct handling (This can be taken by police later and forensically examined). A self seal food bag would be ideal.
- Make a note of the car that drove off and make a note of where you first saw it - this will help the police trace it later.
- Call the police back and tell us that the other vehicle has left the scene and the direction it went.

A police officer will contact the driver and/or the company over the following days in order to pursue the investigation.

**If there are any questions about this initiative please contact the Road Crime Intelligence Unit on 0207 161 1011 (Mon - Fri)**