

Grantees fight auto theft at the local level.

The Authority funds 15 law enforcement/investigative units, including the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), which distributes its grant funds to three regional task forces. Authority funds support investigative activities by the grantees as well as public outreach activities by two additional organizations. The grants awarded through December 2005 total \$51.3 million to support activities through the year 2006.

Allegheny County District Attorney's Office

joined the Authority in September 1998. The unit, which consists of an assistant district attorney and two paralegals, is operating under a two-year grant renewal totaling more than \$318,390 through mid-2006.

Cumberland County District Attorney's Office

received its first grant to establish an auto theft unit in 1996. The unit is operating under a two-year grant renewal totaling more than \$113,321 through mid-2006. The unit includes an assistant district attorney and a detective. It coordinates investigative efforts with local municipal police throughout the county and provides local police training sessions with public presentations.

Delaware County District Attorney's Office

received initial funding in 1997 and is operating under a two-year grant extension of more than \$426,977 through mid-2006. An assistant district attorney, a detective and an analyst support the unit. Grant funds help pay overtime expenses for four police officers from local departments. The funds also cover equipment and coordination with local law enforcement units.


City of Erie Bureau of Police

initially funded in 1997, the unit is operating with a two-year grant extension through mid-2006 totaling \$162,795. The Erie Auto Theft Unit has one officer working closely with the Pennsylvania State Police and the Millcreek Township Police Department to investigate and arrest car thieves.

"There has definitely been a significant impact since we started receiving ATPA funding, resulting in numerous investigations in our area. We have uncovered many chop shops in the past few years and our cases are now involving a lot more than just auto theft. Some cases are now including drug confiscations, money laundering, asset forfeitures, guns and homicides. We believe that we are now better equipped at a higher level to pursue this type of criminal activity!"

– Diane Castellano, Paralegal
Sergeant Douglas Grimes
PSP Auto Theft Unit – Western Region



The image shows the front-left corner of a silver car, including the headlight, side mirror, and part of the hood and windshield. The background is a clear blue sky.

Erie County District Attorney's Office

received an initial grant in July 2001. The unit, which consists of an assistant district attorney and a clerical position, received a one-year grant extension of more than \$31,181 in July 2004 to continue the unit through June 2005.

Harrisburg Bureau of Police

has had an active auto theft unit since it received its first grant in 1997. The unit is operating with a grant of \$340,319 through June 2006. Two investigators coordinate anti-theft measures in Harrisburg, where there has been a major juvenile theft problem.

Lancaster City Police

joined the list of grantee organizations in July 2002. The unit, which consists of two investigators and a part-time assistant district attorney, received a two-year grant extension totaling \$555,620 through mid-2006.

Lehigh County District Attorney's Office

received an initial grant in 1996. Currently, it is operating its Auto Theft Task Force under a two-year grant renewal, totaling more than \$876,775 through mid-2006. The unit, which also has investigative powers in neighboring Northampton County, has a prosecutor, secretary and four full-time investigators from local police departments.

Millcreek Township Police

The Auto Theft Task Force, first funded in 1997, is operating under a one-year grant extension of more than \$106,067 through June 2006. The unit consists of one officer who works with the Pennsylvania State Police operating in Erie and Crawford counties. The unit has been granted jurisdiction throughout Erie County.

Northeastern PA Task Force

is a unique multi-jurisdictional program administered by the Lackawanna County District Attorney's Office. First funded in 1996, the unit is operating on a two-year grant of \$550,175 through June 2006. Supported by an assistant district attorney, an administrator, one full-time and five part-time detectives and a secretary, this far-reaching investigative unit coordinates efforts in 11 counties, including Lackawanna, Luzerne, Pike, Susquehanna, Bradford, Monroe, Wayne, Wyoming, Sullivan, Columbia, and Carbon.

“According to the Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report, motor vehicle thefts reported in Pennsylvania were over 50,000 in 1994. Since the ATPA was formed, that rate has consistently decreased each subsequent year, with the only exception being 2003. I think that the focus placed on the vehicle theft problem in Pennsylvania, through the efforts of the ATPA, is directly related to the decrease in reported vehicle thefts. The ATPA has proven to be an invaluable resource for the enforcement efforts of the PSP Auto Theft Task Force. We are appreciative of the relationship that we have shared with the ATPA for the past 10 years and we anticipate that their efforts in combating vehicle theft will continue to aid our investigative efforts in the future.”

**– Sergeant Joseph W. Boyd
PSP Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Auto Theft Section Supervisor**

“Since the inception of the ATPA grant funding for auto theft investigation units in the state of Pennsylvania ten years ago, there has been a 40% reduction in the incidence of stolen vehicles. The Millcreek Township Police Department has been privileged to be a part of these efforts in the overall reduction of automobile thefts.”

**– Gary Rogers
Corporal
Millcreek Township Police**

**Pennsylvania State Police
Eastern, Central and Western
Regional Task Forces**

oversees statewide anti-auto theft efforts. Initially granted Authority funds in 1996, the units received a two-year extension, totaling more than \$3.6 million through mid-2007. The regional task forces concentrate on high-theft areas around Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, central and northeastern Pennsylvania. The grant funds cover salaries of 11 county detectives, as well as overtime costs for four State Police supervisors and seventeen troopers. The funds also cover part-time clerical support in district attorneys' offices, equipment, maintenance, vehicles and other expenses.

**Philadelphia District
Attorney's Office**

funded in 1996, this unit works closely with the Philadelphia Police Department through a one-year grant extension totaling \$335,239 through 2006. The funds support one detective, one prosecutor, one trial assistant and two law clerks. Starting in July 2003, the funds were also allocated to research and develop a juvenile auto theft diversion program in Philadelphia.

**Philadelphia Police
Department**

funded in 1996, this unit operates its Major Crimes Auto Theft Unit with a two-year grant extension totaling more than \$2.6 million through mid-2006. One arm of the unit concentrates on chop shop and salvage yard investigations, while another investigates all other auto theft cases. Funding from the Authority added eight police officers and four detectives, which doubled the resources available prior to the Authority's grant funding.

**Pittsburgh City
Police Department**

received its first grant in 1996. Currently, it is using its \$409,164 grant extension through mid-2006. The funding increased its auto-theft squad by two detectives, modernized equipment and paid for office space and automobiles.

**York County District
Attorney's Office**

first received funding in 1996 and was approved for more than \$220,131 to extend its operation through mid-2007. Supported by a detective, the unit developed auto theft reporting, investigation and prosecution protocol for countywide use. It also provides victim/witness services.

**There are two public
outreach programs funded by
the Authority:**

**Good Shepherd
Mediation Program**

received their first grant in 2004. Currently, they are funded through 2006 with a grant of \$82,350. Working with the Philadelphia District Attorney's Juvenile Court Division, they have developed a diversion program for first-time juvenile offenders involved in vehicle theft.

**Pennsylvania Anti-Car Theft
Committee (PACT)**

received its first one-year grant in 1997 and is currently working under a two-year grant totaling \$93,500 through mid-2007. PACT operates a speaker's bureau. It also sponsors "car stripping" events to raise public awareness of auto theft and chop shop organizations.



Estimated vehicle and parts recovery value since 1996:

\$258.9 Million