RYAN SPECIALTY | NATIONAL PROGRAMS



DEALER PROTECT: RISING "STRATEGIC CARGO THEFT" THREATENS DEALERSHIP INVENTORY

CLAIM ALERT: BEFORE VEHICLES LEAVE THE LOT, TAKE THESE FRAUD PREVENTION STEPS

Dealerships across the country are facing a surge in coordinated "strategic cargo thefts," where organized crime rings pose as legitimate brokers and transport carriers to steal high-value cars.

As vehicle transport fraud continues to evolve, dealers may want to take additional steps to help reduce exposure to phishing scams and wire fraud. Set out below is a sample approach that may assist in verifying transport carriers before vehicles are released. Each dealership should assess its own risk tolerance and determine what approach is most appropriate for its operations.

Vehicle Theft Prevention Tips:

- License scanners to validate customers as well as tie into the department of vehicles website
- Knowledge-based association question software
- Look at vehicle inventory daily for any damaged vehicles or vehicles that may have had parts removed
- Keep a low inventory of higher-value target vehicles to promote quick turnaround and limit the number of days on the lot
- Store high-valued and most-at-risk models inside a locked building with wheel or steering wheel locks
- Central station burglar / fire alarms with motion sensors on windows and doors inside and outside the dealership
- Live video monitoring that can notify the local police if someone is on the lot after hours
- Computerized key machines locked in an office and always kept away from the public
- Because theives' methods change and new vulnerabilities frequently arise, consider working with a company that specializes in key security controls for dealerships.

Step-by-Step Protection in Minutes:

1. **Verify that the Department of Transportation (DOT) number matches the driver arriving at the lot.** Before scheduling a pickup, request the following from the transport carrier:
   - Company name
   - DOT number or MC/MX number
   - Address and contact information

2. **Verify with SAFER.** Enter the transport carrier's details into the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's SAFER system: https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/CompanySnapshot.aspx
   This tool provides:
   - Verified contact and address information
   - Number of power units
   - Authorized cargo types
   - Insurance details and more

3. **Request and verify a bill of lading,** the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), and the intended destination prior to release.

4. **Demand proof of insurance** and maintain direct contact with the assigned truck driver throughout the shipment.

Taking extra verification steps can potentially save your dealership thousands of dollars and hours of headaches. Fraudsters often impersonate real transport companies. A quick verification process could help them from falling victim.

This is a claim alert to retail insurance agents and brokers who currently insure auto dealers to assist with reducing losses and keeping insurance costs competitive. Contact our experienced dealership underwriters for additional loss prevention tips and to discuss your dealership client's current coverage.

The information contained in this material is for general information purposes only. This material should not be relied on as legal or professional advice or treated as a substitute for specific advice relevant to any particular circumstances. No user should act on the basis of this material without obtaining proper legal or other professional advice specific to their situation. Appropriate steps to manage any of the risks described herein will vary depending on particular circumstances. This material should be considered in addition to all other relevant information, including the advice of professional or legal advisors, requirements of applicable law, best practices suggested by health and safety organizations and the requirements of any applicable policy of insurance. The operations described herein are conducted by RSG Specialty, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company based in Illinois. RSG Specialty, LLC, is a subsidiary of Ryan Specialty, LLC. RSG Specialty works directly with brokers, agents and insurance carriers, and as such does not solicit insurance from the public. Some products may only be available in certain states, and some products may only be available from surplus lines insurers. In California: RSG Specialty Insurance Services, LLC (License #0G97516). ©2026 Ryan Specialty, LLC