Vehicle Investigation Prevention Enforcement Response (VIPER) Program

Supported By LATIFPA
Louisiana Automobile Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Authority

LATIFPA began supporting local law enforcement agencies in 2006 when it introduced VIPER, a statewide bait vehicle program implemented through a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). This program is designed to reduce insurance fraud and related crime, including vehicle theft. Through the collective efforts of LATIFPA, NICB, law enforcement agencies and the insurance industry, the development and implementation of the VIPER program has been successful. The NICB oversees the bait vehicle program with local law enforcement agencies that are selected by a steering committee consisting of both parties and recommended to and approved by LATIFPA's board of directors. NICB develops and maintains accountability standards to assess the effectiveness of the program within the selected law enforcement agency to determine future deployment of the program. NICB also developed a reporting system for law enforcement agencies to follow and maintain. LATIFPA oversees the donations to NICB to purchase bait vehicle equipment and develop and maintain accountability standards to assess the effectiveness of the bait vehicle equipment donations and the success of the bait vehicle programs assigned to law enforcement agencies.

Under the program, vehicles donated by insurance companies and equipped with systems funded by LATIFPA are granted to law enforcement agencies through an application process approved by the LATIFPA Board of Directors. The technology installed in these vehicles utilizes computers, satellites, and tracking devices, which alert police when the bait vehicle has been entered. Once the bait vehicle is deployed, police wait for a signal to be transmitted alerting them when the bait vehicle has been entered or moved so that law enforcement authorities may proceed to apprehend the criminals in the act of stealing the bait vehicle. This program is effective in deterring future offenders, which in turn reduces the number of vehicles lost by the public and reduces the cost of insurance claims to insurance companies. The equipment used in the program is also effective in assisting in the investigation and prosecution of vehicle theft offenders.

License Plate Recognition Program

The License Plate Recognition (LPR) program is implemented through a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the NICB. Under the LPR program, grant awards of LPR systems are made to law enforcement agencies selected by application and ranked according to certain criteria including city populations of 50,000 or more.

LPR systems awarded to qualifying law enforcement agencies are designed to capture pictures of thousands of license plates from moving or stationary vehicles, process the images and send the images to a centralized database, and within seconds determine if the vehicle matching the license plate has been reported stolen. This technology has also been used by law enforcement to track Amber Alerts, carjackings and robberies. LPR systems were endorsed in October 2007 by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.