

Christmas crack down on cash in transit robberies gets under way

CRIMINALS are being warned that strong measures are being put in place to prevent cash in transit robberies in the run up to Christmas.

Deliveries of cash to banks and businesses tend to be more frequent at this time of year as people go shopping to buy presents. Criminals can look to take advantage of this, and the county has seen a higher number of robberies this year than last. So far this year there have been eight CVIT robberies. There were four in 2012.

Lancashire Constabulary is working with the British Security Industry Association (BSIA), SaferCash and other partner agencies to prevent cash and valuable deliveries being targeted by criminals. Officers will be using both high-visibility and covert patrols on the ground and in some cases will escort security vehicles as they carry out their normal deliveries.

A number of other tactics will be used to prevent these robberies, including overt and covert CCTV monitoring; patrol cars following cash-handling vehicles; plus all cash containers will include either Smartwater or a dye, which will be released when they are opened.

Detective Chief Inspector Neil Ashton, of Lancashire Constabulary's Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: "We have unfortunately seen a higher number of cash in transit robberies this year compared to previous years and we are determined to take action to prevent further robberies occurring.

"These types of robberies often involve armed gangs who are prepared to use excessive levels of violence to secure large sums of money. This is not a victimless crime, with only the businesses suffering; armed robberies can have a truly devastating effect on innocent victims."

He added: "We will be stepping up its fight against criminals who carry out robberies in the run up to the busy festive period. Our activity is aimed at targeting, deterring and disrupting criminals who carry out these robberies, thereby making Lancashire a hostile environment for them to operate.

"We will target travelling criminals as the majority of offences are committed by offenders from outside the county; the whole force is working together to stop dangerous criminals coming into the county. This includes response and neighbourhood officers, as well as specialist teams such as firearms officers and roads policing officers. We are totally committed to keeping members of the public safe and protecting workers from criminals who are often prepared to use violence."

Police are asking the public to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity, for example offenders usually park a second getaway car within a mile of the offence a day or two before in an alleyway or residential parking, in the run up to the festive season by dialling 101 or calling Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111. In an emergency always call 999.

ENDS

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