

A word from the UKRPA Chairman...

I would like to personally welcome you to the first edition of the quarterly United Kingdom Revenue Protection Association Newsletter for 2012, which will assist the UKRPA in highlighting and improving the visibility of revenue protection issues in the UK and Ireland. We welcome relevant feedback from all of our stakeholders, which will help in determining the shape of any further UKRPA publications.

UKRPA Direction

I am pleased with the progress that the UKRPA has made so far during the first quarter of 2012/13 and look forward to a successful and fruitful end to the year.



Tony Thornton, UKRPA Chairman



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Cannabis Farm Found Following Fire

Police are investigating after a cannabis farm was discovered by firefighters while tackling a blaze in a house in Kimberly Road, Thornton Heath. It has been confirmed that the fire was caused by an electrical fault around the fuse board at the property.

The house was left badly damaged after a fire swept through the building. Firefighters who put out the blaze called police after they suspected the home was used as a cannabis factory.

A police spokesman said a number of cannabis plants were found inside the house.

No arrests have yet been made with enquiries ongoing. The owner had not returned to the house by the time the fire crews left.

UKRPA Member NIE Calls for Metal Theft Protection

Sam Gibson from NIE, says, "The rising number of incidents of metal theft shows that there is a market for illegally obtained metal and we would like to see it closed down. Particularly as metal thieves are damaging equipment and in some cases leaving areas unsafe for the general public."

This Issue's Revenue Protection Spotlight

Following a fire caused by an electricity meter that had been tampered with, Liverpool Housing Trust (LHT) has launched a campaign to tackle 'meter cheaters'.

The housing association is set to train 150 staff and contractors so they can be the 'eyes and ears' of LHT and spot the tell tale signs of electricity meter tampering at the 10,000 homes they own across Merseyside, Cheshire and Lancashire.

Simon Brown, divisional director (asset management), said: "The reason why LHT is taking this hard line is simple: electricity fraud can kill. Tampering with electricity meters can be lethal, not only for the culprit but also for neighbours and friends living nearby. Our staff and contractors visit thousands of our tenants' homes every year and are now fully trained to spot the giveaway signs left by 'meter cheaters'."

"LHT has a zero tolerance approach to electricity meter tampering. If we discover that an LHT tenant has been involved they could face a criminal prosecution and eviction."



2012 UKRPA Conference

The twelfth National UK Revenue Protection Conference took place on 13th and 14th June 2012 at the Woodside Conference Centre, Kenilworth. The conference was run successfully with a number of informative and interactive presentations as well as a Panel discussion. Presentations from the conference are available on the members' area of the UKRPA website

Industry Update

Scotland's Crown Office is to get tough on metal thieves, with the release of new guidance notes related to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's "Metal Theft Policy". The Crown Office are looking at the licensing structure of dealers in Scotland in an attempt to reduce this crime, which costs tax payers hundreds of thousands of pounds a year.

Smart Thinking

Following the recent UKRPA General Meeting, Alan Dick, UKRPA Consultant has produced an initial assessment on the significant impacts of smart meters on the Revenue Protection industry.

The expected considerations for the UK include:

- Roll out of smart meters will in theory involve visiting all customers' installations and is likely to identify any theft/interference. However in practice it is expected that a (small) percentage will not gain access, even with resort to entry warrants, and many of these may be deliberately obstructing access so as to avoid discovery. Even so, a large number of theft leads are likely to be generated and may require increased RP activity.
- The type of automated interference alarms (tamper flags) that may be fitted to a smart meter is currently still under discussion (expected to be included as at May 2012). It needs to be agreed what will be provided and, since the addition of flags increases the price of the meter, this will need consideration of the prevalence of various theft methods to establish that a particular feature can be justified.
- Any such flags must also be reliable indications of tamper. One major flaw here is the inability for flags to identify by-pass, the prevalence of which may therefore increase.
- New methods of RP work, leads and investigations may need to be identified, for instance at high level 'hacking' into remotely transmitted data and, at a lower level, deliberately triggering flags so that eventually after several false alarms nobody responds.
- Any evaluation generating leads to give indications of suspicious consumption change, which could indicate theft, should preferably be done 'off line' (i.e. by so-called data mining) to avoid large amounts of possibly unreliable data swamping the communications system and RP resources.
- Information will in any case be coming in through the Central Data Collection organisation and there will need to be agreed channels to pass this on to the relevant parties — initially the supplier but further to parties which may be able to assess its significance. Such procedures will need to take account of data privacy implications.



Alan Dick, UKRPA Consultant

UKRPA Membership

Full membership and affiliate membership is open to companies working in the revenue protection arena in and around the UK. For more information about benefits of membership please view our [website](#).

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