

OnStar Says No to Automotive Thieves

GM's OnStar is helping police across the country take a bite out of crime.

Nearly 250 times in the last five years, a signal to an OnStar-equipped stolen vehicle has helped stop a car thief in the act, gradually and safely slowing the vehicle to avoid a high-speed chase.

OnStar's Stolen Vehicle Slowdown is one of three Stolen Vehicle Assistance tools OnStar offers subscribers, said OnStar spokesman Stefan Cross. A Remote Ignition Block makes it impossible to start a stolen vehicle once turned off. And a GPS location can be provided to authorities once a vehicle is confirmed stolen.

OnStar worked closely with law enforcement in the U.S. and Canada to develop and modify the services to ensure best practices would be followed, Cross said.

"Stolen Vehicle Slowdown is a prime example of a safety service that our customers rely on us to provide," said George Baker, OnStar's Emergency Services Outreach manager. "We have a strong relationship with law enforcement that has allowed us to refine our processes, promote teamwork and more quickly recover stolen vehicles for our subscribers."

Since OnStar began in 1996, more than 59,000 stolen vehicles have been located using OnStar's Stolen Vehicle Assistance services, Cross said. Over the past year, Detroit, Houston, St. Louis, Chicago and Los Angeles were the top metropolitan areas for Stolen Vehicle Assistance requests.

OnStar executes five to seven Stolen Vehicle Slowdowns a month - a number trending upwards as the Public Safety sector becomes familiar with the service, Cross said.

"This slowdown service is a perfect example of the technologies available to law enforcement agencies to keep our citizens and officers safer on the road," said Detroit Police Chief James Craig.

Here are three high-profile Stolen Vehicle Slowdown cases in the service's history:

- **First SVS Carjacking:** A California resident was carjacked at gunpoint early one morning in 2009. After OnStar located his stolen Chevrolet Tahoe, and police had it in their sights, OnStar was able to safely slow the vehicle and the suspect was apprehended. Less than 16 minutes after OnStar was contacted, the Tahoe was safely recovered.

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- George Baker

- **Congressional Recovery:** In May 2010, a Chevrolet Impala belonging to a state senator was stolen from a parking lot. Upon realizing it was stolen, the senator quickly contacted OnStar, which alerted the county sheriff and confirmed the vehicle was being treated as stolen. OnStar then provided officers with the vehicle's GPS location.

When the officers had the Impala in sight, they requested Stolen Vehicle Slowdown be initiated, the vehicle was disabled and the suspect was taken into custody.

- **Stolen Vehicle Standoff:** In Shreveport, La., the owner of a Chevrolet Silverado was robbed of his truck and money at gunpoint during a home invasion. Since the vehicle had an active OnStar subscription, advisors were able to provide authorities with the vehicle location and slow it down when the suspect refused to stop.

However, the suspect then refused to surrender, pointing a gun at himself and threatening his own life.

Officers called in a negotiating team who used OnStar's Hands-Free system to talk to the suspect for hours, eventually convincing him to surrender before anyone was hurt.

OnStar's Stolen Vehicle Slowdown is available on most 2009 model year and newer General Motors' vehicles in the U.S., Canada, China and Mexico, Cross said.

The service is included in the OnStar subscription that comes standard on new GM vehicles. For more information regarding Stolen Vehicle Slowdown and all of OnStar's services, visit www.onstar.com.

FBI Tags Takata for Antitrust Breach

Takata Corporation, which maintains offices and other facilities in Auburn Hills, has entered into a plea agreement with the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), agreeing to pay fines in the total amount of \$71.3 million to resolve allegations that Takata violated U.S. antitrust laws in connection with the sales of certain automotive seat belts to customers, including GM, Ford and Chrysler.

In a press release, Takata officials stated that "Takata and its subsidiaries have cooperated fully with the investigation by the DOJ since February 2011 when its U.S. subsidiary, TK Holdings Inc., became the subject of an investigation by the Federal Bu-

reau of Investigation. Takata decided to enter into the plea agreement described above upon overall consideration of applicable laws, relevant facts and other factors. Full cooperation with the DOJ investigation will continue based on the plea agreement."

The settlement came after a lengthy investigation by the Justice Department in which 20 companies and 21 executives have pled guilty to a variety of anti-trust law violations. These pleas have resulted in more than \$1.6 billion in fines being paid. Additionally, Gary Walker, a Takata employee, agreed to serve a 14-month prison sentence for his role in Takata's legal troubles.

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