

# Overly easy to steal cargo from transport networks

May 24 2011

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Each year, billions of euros worth of goods are being stolen from European transport networks. A discouraged transport and logistics sector has more or less chosen to tolerate the problem. But there are solutions, according to Dr Luca Urciuoli, researcher in Engineering Logistics at Lund University, Sweden, who recently published a PhD thesis on the subject.

Luca Urciuoli's research shows that many haulage companies do not make any security investments at all, even though it is fairly easy to find security measures such as theft-proof doors or windows, truck alarms, track and trace systems and mechanical locks on the market.

"In Sweden, criminals often have time to attack [cargo](#) when the driver leaves the lorry for lunch, or while he is sleeping in the cab or delivering the goods to the customer", says Luca Urciuoli, who adds that cargo theft is a growing problem in Europe.

Luca Urciuoli's explanation as to why Swedish transport companies are doing so little to enhance security is that they often do not find it worthwhile to tackle such a problem.

Today, companies rarely bother to report thefts to the police, arguing that "they won't do anything anyway...". Neither are they reporting the problem to the insurance companies because this would lead to their premiums and excesses being raised.

This lack of reporting and statistics collection means the problem is underestimated. Consequently, relevant stakeholders – police, customs, courts of justice, insurance companies, certification bodies, security companies, transport companies, shippers and cargo owners – put less effort into fighting cargo crime than they should.

But Luca Urciuoli's survey study shows that it pays to address this problem. The few Swedish carriers who are actually investing in better security, establishing closer collaboration with the police and exploiting special contract agreements in which security is emphasised, are also subject to less security incidents.

Luca Urciuoli was also able to observe that these companies were less scared by the opportunistic behaviour of criminals and trusted the courts of justice and police to apprehend and correctly prosecute cargo thieves. In addition, these companies were able to negotiate more advantageous premium discounts with the [insurance companies](#).

"Training and implementation of security measures are essential to enhance security in transportation. In addition, national governments could help to improve the situation. For instance, fiscal measures, recommendations, training and education could be tools to stimulate the enhancement of security", says Luca Urciuoli.

According to Prof. Sten Wandel, Luca Urciuoli's supervisor, many transport companies need external help to perform [security](#) analyses. This is especially true for small and medium-sized companies which today dominate the transport market. It is also important to subsidise and build more secure parking places in Europe.

**More information:** The PhD thesis and a short abstract are available at the following link: [www.tlog.lth.se/fileadmin/tlog ...  
is Luca Urciuoli.pdf](http://www.tlog.lth.se/fileadmin/tlog...is_Luca_Urciuoli.pdf)

Provided by Lund University

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