

Secure parking key to U turn on road cargo theft



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Underwriters should incentivise the use of secure truck parking areas to combat cargo theft on European motorways, delegates at the International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) conference in London were told.

Eric de Smet, manager at Baloise Insurance in Antwerp, stated that 72% of intra-European trade is transported by road. Annual cargo theft losses from this trade amount to €8.2bn with many incidents occurring at rest stops.



"A truck at rest is a truck at risk. There is a lack of truck stop areas and there is a lack of secure truck stop areas," declared Mr de Smet.

He detailed European Union plans to improve motorways across a trans-European network, removing bottlenecks and increasing security.

The €550m initiative includes applying a rating system to truck parking areas based on the standard of their security measures.

"We should be thinking of raising awareness to increase theft prevention measures, including the construction of secure truck parking areas," said Mr de Smet.

"Cargo theft is a serious issue and addressing parking security has to be part of an overall strategy."

Ironically, although there is a current lack of secure parking areas across the continent those that are in place are sometimes underutilised because transport hauliers are deterred by high user fees.

However, in areas where the security of truck stops has been successfully improved the results, stated Mr de Smet, have been "astonishing". For example, since 2010 cargo theft in the Netherlands has been halved each year.