

# New crime stats show huge increase in truck hijacking

The crime statistics for the second quarter of 2020/2021 were released last week Friday. Police minister Bheki Cele says there was a 1.6% decrease, or 79 less, in cases of carjacking. However, there was a 31.7% increase in truck hijacking.



Photo by Matthew T Rader on Unsplash

Eugene Herbert, managing director of MasterDrive, says: "Whether you drive a car or a truck, one should increase their awareness levels as we head toward the end of the year. Traditionally, the end of the year is a time when crime tends to rise. Consequently, all drivers need to increase their awareness levels as they make their way around."

## High-risk scenarios:

- **Driveways** - Drivers of cars need to pay attention as they head toward their houses. Avoid turning into your driveway if there is another car behind you. Even if there is no one behind you, rather wait parallel to your gate while it opens and only pull in once you can drive straight inside. Ensure the area is well lit and clear of overgrown bushes.
- **Intersections** - Pay attention to the people you regularly see at intersections on your commute or regular routes. If someone is different to usual, keep an eye on them. Try to avoid coming to a complete stop at an intersection and rather anticipate light changes so that you are not at a standstill. If this is unavoidable, leave a large gap between yourself and the vehicle in front so that you have space to react if necessary. A common modus operandi in truck hijackings is to tell the driver there is something wrong with the truck. Rather check on the vehicle once you are in a safe area.
- **Stationary** - When you are parked at a shopping centre or at a client to unload cargo, you should pay attention to your surroundings. Passenger vehicle drivers should ensure that they reverse park at their destination so that you can drive straight out when departing. Once you return to your vehicle be ready to climb in and leave without delay. Truck drivers should also ensure that they can leave their stopping points without delay.

As we approach the end of the year, be extra vigilant. "Much loss and trauma could be avoided if we pay attention to the suspicious people and vehicles around us. Unfortunately, however, this does still not guarantee that you will never become a victim. Thus, learn what to do if you are hijacked so that you are prepared for all scenarios," concludes Herbert.