

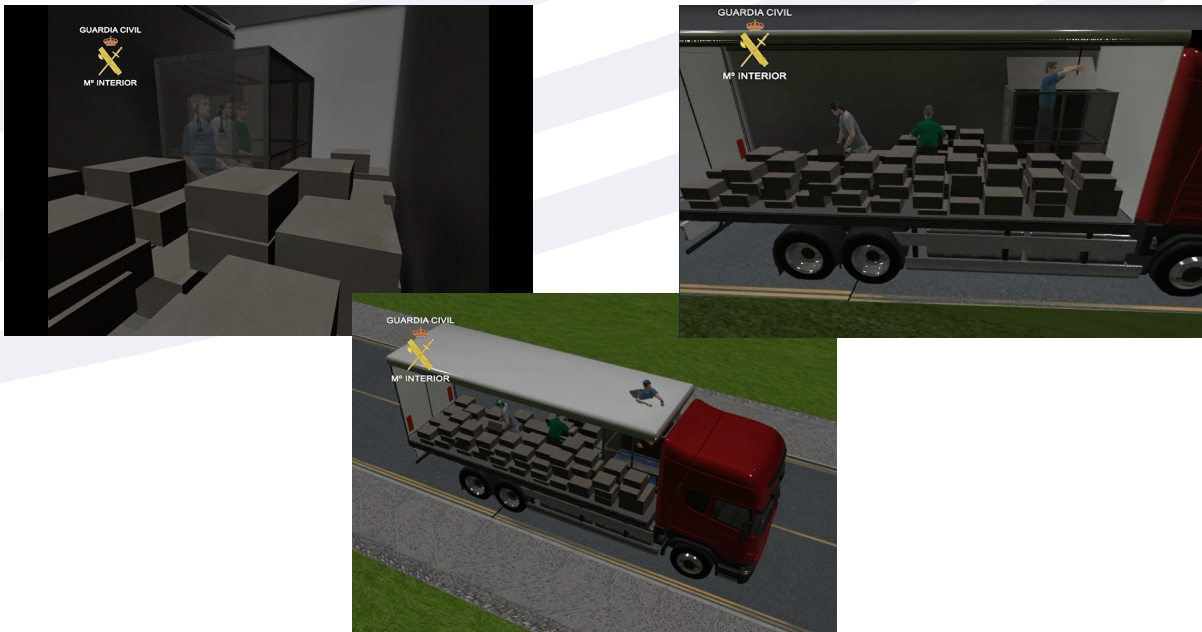
EARLY WARNING NOTIFICATION

'Trojan Horse' cargo thefts

What is happening?

Spain has reported some incidents of cargo thefts carried out using a particular 'Trojan horse' *modus operandi*. The criminals gained access to delivery lorries by concealing themselves in large wooden boxes and arranging for their pick-up by parcel delivery services. The large wooden boxes offered space for one or more persons and were custom-made for this purpose. Those arranging the pick-up stressed that the box contained fragile and precious goods and had to be handled with great care. The criminals left the boxes while they were being transported by a delivery lorry. After an initial screening of the lorries' loads, the thieves collected valuable items such as jewellery, phones or electronics. To leave the vehicles, the team contacted accomplices following the lorry via mobile phone or other transmitters. The accomplices then simulated an accident ahead of the lorries to stop the vehicle, preferably somewhere in the countryside. After escaping via holes cut out of the roofs of the lorries, the teams hidden in the lorries were picked up by other accomplices.

Please see the pictures below for an illustration of the *modus operandi*.



What is different about this specific *modus operandi*?

Cargo thefts involving simulated accident are quite common. Thefts from moving trucks have also been reported repeatedly. However, the **Trojan Horse** *modus operandi* outlined above has not been reported to Europol before. While the concept of this *modus operandi* is quite simple, it requires a degree of organisation and sophistication uncommon to similar *modi operandi*.