

Vitalii Bondarenko – Researcher of the Scientific Laboratory on the Problems of Pre-trial Investigation of the National Academy of Internal Affairs

Examination Methods of Signs of Destruction, Forgery or Replacement of Vehicle Units and Assemblies Numbers

Car ownership is a significant achievement in scientific and technological progress, the logical value of civilization, without which it is impossible to imagine the life of the European society. The number of vehicles is growing steadily every year in Ukraine and elsewhere around the world.

In recent years, the so-called «organized car crime» in Ukraine and in foreign countries implies: crimes related to the destruction, forgery or replacement of vehicle units numbers. Crimes involving the destruction, forgery or replacement of vehicle units and assemblies numbers as a form of criminal activity because of their yield are extremely attractive to criminals. There are clandestine workshops that prepare cars obtained as criminal for resale. Criminal groups control such markets where vehicles are sold with forged or altered units and assemblies numbers as well.

The law enforcement agencies are seriously concerned about the increase of the crime, which in legal literature is called «criminal auto business». This concept covers a wide range of crimes, namely theft, alteration or destruction of identification numbers of units and assemblies, sales of stolen goods, illegal customs clearance, illegal vehicle registration. Since criminal car business occupies a niche in the criminal environment, its separation from other crimes such as fraud, murder, robbery, extortion, etc., is meaningless. Criminal groups specializing in automotive business, take control of the activities of commercial entities engaged in the importation and sale of foreign-made cars, organize them to sell stolen vehicles abroad. Automobile plants, highways, by which vehicles are transported, crossing points find themselves under their control. The colossal criminal income with minimal risk and expenses made by «car business» is extremely attractive to organized crime groups and has become a major source of profit. Illegal criminal business based on

the realization of stolen cars has increasingly transnational nature and its income is not lower than the one from drug trafficking and arms trade. Against this background, dangerously low level of prevention, detection and investigation of crimes related to motor vehicles is particularly evident, and one reason of this situation is the lack of high-tech scientific support of forensic and operative investigative activities and investigative practices of law enforcement bodies adequate to modern needs. Topical problems of conducting forensic expertise in the investigation of crimes related to the destruction, forgery or replacement of vehicle units and assemblies numbers are described in this article, certain methods of conducting the examination are discussed as well.

Keywords: forensic expertise; destruction; forgery; methods; re-marking; vehicle.