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Subject: Aggressive police take hundreds of millions of dollars from motorists not charged with crimes

Posted by [CyberkNight](#) on Fri, 12 Sep 2014 15:07:34 GMT

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After the terror attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the government called on police to become the eyes and ears of homeland security on America's highways.

Local officers, county deputies and state troopers were encouraged to act more aggressively in searching for suspicious people, drugs and other contraband. The departments of Homeland Security and Justice spent millions on police training.

The effort succeeded, but it had an impact that has been largely hidden from public view: the spread of an aggressive brand of policing that has spurred the seizure of hundreds of millions of dollars in cash from motorists and others not charged with crimes, a Washington Post investigation found. Thousands of people have been forced to fight legal battles that can last more than a year to get their money back.

Behind the rise in seizures is a little-known cottage industry of private police-training firms that teach the techniques of "highway interdiction" to departments across the country.

One of those firms created a private intelligence network known as Black Asphalt Electronic Networking & Notification System that enabled police nationwide to share detailed reports about American motorists -- criminals and the innocent alike -- including their Social Security numbers, addresses and identifying tattoos, as well as hunches about which drivers to stop.

Many of the reports have been funneled to federal agencies and fusion centers as part of the government's burgeoning law enforcement intelligence systems -- despite warnings from state and federal authorities that the information could violate privacy and constitutional protections.

A thriving subculture of road officers on the network now competes to see who can seize the most cash and contraband, describing their exploits in the network's chat rooms and sharing "trophy shots" of money and drugs. Some police advocate highway interdiction as a way of raising revenue for cash-strapped municipalities.

Full article: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/investigative/2014/09/06/st op-and-seize/>

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