



produced in
conjunction
with the
Association of
Chief Police
Officers

STEER CLEAR OF CARAVAN CRIME

A Police Officer's Guide

Contents

Introduction	1
Reducing caravan theft	3
What is CRiS?	8
Why be suspicious?	10
Identifying caravans	12
Assessing the age of a caravan	42
Equipped to steal	44
Information required when a caravan is reported stolen	46
Caravan identification	47
Stolen caravan check	48

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Sadly, caravan crime is increasing and, for the average Police Officer, particularly if they are not caravanners, understanding caravan crime, recognising a caravan is stolen and identifying that caravan can be difficult.

The accompanying video can help. With this booklet, it sets out to give Police Officers all the information they need to play their part in the battle against the theft of caravans.

We know that having any item stolen is distressing but when the stolen property represents a person's leisure and pleasure time, the crime is somehow much worse.

I hope you will watch this video. I am sure it will help you in your work.

Richard Childs, Chief Constable, Lincolnshire Constabulary
Lead Officer, ACPO Crime Reduction Through Partnership Portfolio



Reducing caravan theft

Some 4,000 touring caravans are stolen each year. That's about a quarter of all new caravans sold annually. Very few of these caravans are recovered.

The Caravan Registration and Identification Scheme (CRiS) currently holds details of over 10,000 outstanding caravan theft reports. Few as one in four of these caravans are ever recovered.

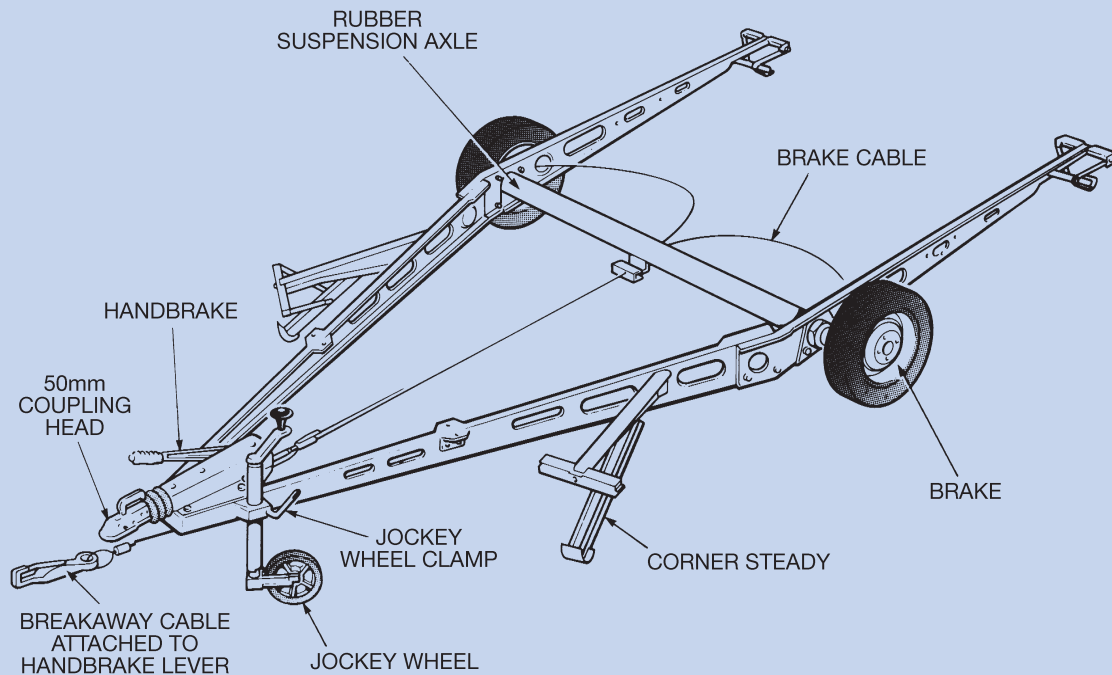
For the owners it isn't just the loss of property worth up to £25,000. The thief also steals memories of happy days in the sun, watching the children growing up and making new friends.

The purpose of this booklet and accompanying video is to help you to determine if a caravan has been stolen and how to identify the many makes and models of caravans on the road today.

There are around a half a million touring caravans throughout the UK, some of which are over 30 years old. There are around 60 manufacturers of caravans throughout Europe,

over 20 of which are based in the UK.

Between them they produce nearly 600 different models each year, so identifying the make and model of a caravan can be difficult. However, there are plenty of clues around but you will need to know a little about caravans before you know where to look.



The constituent parts

Caravans are built on a chassis like the one shown opposite. The converging bit at the front is the A-frame and at its point is the coupling head. It is the coupling that attaches to the tow ball on the towing vehicle.

Mounted on the chassis is the body. At the front of most caravans is a compartment which normally carries the gas cylinders and spare wheel. Sometimes these are housed elsewhere and there is often another locker which houses the battery.

There may be a further locker that carries the chemical toilet holding tank. All these lockers will have lockable doors.

Identification

Most caravans look like white boxes on wheels but when you know what you are looking for you can easily tell what era they come from.

A typical pre-1974 touring caravan will have windows made of flat glass and carry the gas cylinders in a cradle on the A-frame or in a box

which isn't part of the caravan's main body.

From 1979 British caravans adopted double-glazed plastic windows which stand proud of the caravan body. It was not until 1981 that continental caravans started to use this type of window.

From 1984 the current shape of caravans had become established. The front locker became part of the aerodynamic caravan shell. Some caravans have the gas cylinder locker built into the side of the 'van.



*A Cheltenham Sable from the 1970s.
A Swift Corniche from the year 2001 range.*





Up to that time caravan manufacturers had their own means of identifying their units by using a series of letters and numbers stamped at various places on the chassis.

From 1987 the caravan industry rationalised the identification by using a ten-digit letter/number combination on an identification plate and chassis.

The first two numbers indicate the model year, for example 87 BY 00 8721 indicate that the 'van was made in 1987 model year.

The following letters and numbers indicate the caravan maker (in this case Bailey), the model identification (issued by the manufacturer) and the serial number of that particular caravan.

Unfortunately the identity plate is fairly easy to remove and could be significant if the caravan being examined is suspected of being stolen. Look for signs of interference with screws, rivets or damage to the plate.

Some caravanners don't realise the importance of the identity plate and may

not have kept a record of the numbers and letters on it.

Post-1992 caravans

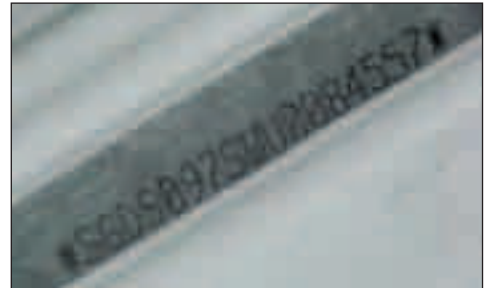
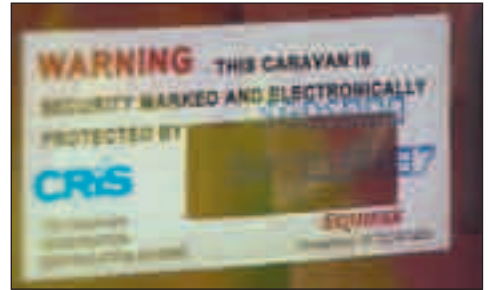
There aren't any significant design changes which help separate a pre-1992 model from one made after that date. However, colour stripes on earlier caravans tend to be bigger and bolder.

In 1992 most British made touring caravans adopted the Caravan Registration and Identification Scheme (CRiS) which gave every new caravan a unique 17-digit number similar to the VIN number found on other road-going vehicles.

This CRiS number can be found etched on up to ten windows and is also stamped on the A-frame and chassis. Sometimes the A-frame cowling may have to be removed to reveal the number, but in some modern caravans there is a cut away in the cowling through which the markings can be seen.

The CRiS number on caravan windows is

displayed with seven upper numbers and ten lower numbers. The last seven numbers of the 17-digit VIN is the serial number of the caravan.



What is CRiS?

CRiS, Caravan Registration and Identification Scheme, is the national register of UK-manufactured touring caravans. It was established in 1992 by the National Caravan Council (NCC) in conjunction with HPI, the same vehicle data base company which provides the HPI service to the motor industry.

All new UK-made caravans since August 1992 are allocated a 17-digit identity number, similar to that found on motor vehicles and recorded by the DVLA.

The CRiS number and the caravan description are recorded on a Touring Caravan Registration Document, similar to a vehicle registration document, that includes information about the caravan and its keeper. It also includes a tear-off strip to notify CRiS of any change in circumstances.

Some thieves try and use a National Caravan Council BS Certificate to prove ownership. This certificate merely shows compliance with a manufacturing standard and is not proof of ownership.

The 17-digit number is issued by CRiS, which keeps computerised records that can be checked by the police to identify who the registered keeper of the caravan is.

Recently, CRiS has also been expanded to include pre-1992 caravans and some imported 'vans. In these cases owners have directly registered their caravan with CRiS, after meeting security criteria, and had a VIN number issued.

Since 1998 all new UK-made caravans have also been fitted with unique transponders, hidden at various places within the caravan structure. These transponders reveal the CRiS number to a reader available from CRiS. The number should match those etched on the caravan windows. Transponders have also recently been made available for those CRiS-registered caravans made between 1992-98.

The CRiS scheme holds all the information known about a caravan including the last registered keeper and whether it has been stolen or written off.

Don't get confused between these certificates. The two below show that the caravan meets British or European Standards of manufacture and are not proof of ownership. The one on the right is issued to the registered keeper by CRiS as proof of keepership.

A horizontal document titled 'Caravan Registration Document' in blue. It has a blue header and footer. The main body is white with blue text and lines. It contains several sections with headings like 'Registration Details', 'Registration Fee', 'Registration Validity', and 'Registration Conditions'. There are also sections for 'Registration of Sale or Transfer' and 'Registration of Change of Ownership'. The document is a form for registering a caravan with CRiS.

Why be suspicious?

Most caravanners are genuine, but there are indications which can make Police Officers suspicious of a particular unit.

Firstly, is the driver on his own? Do the vehicle occupants appear genuine caravanners? Most caravanners tend to be older couples or families in saloon cars.

Does the towing vehicle equate to the perceived value of the caravan being towed?

Does the towing vehicle's number plate match that on the caravan?

Are the curtains closed? Caravans that have been stored may have the curtains closed to prevent fading to interior trim.

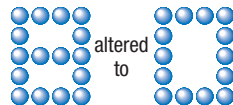
Have any of the vehicle's occupants got the caravan keys? Not many caravanners or delivery drivers take a caravan without the keys.

If the main door is found to be unlocked does the driver have keys to any of the other lockers? A thief can force the main door lock open and then close the door afterwards. Look at the door, door frame and locks for

signs of damage. Once the locker locks are forced they generally have to be changed or use tape to keep them closed.

Has the CRiS number on the windows been interfered with? Clever thieves have been known to remove or alter the CRiS number with a hot pin and blue paint. Typical numbers altered are: 1's to 6's, 1's to 8's, 1's to 9's, 5's to 6's and 8's to 0's (as illustrated on the right).

Thieves have also



been known to remove all the CRiS numbers and substitute their own using solid numbers rather than dot matrix characters. Sometimes the thieves are in such a hurry to remove the white sticker from the inside of the nearside front window they slightly distort the plastic pane.

Has any attempt been made to grind out the chassis number on the A-frame or have the numbers been altered?

Calling CRiS

If the caravan is suspect then it can be checked out by contacting CRiS on 01722 411 430.

It may first be necessary to see if the caravan contains a transponder. The transponder reader is obtainable from CRiS and may necessitate the caravan being taken to a holding compound.

Once the CRiS number has been found, a call to CRiS direct or via your control will help to confirm information about the caravan in question. CRiS will ask the caller a few simple questions to confirm the identity of the inquirer before any information is given.

A further check should be made with the police national computer (PNC) to see if the caravan has been reported stolen.

CRiS records of stolen caravans include all those collected by The Camping and Caravanning Club and The Caravan Club, and include caravans of any age.



Identifying caravans

There are thousands of touring caravans in existence made by several manufacturers since the birth of the modern caravan industry around 1920. A number of manufacturers are no longer around and some have been taken over by other caravan producers.

Most caravans you may come across will probably have been made within the last five to ten years.

The following pages contain photographs of the most common caravans made between 1995-2000. Each has a description to help with identification.

Over the last five years limited edition caravans have increased in large numbers. These caravans are based on manufacturers' base models but have alterations made to them by caravan dealers. These changes can include different upholstery and/or added accessories, and are often re-badged with a name unique to the dealership, eg a Broadway 350/2 is really an Elddis Whirlwind XL supplied by the caravan dealer Broad Lane Leisure; a

Lifestyle 530 is really a Swift Challenger supplied by Barrons Great Outdoors. The stolen Fairway 460 caravan featured in the video is based on a Swift Classic Duette produced by Swift for Broad Lane Leisure.

You may also come across imported caravans, mainly from Europe. Most of these will have the doors on the UK offside but others will have been imported with the door on the nearside. Adria, Burstner, Eriba, Freedom, Hymer, Hobby, Knaus, Liberty, Sterckeman, Tabbert and Weippert are the most common imported models.

Some imported caravans are registered with CRiS, others are not.



Abbey Caravans

Piper

Flat roof, pre-1995 models have a one-piece front window. 1995 models have three front windows. Exterior profile follows Abbey County with large Piper-style graphics.



lona

Small compact tourer (1.95m width), one-piece front window on pre-1997 models. Same exterior as County, cream colour with bold lona graphics on later models. GRP-moulded front end was rounded for 1999/2000.



County

Named after English counties, eg Somerset, Dorset, etc. Flat roofs and front-moulded panel. Bolder graphics for 1998 models, full specification and GRP-finished side panels after 1999.



Evolution

Named Domino Two and Four in 1996 and 1997. Unique GRP (glass-reinforced plastic) side panels (most caravans use aluminium) with large Domino picture graphics. Full specification, 1999 model year was joined by Chess and Solitaire models.



GTS Vogue

Upmarket Abbey County range. GTS has plainer moulded front and rear panel from 1995, window edges finished in gold colour. From 1998 new front and rear panels with window frames in black. Bold green graphics make them more distinctive.



Spectrum

Top of the range Abbey models come as large twin-axled (ie four-wheeled) tourers. Sharp front end GRP panel with gold window frames on 1995 models to 1997, after new smooth-rounded front and rear panel. Window edging in black, exterior in white. Full specification tourers.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door pre-1993 Cosalt manufacture.



ABI/ABI UK

Adventurer (1997-98)

Distinctive, sharp raked front end with one-piece window. Door placed at rear. Green lower waistband with distinctive graphic compass markings. 2000 models had the same exterior profile but in silver.



Sprinter

Narrow-bodied tourers with sharp front end. Tan-coloured lower panel band, from 1998 Sprinter GT with cream exteriors with pale blue coachlines. One-piece front window – non-opening on earlier models.



Marauder (from 1995)

Marauder has moulded front panel with three windows and smooth exterior panels. 1996/1997 models known as Gold and Sportique. Rear end panel features a graphic of a car towing a caravan in pale green. Range discontinued for 1998.



Dalesman

Based on Ace profiles of 1996, the Dalesman was a cheaper version. With a peaked roof, the Dalesman was finished in a combination of white and pale mint green. Three front windows in one-piece moulded panel. Ram's head graphic on rear end side panels. Built until end of 1998.



Ace

Profile (new shape from 1995) similar to Dalesman, except cream exteriors with blue coachlines from 1996. Rear roof spoiler added to Ace. Last model year 1999 with red coachlines on exterior panelling and Prestige name attached to large rear red reflector plate.



Evissa

Easy to spot with very bold graphics, light grey exterior and rear chrome ladder. Rear end bunkroom made only for 1996/1997 no changes made in that period.



Jubilee

Same profile as Ace but with large Jubilee graphics. Rear end spoiler, two front windows in moulded panel was distinctive feature.



Jubilee Supreme

Same as Jubilee but with Supreme badging and higher specification.



Manhattan

Profile same as that of Marauder with Manhattan logos and new blue ABI badging. Mannhattans can either be single- or twin-axle caravans.



Brooklyn

Based on Manhattan but with a width of 2.23m. Also Brooklyn logos and new blue ABI badging.



Award

Smooth, streamlined plastic front panel. Lower band colouring on 1996/1997 models metallic green with matching drawbar cover. One-piece rear end panel includes built-in roof spoiler with Award logo; moulding extends part way onto roof. From 1998, green colour replaced with blue (as above) but not used 1999/2000. (Award Papillon has modern interior and butterfly graphics). All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door. Old green ABI logo replaced in 1999 with new blue ABI badging.



Adria UK

Pre-1996 Adria imported the Optima (right) and Forma-Optima (left), more popular with sharp, raked front end, heavy blue-tinted windows. Bold Adria logo on rear panel.



Unica

From 1996 Unica imported. New body shell with bold graphics. No drawbar shroud (only on later 1998 models). Large one-piece front windows.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Avondale Group

Sport

Based on the shell of the budget Perle, 1995/1996 exteriors almost identical. Large surfer logo on cream exterior finish. No glazed stable door. Moulded front panel has one-piece window, with gas locker situated over axle on offside. Grey-coloured draw bar shroud.



Perle

As profile of Sport, except distinguishing three front window arrangement. Graphics are low key. Twin side panel lockers on nearside with offside gas locker over axle. Unglazed stable door.



Leda

Follows profile of Perle except with more use of GRP mouldings. Known as GXL after 1994. Rear end panel is one complete unit, incorporating a spoiler. Offside gas locker over axle line, spare wheel carrier is built into floor. Front panel has storage compartment only. Cream paint with subtle coachlines.



Avondale

Distinctive shell with GRP-moulded roof and front and rear panels. Off-cream exterior with all model names of UK hill ranges. Small rear roof window is Avondale identity trait. Gas locker central on offside.



Dart

From 1998 Dart based on Leda with GRP front and rear end moulded panels. Offside gas locker front storage locker only. Glazed stable door, battery box placed on nearside.



Land-Ranger

All twin-axled tourers from 1996 with GRP front and rear panels, some may have optional rear bike rack fitted. Roof raises slightly at rear (aluminium up to 2000), exterior lower panels were either in green, white or blue (customers' choice). 2000 models had new one-piece roof.



Rialto

Front panel is GRP and extends just above the roofline. Profile similar to Leda's. Front storage locker with offside gas locker over axle line. Low key body graphics are set on smooth panels.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate above inside of door.



Bailey of Bristol

Beachcomber

Club and CD identical in profile. Plain simple looks, with moulded front panel, red centre waistband. Slight wedge at front, profile not dissimilar to Ranger. Deep side windows, especially over kitchen area. Glazed stable door.



Hunter Lite

Exterior of Hunter Lite follows that of Ranger. Front GRP-moulded panel, green coachlines, silver wheel trims, and new wheel arch spats for 1998 (last model year).



Discovery

In production until 1996, front panel of GRP also same one to be used on Bailey Ranger until 2000. Pale green centre waistband with Discovery logo. One-piece moulded rear panel (borrowed from Ranger).



Ranger

Exterior of Discovery, pale green waistband. Early (1996) models didn't carry the Bailey badge. From 1998 graphics were bolder, 2000 models saw new front end and rear panel. Blue coachlines. Special limited Ranger GT50's for 1997 only.



Pageant

Front moulded panel, with complete moulded rear unit. 1996-1997 models have gold waistbands. New shape for 1998, front end had distinctive “dolphin nose” GRP panel used for all Bailey range except Ranger until 2000.



Senator

All on twin-axles pre-1998, same front and rear as Pageant after 1997. Blue waistband with logo in red. Under-chassis spare wheel carriers, Bailey 50-year badge.



Regency

Made for 1999 model year only. Cream exterior with gold coachlines. Same front end and rear panels as other Baileys. Built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Bessacarr

Bessacarr XL

Less specified Conisborough, Denby etc have same profile as Cameo range. Plain front three-window panel with large rear one. Cream exterior with subtle pale green waistband, single- and twin-axle models.



Cameo

From 1996 distinctive front GRP-moulded panel wrapping over to roof. Rear panel carried a moulded spare wheel carrier. From 1998 Cameo range received a new swept back front panel with green waistband. Built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Buccaneer

Distinctive profile with GRP front and rear panels. Post-1995 all changed to GRP three-piece roof design. Twin-axle and single-axle models. Post-1998 models had new front cantilever storage locker design replacing twin side units. Large stainless steel grab handles.

Built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate on kick plate inside doorway.



Carlight

One-piece front window; lantern roof all front, rear ends plus roof finished off in GRP. Smooth-finished white panels, chrome hubcaps, large stainless steel grab handles. Old-fashioned interiors. Profile changed very little since 1995. Single- and twin-axes available.

ID plate by door also stamped onto chassis A-frame.



Castleton

Front and rear GRP-moulded panels incorporating large stainless steel grab handles. Side panels flat aluminium, roof GRP one-piece unit, colour off-cream with single coachlines. None made after 1995. Genesis model more modern looking with sleeker styling, finished in off-white.

Built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate inside doorway.



Coachman

Mirage

Flat roof with front ABS-moulded panel and rear one-piece panel. Pale blue waistbands and no glazed stable door on pre-1996 models. End dinette models feature a small rear back window. After 1997 Mirage changed to Lux, basically unchanged.



Genius and SE

Pre-1997 front and rear ABS-moulded panels, plus side skirts and blister design. ABS wheel spats. From 1997 profile based on VIP range but without a rear spoiler. Lower body panel with red coachlines.



Concept

Profile of Mirage complete with front and rear ABS panels. Front window one-piece unit only. Grey lower half body panel, made from 1996-97.



VIP

Same profile as post-1996 Genius models, but with a large rear panel incorporating spoiler. Red lower waistband, ABS side skirts. From 2000 new front end (same as VIP) with rear end ABS panel incorporating grab handles and light clusters. Alloy wheels.



Amara
Replaced Mirage, same shell except for new one-piece front ABS panel. Amara logo just above narrow centre waistband, front windows in black frames.



Pastiche
Same profile as the Amara, front locker design slightly different. Larger centre waistband finished in green with subtle coachlines beneath tell the two model ranges apart.



Laser
Twin-axled tourers based on Amara, alloy wheels. Launched for 1999/2000. Built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Compass

Lynx

Small 3.35m length by narrow 1.95m body width. Three front windows, slight front wedge design, discreet coachlines. Post-1998 new profile includes one-piece front ABS-moulded panel, white exterior with bold Lynx graphics.



Omega

Produced for 1997, Omega followed family Compass profile. Front GRP-moulded unit has integral locker and lower blue stripe. Roof slopes slightly up to rear. Rear panel has low moulded unit for road lights.



Reflection and Merit

Front moulded panel with three windows and storage locker. Red coachlines make up centre band with embossed Reflection logo. No glazed stable door fitted – Merit has this feature plus special Merit badging.



Vantage

Profile based on other Compass models, with Vantage having a gold low body panel banding. No rear roof spoiler.



Connoisseur

Swept back front end with cantilever locker lid from early 1995 models with gradual sloping roof to 'van's rear end. Shape close to that of Omega. Lower green band and rear end roof spoiler, 1996 twin-axle model. 1997 models had maroon graphics – last model year.



Illusion

Based on the profile of the Connoisseur, except Illusion doesn't have rear end spoiler for 1996 or 1997. Twin-axled 'vans for 1997 model year. Body coachlines on lower panel and waistband.



Kensington

Following familiar Compass profile (Pentara) – minus rear roof spoiler – Kensington built for 1998/1999 year only. Bold red lower reflective panel waistband. Front GRP-moulding and lower rear end panel.



Rallye GTE

GTE name not used on 1995 models. Shape from 1997 broke away from other Compass models. Front end GRP panel has sharper angle. Window frames finished in silver. Rubbing stake at bottom of side panels, pin-stripe coachlines. Wheel covers have Compass logo.

From 1999 distinctive swept back GRP panel, rear is one complete unit, with built-in corner road lights, 3D graphics and lilac blue coachlines.



Pentara

Large twin-axled tourers with family Compass GRP front end panel. Rear end moulded panel included roof spoiler. Red lower coachlines. From 1999 new shape: distinctive ribbed, moulded front and rear GRP panels. Blue moulded skirt panels.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Crown Caravans

Crown and Golden Crown

Both share same body profile. GRP front end with three window design. Almost flat roofline.

Golden Crown had glazed stable door plus bolder markings.

Shape kept basically the same with only detailed body graphics being changed. From 2000 one-piece front window and new front and rear end moulded panels.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Eddis Caravans

Elusion and Wisp

Both model ranges available from 1995 with same sharp front end GRP panel, Eddis family design.

Exterior colours: off-cream for Wisp, white for Elusion. Logos discreetly placed. Elusion dropped for 1995, Wisp introduced in 1996.



Elf

Based on Vogue made from 1995 to 1997. Elf only 3.35m long and 1.90m wide. White exterior with pale grey waistband. Shape based on the larger Eddis Vogue. On all 1995 Eddis models 30-year anniversary badge on front locker lid.



Vogue and Vogue SE

Based on Wisp range with the same profile. Body graphics went over to a pinkish red for 1997. Shape carried on until 1998, with pale green centre waistband.



GT

Produced from 1999, the GT inherited the 1998 GTX new Eddis profile. Aerodynamic GRP front end with panel stopping just above roofline. Rear end also in stylish GRP moulding. With high-level brake light. Black edged window frames and pale red body stripes are other distinguishing features.



GTX

Pre-1998 old Eddis profile as the Vogue. From 1998 GTX aerodynamic front end as the GT. Same distinguishing features with waistband coloured pale red graphics. All named after winds, eg Tornado.



XL and EX2000

Base Eddis models featuring the exterior of the GTX and GT models, XL has deep green waistband for 2000.

EX2000 had three coachlines for waistband. From 2000 all Eddis models had Seitz flush-fitting side windows.



EX300

Profile of Eddis Vogue with GRP front end. 1996/1997 both years had same exterior front dark green centre band. Rear moulded panel has high-level brake light and spoiler.



Crusader and Super Storm

All twin-axled tourers-pre 1997 profile same as other Eddis ranges but Crusader and Super Storm slightly wider. After 1997 new aerodynamic Eddis profile used with bold 3-D style graphics and subtle coloured waistband.

Eddis used both Al-Ko and BPW chassis. ID plate by door.



Fleetwood Caravans

Colchester and Diadem

Wedge front GRP-moulded front panel, with large three window arrangement and almost vertical moulded one-piece back panel, is Colchester recognition points. Off-cream colour with centre coachlines.

1999 models had new white exterior and new less wedge front end and one-piece rear end moulded panel with spoiler and Fleetwood name in large letters. Red centre coachlines.



Countryside

1998 was first year, following wedge front end from Colchester range.

From 1999 model year, less wedge front end white exterior sharing the same exterior profile as the Colchester. Blue centre coachlines.



Garland

Followed profile of Colchester range from 1995. Red dash coachlines on lower side panel. No glazed stable door. Re-named Garland Lux discontinued after 1997.



Heritage

Large twin-axled Fleetwood with pale blue centre band. Flat roof with front and rear end GRP-moulded panel. Air conditioning unit on roof. Made from 1999.

All models built on BPW chassis. ID plate by door.



Herald Caravans

Emblem and Clarion

Made by Compass, exterior profile is on same lines as Kensington. Emblem has blue body graphics, Clarion has red. New shape for 2000 again follows Compass Rallye lines closely with complete moulded rear and front panel. Distinctive corner rear road lights.

Both brands made for two years only.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Hobby Caravans

Prestige, Elegance and Classic

Same profile used since 1995. Profile for all ranges the same, similar to Adria design. Front one-piece window, blue centre waistband bold body graphics. Unglazed door nearly always on offside. Flat roof except front has slight wedge and moulded panel. Scale-effect panel finish.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate on front nearside of caravan body.



Lunar Caravans

Ariva and GT

Narrow width tourer with flat roof and GRP-moulded front panel and lower rear on early 1995, 1996 and 1997 models. Bold graphics.

Standard Ariva became GT model with fuller specification. Four-berth model produced for limited period in 1995/1996.



Solar and Ultralite

Flat roof profile-based caravans with front GRP-moulded panel on both models. Ultralite is lower spec of the two and made for 1999 only.

Solar exterior is cream with lower panel finished in grey and black coachlines. Glazed stable door.



Planet and Premiere

Sharing the same body shell, the Premiere, like the Planet, have GRP-moulded front and rear panels. Premiere has speckled waistband and striping. Premiere ended in 1997, low specification caravan.

Planet range received up-market additions for 1997 and a new exterior profile based on the Solar shell. Dark green centre waistband with Planet name in gold. Last model year for Planet.



Clubman

Easy to identify with bowed-out GRP front end and one-piece roof. Red centre body stripe. Grey window frames.

From 1999 new profile saw less profound front end plus new one-piece rear moulded GRP panel. Full specification caravan.



LX2000

Made from 1998, the LX2000 has bold graphics, GRP-moulded front end and flat roof. Rear end moulded panel, incorporates spoiler and high-level brake light after 1998.



Delta

Large twin-axled tourers from 1995, same profile as Clubman range. Delta given new GRP front end and rear panels for 1998 with flat roof and rear end incorporating a spoiler.

Body stripes on lower panels and Delta logo in bold blue lettering. Other feature is unusual lift-up axle design turning the Delta into a temporary single-axle for on-site manoeuvring.



Lexon

Large caravan with distinctive end kitchen layout and 2.25m width. Flat roof design, with Lexon logo in bold blue lettering. 2000 edition has a fixed rear bed design.



Meteor and Meteorite

Small compact caravans, two berths only.

Until 1995 exterior feature was the three-piece roof. For 1996 flat roof and new front and rear mouldings. Unchanged for last (1997) model year.

All models built on TW chassis until 1999, then changed over to Al-Ko. ID plate by door.



Sterling Caravans

Sprite Leisure

Sprite caravan from 1995 had one-piece front window, front ABS-moulded panel. Grey bottom panel.

From 1996 Sprite named Excel featuring one-piece front window modified front ABS panel. Grey bottom panel with green coachlines. No glazed stable door.



Europa

Three front window moulded panel, similar profile to Sprite Excel models. Lower rear end moulded light panel, green centre band for 1996, 1997 and 1998, except with different Europa logo designs.

Sprite Europa models had grey and natural internal wood finish options.



Eccles

1995 models had Sprite badge attached and maroon body striping. All models named after precious stones.

Sterling models from 1996 with ABS-moulded front panel, profile following Europa's with red centre waistband. From 1999 front panel redesigned with more streamlined effect. Rear end panel is one-piece. Explorer and Trekker Wayfarer all twin-axle high specification Eccles tourers.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Swift Caravans

Azzura and Classic

Azzura made for 1995 only with same profile as Challenger SE except Azzura had no rear roof spoiler. Exteriors finished in white and grey stripes with green and turquoise graphics.

Classic range launched for 1996 with new exterior, off-white with centre stripes in pale green, front panel in GRP flat roof. Following years saw same exterior with slightly different body colour graphics.



Challenger SE

Front and rear GRP-moulded panel with roof spoiler. Red centre stripe Challenger logo in plastic panel 3-D effect. Full specification.

Profile and stripe only saw detailed changes till 1999 when revised front swept back GRP panel was used along with a complete one-piece rear unit, same red body stripe used.



Corniche

1995 models used mostly GRP mouldings in off-white with bold Corniche logo on front side panel. Also side trim was finished in gold. From 1998 new exterior glaze white aluminium side panels with GRP smooth front and rear panels.

Front windows were flush-fitting units with black frames. Well specified. Coachlines and graphics are low key, very little exterior change for 1999/2000.



Conqueror

Twin-axled caravans top of Swift range with profiles similar to Challenger. From 1996 Conqueror had deeper side windows, 1997 models red centre coachlines. Conqueror was a stretched Challenger but with higher specification.

From 1999 Conqueror has new shell with more aerodynamic, front end and new one-piece rear end GRP panel with roof spoiler. Green centre stripe carried on to 2000 models. All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Vanmaster Caravans

Vanmaster

GRP-moulded sloping front end with GRP roof and rear end panel. Low key graphics with all-white exterior. Rear end panel has slab appearance with roof spoiler. Early 1996/1997 models used Vauxhall Cavalier rear light lenses.

Full specification luxury caravan with unique felt ceiling, main exterior profile hasn't changed since 1996.

All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.



Vanroyce Caravans

Select and Classic

Distinctive front end GRP-moulded panel with stainless steel grab handles. GRP roof and one-piece rear end GRP panel with small boot. All-white exterior and low key graphics from 1998 both Select and Classic launched, latter having more specification. Profile hardly changed for six years.

For year 2000 profile changed slightly with more aerodynamic front panel with deeper front windows. All models built on Al-Ko chassis. ID plate by door.

Assessing the age of a caravan

The age of a caravan can be difficult to determine. Up until 1987 each manufacturer dated their units in their own way using a serial number that usually incorporated two digits indicating its age. Between 1987 and 1991 some manufacturers, but not all, used a ten-digit NCC standard. The first two digits indicated the model year. In 1992 the CRiS 17-digit system became the industry standard for most UK caravan manufacturers.

The external shape, the mechanics and contents have also changed over the years, so identifying these may help in determining its make and approximate date of manufacture.

1960s features

Fluorescent lights using a 12V source and manual water pumps were introduced. Gas cylinders were carried on an open rack on the drawbar.

1970s features

Gas cylinder locker boxes on the A-frame

appeared. From the mid-1970s gas lighting disappeared and fluorescent lights became the norm.

Peak, B&B and CI chassis had spring and shock absorber suspension units. A clip behind the coupling had to be engaged before the caravan can be reversed.

Early types of laminated walls appeared. External aluminium sheet and internal ply were attached to the main framework and filled with glass fibre or polystyrene. Floors were uninsulated. Non-safety glass became illegal in 1978 and fog lamps became compulsory in 1979. Twin plug systems appeared at the end of the decade.

198's features

Lightweight galvanised chassis and bonded wall and floors became the norm.

Automatic reversing systems and rubber suspensions were introduced. Many more 12V appliances, including electrical water pumps, were added – requiring an on-board battery.

The wedge shaped frontage arrived in the mid-'80s which included the integral front locker gas box. Hot water systems and the cassette toilet were introduced at the end of the 1980s.

1990s features

Many more modern appliances were added, including three-way powered (mains electric, 12V and gas) refrigerators, warm air and water central heating systems, air conditioning etc.

Fire alarms and fire retardant foams became mandatory. Mains electricity became the norm in most caravans. Fused distribution panels and separate gas and battery lockers were introduced.

1992 saw the introduction of the NCC/CRiS registration scheme for UK-made caravans requiring a 17-digit dot matrix VIN number to be stencilled on up to ten windows. In 1998 an electronic transponder chip, encrypted with the VIN, was added in the structure of the caravan.

Serial and VIN numbers

Serial numbers are normally found stamped on the A-frame or the axle. Later models may also have the serial number on the weight plate found on the body of the caravan – typically by the door – or on the A-frame. VIN numbers are on the A-frame and etched on the windows.

Typical chassis markings:

Ambergate (Peitz Trailgear 1985/86)

January 1979-1987 first two digits give model year.

Al-Ko

Oval plate on rear of axle. Plate colour mauve up to April 1989, green after 1989. From 1994 Euro-axle used (see letter "E" after "Capacity")

B&B

Prior to 1987 six digits used. From 1984 most un-numbered, but first issued 361079.

CI

Initial letter followed by two digits representing the year.

Peak

From 1970 first two digits give month, next two give year. Ceased 1980.

TW

Last two digits give year.

Equipped to steal

It is often very basic equipment that is used to steal caravans and will normally include implements to remove most types of wheel clamps and hitch locks by force.

Wheel clamps are often removed by forcing out the legs that grip around the tyre using tools such as:

- large stilson wrenches (24" plus) which may be attached to a length of scaffold pole for greater leverage.
- large spanners or socket sets to secure or remove tow ball fittings or fix a caravan 'drop box'.
- a caravan brace to raise the corner steadies (stabilising legs).
- various flat bladed and cross headed screwdrivers that can be used for force the main caravan door or replace locks.
- wiring connectors and flex to provide lighting on the stolen caravan;
- crowbar or jemmy to force hitch locks and wheelclamps.

To remove a caravan secured by a hitch

lock thieves often use a metal 'drop box' or heavy duty ratchet straps attached to another towing hitch.

The 'drop boxes' have been designed by criminals with the sole intention of stealing caravans and trailers that have been secured by hitch locks. They are about 340mm (14") long and about 250mm (10") wide and about 250mm (10") high and are constructed from heavy duty plate. At one end of the 'drop box' there are two small holes. These holes are used to bolt the box to a tow bracket of either a car or van. The lid to the box is secured in place with either a split pin or a nylok nut.

To use the 'drop box' thieves will normally have already located the caravan they wish to steal. They carry the 'drop box' in the boot or inside the vehicle they will be using to tow the caravan away. Be suspicious if the vehicle they are using has a towing bracket but does not have a 50mm tow ball attached.

When the thief is near the location they fix the 'drop box' with two bolts to the vehicle's

tow bar, generally removing the lid. When they arrive at the chosen caravan they will remove any wheel clamp fixed to the caravan and reverse their vehicle up to the tow hitch. They then drop the caravan towing hitch, secured by the hitch lock, into the 'drop box'. They replace the lid, hand tight the the securing nylock bolt and drive off.

Basic tools used to steal caravans.



Typical 'drop box' attached to a towing vehicle.



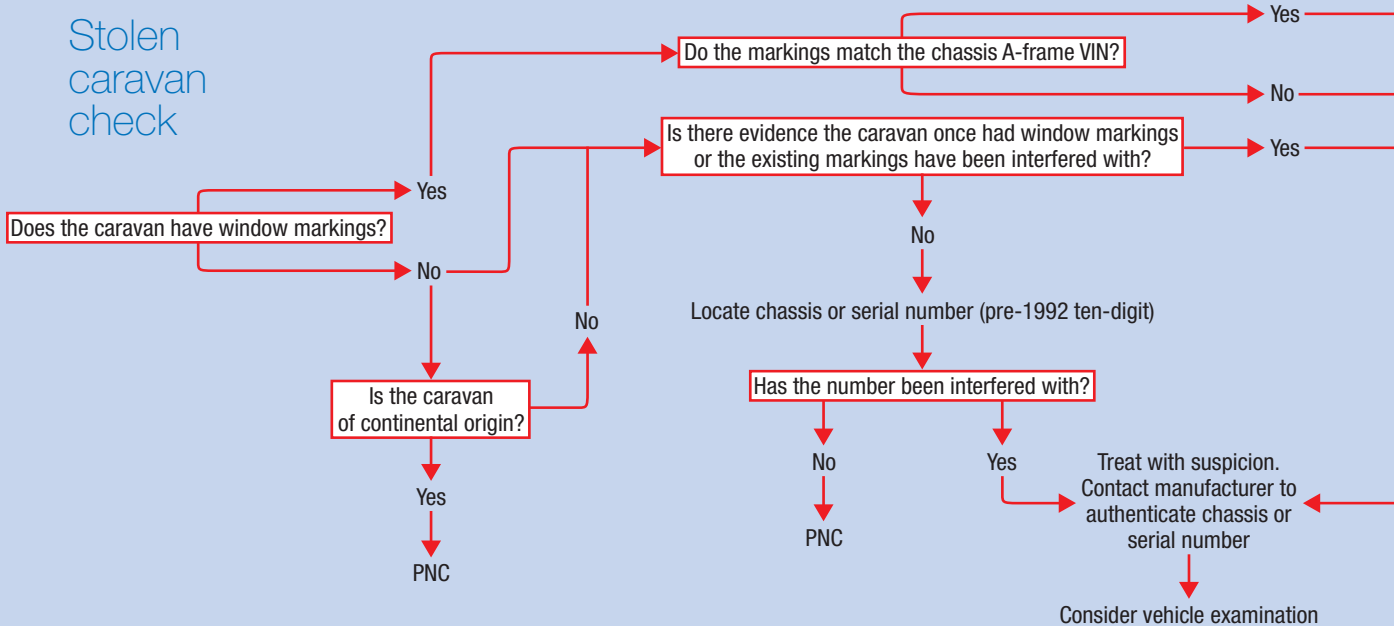
Information required when a caravan is reported stolen

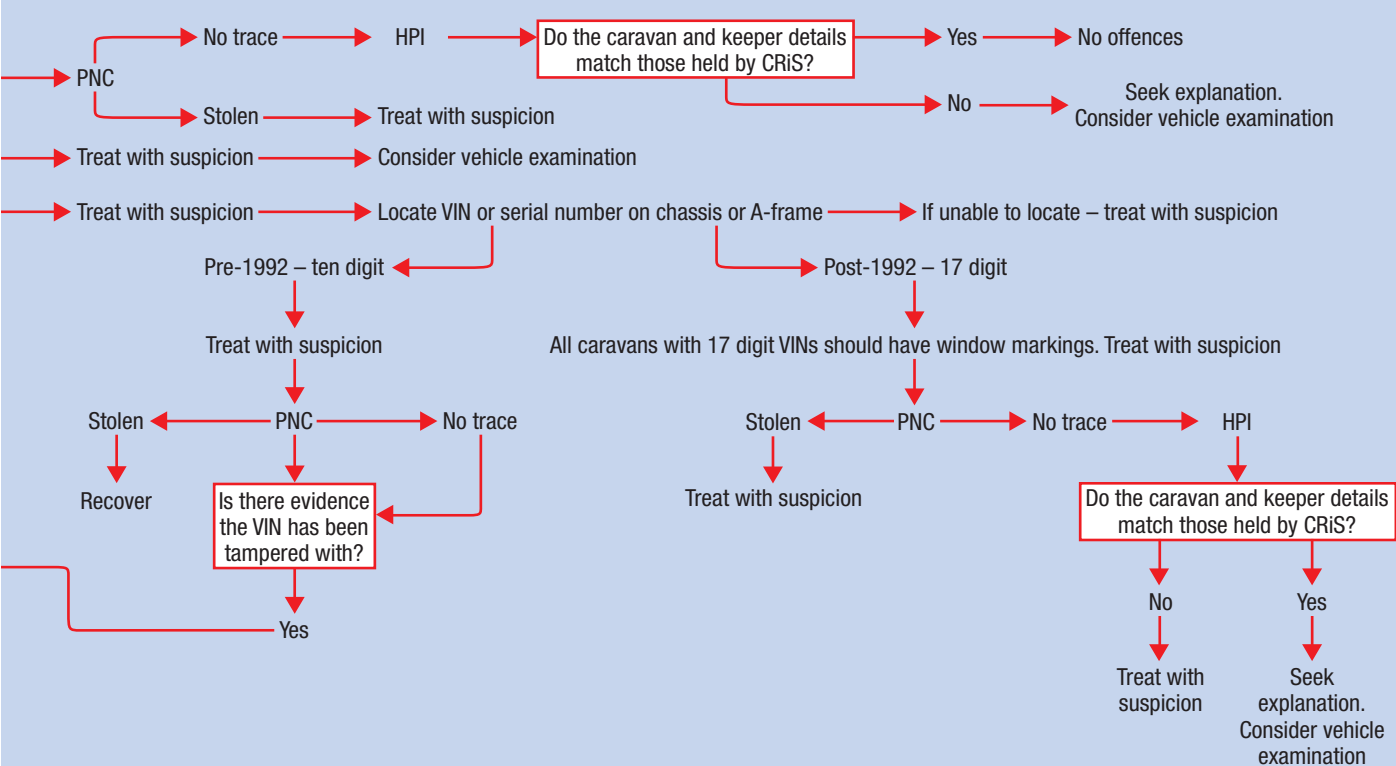
- 1 Date, time, venue of offence.
- 2 Name and address of owner.
- 3 Caravan make (eg Avondale).
- 4 Model (eg Land Ranger).
- 5 Exact model variant (eg 6400L).
- 6 Is caravan a UK or European model? Single- or twin-axle?
- 7 Is caravan CRiS registered? Do they have the CRiS registration document?
- 8 VIN/chassis/CRiS identification number, for post-1992 UK-built caravans this will be 17 digits. Pre-1992 and European numbers will normally be less.
- 9 How was caravan secured (eg wheel clamp, hitchlock, alarm)? Consider scenes of crime/forensic/evidence, if tools or parts of caravan are found.
- 10 Alarm fitted? Activated?
- 11 Description of caravan contents (eg blue Isabella Penta awning, value £1,500) including fitted extras (white additional electric 13 amp socket by TV aerial socket) and identifying features (eg small dent above battery locker).
- 12 Insurance details.
- 13 Complete crime report ensuring caravan is circulated on Police National Computer (PNC).
- 14 Advise owner to inform insurance company and CRiS database if applicable as soon as possible.

Caravan identification

- 1 How old? Try to gauge an approximate date of manufacture. Design? Component dating?
- 2 Is the towing vehicle and occupants consistent with the caravan?
- 3 UK- or European-built – which side does the door open? Single- or twin-axle?
- 4 If UK-built (after 1992) look for a 17-digit dot matrix etched number on windows. CRiS sticker?
- 5 Examine chassis and A-frame for a stamped identification number. This should match above.
- 6 Look at all numbers carefully for signs of interference.
- 7 Request PNC caravan (trailer) check on property file.
- 8 Consider CRiS database search, tel: 01722 411430.
- 9 Use your powers – seize and recover caravan as per local arrangements/ instructions.
- 10 If applicable request a CRiS electronic tag reader from CRiS database. If possible do not use in presence of suspect or onlookers.
- 11 Consider an expert examination by your Force vehicle examiners (Stolen Vehicle/ Traffic Units).
- 12 Consider Vehicle Online Descriptive search (VODs) on PNC and F150 search.

Stolen caravan check







NATIONAL CARAVAN
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