

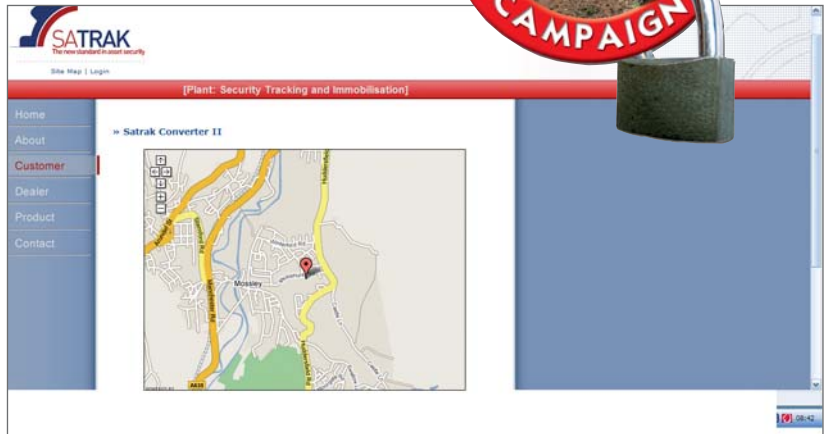
Satrak scores



In amongst all the variety of different solutions available to combat the plant theft problem, one tracking and security system claims to provide particular benefits. Called Satrak, it doesn't rely on third parties or monitoring stations, it talks directly to the plant owner and it is said to allow an immediate and accurate response to a theft situation – all for a one off cost of £550.

According to Satrak Director Dan Walton, "Our system makes it as hard as possible for the thieves to successfully steal the machine and makes it likely they will get caught if they do." And he has case studies to prove the worth of this plant security system.

Satrak (UK) Ltd has been formed by a group of industry specialists, with over 10 years experience in the GPS vehicle tracking industry, with the objective to design a simple, straight forward, and cost effective security device, based on feedback from operators in the Plant, Construction and Agricultural industries. They researched the plant industry requirements before launching the Satrak product here in 2004 using product made specifically to their requirements in Australia.



The Satrak system provides GPS tracking and a free mapping service so plant owners can check the precise position of their machines.

provide a plant owner with instant direct, real time communications with his machine at all times. The system allows machines to be tracked and remotely immobilised using any wire line touch tone phone, mobile phone or PC from anywhere in the world.

The Satrak unit comes with a GSM sim card, either pay as you talk, or with an account. And, because it is a personal Monitoring System, there are not any third party monitoring fees.

Satrak UK states that self-monitoring from the convenience of your phone allows ongoing costs to be minimised. It is also said to put you in control in an emergency, instead of leaving you reliant on the busy authorities.

A tow away alert notifies Satrak system users if their asset is moved from an identified location. Thereby it can combat the most common method of stealing any heavy equipment – loading it onto a low loader or trailer. The system also features battery tamper alerts and an ignition alarm.

Remote immobilisation allows machine owners to bring their asset to a halt from anywhere in the world. This feature can stop misuse and give control to the hire company when its assets are 'off hire'. Usefully the discreet Satrak transmitter unit (with its own battery back-up) is transferable between machines as required due to fleet modernisation.

Satisfied hirers

The success of any plant security system is measured on its ability to thwart theft or locate a stolen machine. And amongst its satisfied plant hire company customers are PJP (UK) Ltd from Manchester and Aylesbury Hire.

Last month, the Satrak system ably assisted PJP Plant Hire to find one of its Takeuchi TB016 mini excavators which had been stolen from a building site during the weekend shutdown.. All aspects of the flexible Satrak system were used in the recovery that involved a quick police response, coordinated by the PJP Managing Director Colin Power.

When thieves took the TB016, the machine's hidden Satrak transmitter system sent an alert directly to Colin Power around 6pm on the 26th November and he instantly knew the machine was stolen. This

One off cost

This research found that manufacturers, hirers and end users alike identified that a effective plant security system needed to be preventative as well as reactive, accurate (to ensure rapid response), produce alerts to indicate a theft is taking place, be rugged and be easy to use with no reliance on third parties. Also highlighted was the need for a one off cost that would be acceptable for the whole industry.

The low cost, Satrak GPS/GSM asset security system is said to



Police were directed to the location of these two stolen Aylesbury Hire machines by the Satrak system.

alert put into action a sequence of events which resulted in the recovery of the stolen machine within a few hours.

Colin Power was able to make direct contact with the Satrak unit installed in the machine and retrieve its exact position from the street level Satrak mapping. He was also able to directing the unit to call him if it was moved again.

The PJP MD called the police and they responded very quickly, meeting him at the location of the stolen mini. Despite the machine being hidden inside a secure lock-up, the Satrak system was able to remain in contact with the GPS satellite system and give up to date positional information.

"I am thrilled to have got the machine back so quickly," reports Colin Power. "By Monday morning the machine had been returned to site, meaning no inconvenience to my customer, nor a time consuming or expensive insurance claim for the company." He says that his company will continue to fit continue to install Satrak systems on our machines of all sizes.

Dan Walton says, "The machine was taken from a construction site and it was the Satrak system which notified the owner of the theft, with the exact position displayed on street level mapping. Immobilisers or conventional security tracking systems would not have worked in this situation. Our system will work inside buildings as well, as this recovery proved."

Unsuspecting builder

Early November saw the theft of a Kubota mini excavator and a Terex HD100 dumper belonging to Aylesbury Hire from a job in West London. The machines were then hired to an unsuspecting builder working on a pop star's home in Richmond, West London.

Aylesbury Hire was able to track its machines to the pop star's garden using the Satrak mapping system. The Metropolitan police

attended quickly, and were pleased to recover two stolen machines, apprehend the thieves, and recover other stolen items.

A bonus for Aylesbury Hire was that it was able to re-hire the machines to the builder so he could complete the pop star's garden and swimming pool. And Satrak is hoping to get a mention in the celebrity's next number one single!

During the summer, Surrey-based plant hire company Harrison Hire was very pleased to regain its stolen Hitachi ZX30R mini excavator following a highly successful recovery operation from a site used by an organised gang of plant thieves. The machine was tracked by its Satrak system and the find also helped get nine other machines back to their rightful owners.

Remote location

On the 10th August, after becoming suspicious of a particular customer failing to make their payments, Francis Harrison of Harrison Hire decided to activate his Hitachi's Satrak system to determine its position by means of his free street level mapping. His suspicions were aroused as the mini had been moved without his authority to a remote location near the A2 in Kent.

After remotely immobilising the machine, using the Satrak system, Francis Harrison contacted the police. They were able to recover not only his Hitachi but the other stolen machines as well.

Meanwhile, a welcome bonus for hire companies installing the Satrak system is support from a well known insurance provider. "We offer any customer a discount on their insurance if they have a Satrak unit fitted, whether they are an existing client or not" Steve Armsden of JCB insurance Services (☎ 01889 590219). "Plant theft is an increasingly alarming problem and JCB insurance services are proud to support firms who are trying to combat it." ■

☎ 08702 418 754 Dan Walton, Satrak (UK) Ltd

Green light for Datatag

It has now been confirmed that Datatag will be the Data Handling Company used by the new National Plant Registration Scheme. Kevin Clancy, the Chairman of the Plant Hire Action Group (PTAG) says, "we have approved this appointment and are entering into a formal agreement with the Construction Equipment Association (CEA) as the scheme sponsor with Datatag as the service provider.

As this issue of PHE went to press, Datatag was unable to issue a formal statement prior to the signing of contracts. However, it is understood that the company's ability to meet the designed standards in data handling – together with its high profile work in helping to reduce the theft of motorcycles and marine equipment (such as jet skis) helps it secure the deal.

In the past Datatag has been best known in construction equipment circles for its involvement with Kubota compact excavators. From around 1995 to 2002 all new Kubotas were fitted as standard with hidden Datatag microchip transponders. A handheld scanner is used by the police and other law enforcement officers to interpret transmitted ownership details.

To provide a visual deterrent to would-be plant thieves, machines fitted with hidden Datatag microchip transponders carried a visible Triangle Tag. This green coloured tag could not be removed without causing easily identifiable damage.

Under the new voluntary National Plant Registration Scheme, participating machines will be allocated a five digit Unique Plant Identification Number which will be carried on prominent tamperproof stickers. These numbers will be recorded on a new National Plant Registration Database operated 24/7 by Datatag.

In securing this five year data handling contract, Datatag beat five other contenders including TER which was the runner-up. TER already runs a plant register and Managing Director Tim Purbrick says, "We would hope to be able to co-operate with Datatag so as not to see a split of data sources." TER will continue with its work in recovering stolen plant as the payments it receives from insurance companies provide around 96% of its income.

The full details of the new National Plant Registration Scheme are due to be officially



Datatag, whose green triangle used to be a common sight on Kubota minis, is the new Data Handling Company for the new National Plant theft Registration Scheme.

revealed at the next CITS Plant Theft Forum. This is being staged on January 23rd at JCB World HQ, Rocester, Staffordshire. Call the CTIS Forum Information Line on ☎ 0800 083 8013 for entry details and costs. Coupled with an exhibition of anti-theft measures, this is one event you should not miss if you value retaining your machines. ■