



U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

Office of Inspector General
Miami Regional Investigations Office

August 14, 2006

Dear Florida Resident:

This is to advise you of a recent incident involving the theft of a laptop computer containing personally identifiable information that was assigned to a special agent of this office. The laptop was stolen from a government vehicle in Doral, Florida, on July 27, 2006. Consequently, and as further explained below, your identity information was potentially exposed to others.

The laptop is password protected, and it is unlikely that the perpetrators stole it based on any knowledge of its data contents. However, out of concern for your personally identifiable information, we are contacting all affected individuals.

The laptop contains listings of approximately 9,000 individuals who were issued Florida driver's licenses in the Tampa area, and approximately 500 persons who were issued commercial driver's licenses in the Tampa area. These listings include names, social security numbers, dates of birth, and addresses. The listings do not include any financial or medical information. This office obtained these listings in connection with an ongoing investigation involving licensing fraud. These are not listings of individuals under investigation, but rather are general listings of driver's license and CDL holders.

We are working closely with the Miami-Dade Police Department to thoroughly investigate the theft and are making every effort to recover the laptop as expeditiously as possible. We have also posted a \$10,000 reward for information leading to its recovery.

Upon receipt of this letter, we recommend that you contact one of the three major credit reporting bureaus referenced in the "Answers to Frequently Asked Questions" posted on our website (www.oig.dot.gov) and request that a fraud alert be placed on your behalf. You should also monitor bank and credit card statements and contact your financial institutions to check for any suspicious activity on your accounts.

Additionally, you should be vigilant to any phone calls, e-mails, and other communications from individuals claiming to be from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, or other official sources asking for your personal information or verification of it. This is often referred to as information solicitation or “phishing.” Government agencies and other legitimate organizations will not contact you to ask for or to confirm your personal information.

If you suspect fraud involving your financial accounts or receive solicitations for your personal information, we encourage you to contact our Hotline at 1-800-424-9071, 24 hours-a-day.

On behalf of the Office of Inspector General, I apologize for any inconvenience or concern this situation causes you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara L. Barnet". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Barbara L. Barnet
Special Agent-in-Charge
Miami Regional Investigations Office