Energy Theft Forum

Headline Report

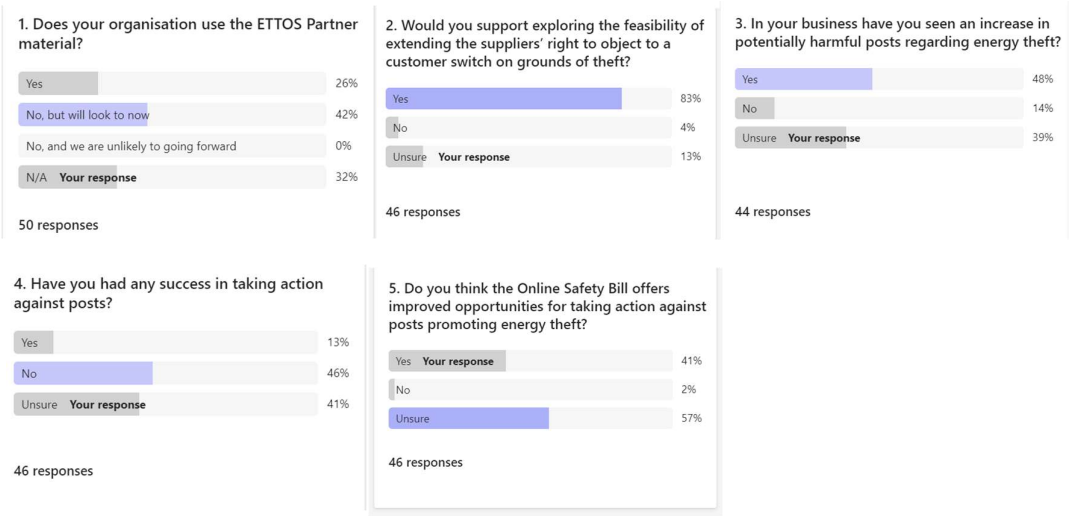
Forum 02 (29 November 2023)

This Headline Report provides an overview of the discussion topics at the RECCo Energy Theft Forum held on 29 November 2023.

- **Stay Energy Safe Partner Material:** it was explained by Crimestoppers that the Partner section of the Stay Energy Safe website (www.stayenergysafe.co.uk) contains material for use by industry participants. This includes collateral that can be used to promote the Stay Energy Safe tip-off service (0800 023 2777), and also to highlight the dangers of energy theft. It was explained that to access the material, log in details should be requested via theft@retailenergycode.co.uk. Attendees were encouraged to make use of this material.
- **Energy Theft Portal:** DeterTech presented on its crime intelligence reporting, explaining that it is developing an Energy Theft Portal on behalf of RECCo that will provide intelligence alerts associated with energy theft. Some examples of non-energy theft dashboards were shared and it was noted that work is underway to develop similar dashboards on energy theft. Once ready, the portal will be available for use by industry parties to identify theft hotspots and drill into specific regions. Reports will be provided alongside the portal, providing additional insight. It was confirmed that the Portal is expected to capture and track instances of theft in conveyance, as well as at the supply point.
- **Theft End to End Process Maps:** it was explained that a series of process maps have been developed for use by industry, to aid in understanding energy theft obligations and how the wider theft processes work. The maps are available on the Energy Theft Hub. The project to develop the maps also identified various gaps in existing processes and obligations, which are set out in a findings and recommendations report. It was noted that RECCo will be publishing a detailed follow up providing a view on how each of the 22 recommendations in this report will be taken forward.
- **Energy Theft Reduction Hub:** attendees were encouraged to visit the Energy Theft Reduction Hub on the REC Portal, where material associated with energy theft can be found. It was noted that to access the page users will need to set up a REC Portal account, and then request access to the hub via the REC Service Desk (enquiries@recmanager.co.uk).
- **RECCo Theft Reduction Programme Update:** an overview was given on the activities being undertaken via the RECCo Theft Reduction Programme. It was noted that activities delivered thus far include the creation of the Energy Theft Reduction Hub, the End-to-End Process Mapping and changes to the Theft Detection Incentive Scheme. In progress activities include the competitive procurement of the ETTOS marketing service provider. For updates on the programme activities, attendees were encouraged to sign up to the REC bulletins and RECCo newsletter, and/or view the Energy Theft Reduction Expert Group (ETREG) papers on the REC Portal.
- **Theft Intelligence Reporting:** it was explained that a pilot has commenced monitoring social media posts for intelligence on energy theft, known as the "Theft Monitoring Service". The service is delivered via weekly reports on findings from intelligence gathered from monitoring multiple internet platforms, including social media platforms and the dark web. The reports are being shared, and will be developed in collaboration with, the Energy Theft Reduction Expert Group.
- **Online Safety Bill:** it was noted that the Online Safety Bill, which came into effect on 26 October 2023, gives new powers around tacking illegal online content. RECCo is seeking legal advice as to whether the Act could be helpful in combating illegal content associated with energy theft, such as that highlighted by the Theft Monitoring Service

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- **Theft Awareness Project:** a summary was provided by Frog (part of CapGemini Invent), of a recently completed project on the levels of energy theft awareness within industry and the public. The project gathered both quantitative and qualitative information from industry and energy consumers to derive insights on energy theft. A number of the insights were shared with attendees. A strategy is being developed to drive down energy theft in response to the challenges identified within the insights.
- **Use of Smart Meter Data:** an overview was provided by the DCC on the role that smart meter data could provide in energy theft detection, along with associated legal and data protection considerations. It was noted that preparation is underway for a proof-of-concept project to investigate the link between smart meter tamper alerts and proven theft events.
- **Theft Detection Incentive Scheme (TDIS):** an overview was provided of the TDIS by the Code Manager, including how the scheme functions and the key dates associated with the annual setting of theft detection targets and payments of credits and debits. It was noted that each Supplier's debit/credit performance is dependent on the performance of others in the same pot, with an overview provided of how the calculation is carried out.
- **Ofgem Update on Energy Theft:** a representative from Ofgem explained that it has recently issued an open letter on energy theft, which will also be made available on Ofgem's website. The letter is in regard to the energy industry's performance against existing obligations. It was noted that there is a concern around the cost of energy theft to consumers and Ofgem would like to see a downwards trend here.
- **Energy Theft Warrants Update:** A representative from the City of London Police explained that a letter has been sent out to all Chief Constables highlighting the issue of energy theft and explaining the challenges from the perspectives of threat, harm and risk. It was also noted that legal advice has been sought on the use of warrants, with the advice received stating that police cannot force entry under warrants granted to energy companies. A summary was given of what powers police do have to force entry, noting that the legislation is relatively old and unique to each situation. It was observed that potentially changes to legislation are needed to enable the energy industry and police to better address energy theft.
- **Polls:** during the course of the forum a number of polls were issued. The questions asked and the results were as follows:



Attendees were invited to send topics for the next forum to TechnicalEnquiries@recmanager.co.uk.

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