



Copper theft

Law enforcement authorities approached the FIC for assistance in investigating a suspected copper theft syndicate. About half a billion rand's worth of copper is stolen each year and, according to the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, close to R5 billion is spent each year on repairing the damage caused and replacing the stolen copper.

During the course of the investigation, the FIC discovered that a scrap metal dealer and the syndicate were transacting only in cash to avoid detection and thereby avoiding anti-money laundering controls. Law enforcement authorities cut a deal with the scrap metal dealer, who agreed to pay the syndicate through electronic transfers to their bank accounts. This allowed the FIC to identify the flow of funds and the key people involved in the syndicate, as well as the assets they had acquired. The funds and assets were later seized and forfeited to the state.

