



**Does this man have the key to stamp out tax disc fraud?**

# TAX-BUSTER

by Tom Johnston

**MOTORIST** Michael Prince has invented a tamper-proof car tax disc that could stamp out fraud worth millions of pounds a year.

Stolen tax discs are now bigger business than MOT certificate fiddles, as one of Britain's fastest growing crimes.

The Government expects to lose £163 million this year from motorists not paying road tax, a 58 per cent rise on the \$103 million loss recorded in the last survey in 1989.

Cleaned-up tax discs are sold by thieves for up to £30, and with 52 million discs issued every year, there's an endless supply.

When Michael, a 45-year-old Birmingham



**This simple but effective patch is impossible to remove and makes the disc worthless to thieves**



building contractor, had his disc stolen, he decided to come up with his own tamper-proof version.

After a year of research, he has produced the Secur-disc, which he says makes stolen discs useless.

Thieves usually steal a tax disc then clean off the car's details using brake fluid or a razor blade.

Michael has used a special acetate to produce a cover which, once applied to the disc, can't be removed without damaging the disc. It goes on sale next month priced at 99p.

## THE FACTS

The 1.5 million unlicensed vehicles on UK roads are:

- 865,000 cars
- 370,000 motorbikes
- 15,000 vans/trucks
- 310,000 others

The £264 million in lost road tax (1994-5) is made up of:

- £119m from cars
- £12m from motorbikes
- £23m from vans/trucks
- £10m from others

A spokeswoman for the DVLA, which spent months testing the disc before giving approval, said it believed it would be a major bonus in the fight against theft.

"We are very happy with the Secur-disc which looks like providing a real answer."

Sergeant Steve Rojek of the Police Information Technology Department, which has also tested the disc, commented: "This disc could provide us with major assistance in fighting car fraud."

# NEWS

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