RENTAL HOUSE SYNDICATE

Incident Report

THEFT | July 2, 2026 | $900,000.00

Incident Summary

Renter / Subject	asking whether they were open for a last-minute rental. The email came from what appeared to
Production	received an email from an existing client asking whether they were open for a last-minute rental
Incident Type	theft
Date of Loss	July 2, 2026
Estimated Value	$900,000.00
Status	Approved

Location

Police Department And Arrested The Suspect When They Arrived To Pick Up The Fictitious Rental., TO
United States

Incident Details

ESTA Fraud and Theft Prevention

Dear Rental Community,

Over the Christmas holiday period a Los Angeles-based camera equipment rental company received an email from an existing client asking whether they were open for a last-minute rental. The email came from what appeared to be a legitimate commercial production company with whom the rental house has previously done a fair amount of business.

Luckily, due to a wrinkle in the rental, the rental house reached out to their client to discuss how to best handle the situation. The email was sent to the production company contact on file with the rental company. This email prompted the commercial production company to respond that they did not send any email to rent equipment.

The value of the requested equipment was in excess of $900,000.

The story has a happy ending. The rental house set up a sting operation with the Culver City Police Department and arrested the suspect when they arrived to pick up the fictitious rental.

The takeaway is, going forward rental equipment companies will need to verbally confirm all rental orders with known individuals at production companies. A second takeaway is production companies should be aware that their company information has been used in the past where the ending was not as successful and the thieves walks off with stolen equipment.

PERG and the AICP are working together on this issue.

If you have questions or information on this issue please contact the PERG Manager (harry.box@esta.org)

You are receiving this message because you have subscribed to receive email alerts, to change your personal settings please login to your Rental Guard account

Imported from mailbox alert
Subject: {Spam?} Individuals Are Using The Names of Legitimate Commercial Production Companies To Steal Camera Equipment
Message-ID:

Renter Information

Company	Not provided
Phone	Not provided
Email	Not provided
Drivers License	Not provided

Equipment Involved

Item	Manufacturer	Model	Serial

Police / Insurance

Police Department	Not provided
Police Report Number	Not provided

Insurance Company	Not provided
Insurance Claim Number	Not provided

Reported By

Company	received an email from an existing client asking whether they were open for a last-minute rental
Contact	Not provided
Email	harry.box@esta.org
Phone	Not provided
Submitted	July 1, 2026 11:58 PM