

Our lovely public servants

And so to continue..... The nice couple in business now have their car Spanish registered and were last seen with smiles on their faces waving with one or two fingers at the police road blocks where the purge on foreign cars is taking place

The man with the impounded car is somewhat lighter in pocket and his car is in process of being made legal, but more of that later

The week started off with a visit to the ayuntamiento in Torrevieja to retrieve a document on behalf of another customer. He and I had gone there a few weeks ago to find out why he was registered as a resident of that fair town when he had never lived there. We met the jobsworth from hell. OK she couldn't help looking like an extra in a Hammer horror film, but she needn't have the personality to match. Unhelpful, indifferent and rude are just some of the nicest adjectives that describe her. Once I forcibly said "No vale" a male colleague came over to intercede and gave us the correct information which meant a visit to another office

It seems that the global company from whom they had bought their property had registered them for some reason or other without their knowledge and irrespective of the later consequences. Whatever, we found the solution

The police office

So up to the north Costa Blanca to get the car out of the compound; this was the car that had overstayed its welcome on British plates and was now languishing at His Majesty's pleasure. At the office of the Policia Local we were greeted by two officers, one of whom was clearly the senior as he sat on his arse and told the other one what to do in relation to my request to please hand the car over so that I could re-register it. Identity was proven forms filled in and wallets emptied

Whilst the customer spoke a little Spanish I had advised him to let me do the talking and only respond to questions as I have found that not only cans of worms are opened if information is volunteered, but that these cans may turn into serpents' nests. The senior of the two mentioned the word "road tax" in English whilst reading his reports plus something about inspections. I looked at the customer and he looked sheepishly back. "Oh gawd" I thought. The officer said that he would have to call his superior. "I can't bloody wait" went through my head

The boss came in and started telling the middle-ranking officer what to do; here was hierarchy at its finest. Road tax was again muttered, but then a reprieve came in sight. The boss smiled and said "I'm sorry to advise you that whilst the car was in the compound it broken into". Mmmm, so the police tow away the car, stuff it into their compound, but have inadequate security to protect the said vehicle. "The driver's window had been smashed, but no worries, get it fixed and the ayuntamiento will pay". Meanwhile this road tax is a foreign problem, so we will forget about it

As you can guess the road tax didn't match the vehicle details and the car was nowhere in site when the MOT certificate was issued; what a let off!

Big heads and big egos

As we walked out of the police office, I noticed a glass cabinet containing a number of police hats including the famous UK bobby's helmet. I showed an interest and the chief puffed out his chest, clearly proud of his collection and explained the origin of the hats. "Why no Guardia Civil hat?" I enquired at which the three officers burst into laughter and said that they didn't have a cabinet large enough to hold one as the Guardia all had such big heads, demonstrating with their hands to emphasise the point. We laughed too at this unexpected "denuncia"

So, finally off to the compound. One officer opened the gates and then asked us for the car keys. "Er, you must have them as you put the car here" I responded. "Ah yes of course" he rejoined as he popped back to the police station to retrieve the keys

To compound matters

Now the lock-up was interesting. There were about 20 cars, mostly foreign, ranging from a newish BMW to some that the owners were probably glad to have had towed away as it had saved them the bother. Several had been broken into. You have to admire the bottle of someone who would rob from vehicles that are in police custody. The driver's door was covered in a black bin liner where the window should have been and the remaining copper decided to take some pictures. His mate arrived back with the key and opened the car door. The driver's seat was covered in glass and in the footwell was a tyre wrench. It wasn't the customer's so I suggested that it was perhaps used to break the glass. "Oh yes" said junior officer who picked up the tool and turned it over in his hands a few times before laying it on the floor for camera-cop to take a picture. Now maybe I have been watching too many episodes of Z-cars or whatever the latest in police drama is, but I would have thought that the fingerprints may have been useful.

We were asked to drive the car away as they wanted to lock up and get back to the station (the kettle was probably coming to the boil), but I declined to put my backside onto shards of glass, so the junior one offered me his gloves to clear out the glass but then decided to do it himself whilst I held the bin liner open for him and off we went feeling less secure in the hands of the law than when we had arrived

The moral of the story? Don't get caught and if you do make sure that it's in Keystone and not Torre Vieja

Spanish Number Plates
Graham Shelton
Orihuela, Alicante
www.spanish-number-plates.com
info@spanish-number-plates.com
966 753 375
605 319 889