

17 August 2018

## Press release

Unlawful use of shared bikes

### PubliBike upgrades locks

**Several hundred locks on PubliBike bikes have been tampered with over the past few weeks, initially in Berne. PubliBike will now gradually modify all its locks and make them more secure. The operation will begin in Berne before being expanded to the whole of Switzerland. Bikesharing services will continue during this time.**

The locks on the bikes in the PubliBike bikesharing system are not vandal-proof enough. It has become apparent over the past few weeks, mainly in Berne, that the locks can be tampered with. A total of several hundred bikes have been used illegally in Berne. Following consultation with the manufacturer, PubliBike has now found a way to upgrade the locks. Starting from the middle of next week until mid-September 2018, PubliBike will upgrade every lock in Berne. An upgrade is then also planned for Zurich and the six other PubliBike networks, covering a total of 2,000 bikes at 200 stations. Locks have also been tampered with in Zurich, although to a much lesser extent than in Berne.

The bikesharing services of "Velo Bern", "Züri Velo" and the other networks will continue to operate as usual and will remain accessible to paying customers of PubliBike during the upgrade process. Between 700 and 1,200 rides have been made each day this week in Berne. To ensure that business can continue, as many as 120 stolen bikes have been recovered each day in the city and conurbation of Berne, partly thanks to information received by PubliBike from the public. To avoid long waits at Customer Service, PubliBike has set up an e-mail to report abandoned bikes: [velo@publibike-service.ch](mailto:velo@publibike-service.ch).

Tampering with the lock of a bike and riding the bike without paying is a criminal offence. PubliBike strongly condemns this behaviour and has already pressed charges.

In addition to these measures, PubliBike is also developing a new series of locks for its future bikes. The opening of 30 additional stations scheduled in Berne for this autumn are not affected.

PubliBike deeply regrets that despite tests the mechanical weakness on the smartphone-capable locks was not discovered, and sincerely apologizes for the inconvenience caused to the contracting bodies, namely the cities of Berne and Zurich. PubliBike is doing its utmost to continue to operate the network successfully.

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