



National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council

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Media Release

'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING...AND TAKING

Australia's expert body on vehicle crime, the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC), is urging motorists to be aware of those whose minds may be less on giving and more on taking this Christmas.

In Australia, around 70 percent of late model vehicles are stolen with the keys, and homes are being targeted. This increasing trend means that motorists need to be especially vigilant over the Christmas holiday period, warned the NMVTRC's Executive Director, Ray Carroll.

"Advances in vehicle security technology have meant that now the only way for opportunistic thieves to steal cars is by gaining access to the keys.

"The holiday period can be a particularly lucrative time for car thieves. People are often distracted during the day with family gatherings and out at night, leaving the car at home. There are also more people going on holiday and leaving a car behind. These are the sorts of scenarios that provide ample opportunity for thieves to enter homes and steal car keys."

While the number of vehicles stolen on Christmas Day is traditionally low, for the past three years January has averaged the highest number of thefts with 150 vehicles stolen per day. Motorcycles are particularly at risk in January.

Home burglaries to steal car keys are almost always opportunistic, with thieves exploiting poor security practices.

Mr Carroll said that motorists need to keep car keys out of sight and away from external doors and windows where they can be easily viewed from outside. When going out, car owners are urged to ensure their keys are with them at all times.

"It is not difficult for motorists to greatly reduce their risk of becoming a victim of theft during the festive season – by simply being aware and adopting some common-sense security measures you can help to ensure your car is safe this Christmas," Mr Carroll said.

Other vehicle theft prevention tips from the NMVTRC include:

- Park wisely – use off-street parking where possible or even better, park in a garage or behind lockable gates.
- Don't tag your keys with your name and address – use a mobile phone number or driver licence number instead.
- Never leave a spare set of house or car keys in your car.
- Motorcyclists should secure their bike in a locked shed or garage, engage the steering lock and use a manual locking device such as a disc lock or chain and padlock.

For more information on vehicle security at home and to download a free home security assessment guide visit, carssecuritybeginsathome.com.

More Information:

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