



National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council

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In this issue

Stopping thieves in their tracks

Car Security Begins at Home campaign
now showing

Choose a Ride goes mobile

Synergy graduates driven to succeed

Annual report available now

Christmas message

Freeing up used vehicle imports will
bring new problems

Odd spot

Public encouraged to join fight against
car crime in South Australia

**The NMVTRC is an initiative of Australian
Governments and the Insurance Industry**

NMVTRC newsletters are available for download
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theft torque

Stopping thieves in their tracks



NMVTRC Executive Director Ray Carroll addresses the media at the launch of the Stolen Vehicle Rapid Response Initiative in Perth.

On 7 December the NMVTRC together with WA Police and RAC Insurance launched the Stolen Vehicle Rapid Response Initiative (SVRRI), an Australian-first program to help the owners of vehicles identified as being at the highest risk of 'theft by key' in the Perth area.

Significant parts of the nation have been in the grip of a spike in residential burglaries in order to access the keys of late model, 'secure vehicles' in recent times. The trend was first noticed and remains prevalent in WA, where vehicle keys are the only property stolen in up to one in four reported burglaries in which a vehicle is taken. It may be hours before the theft is discovered by the owner and reported to police and in the meantime the vehicle is often used to facilitate other crimes or may pose other community risks.

The SVRRI will see up to 1,000 vehicles covertly fitted with a tracking device. Using a simple smartphone app the vehicle owner can set a virtual 'geo-fence' around the vehicle. Should the owner be unfortunate enough to fall victim to this current crime trend, the device will immediately send an email to their nominated smartphone.

From there the owner will be able to track the vehicle. Once they report the theft to the police they too will be able to monitor the vehicle with the aim of safely following its movements and apprehending the offenders.

The launch of the trial attracted strong media attention with extensive electronic and print media coverage both nationally and locally.

The trial is by invitation only with the NMVTRC, in cooperation with WA Police, reviewing more than 2,000 recent vehicle thefts across Perth to determine the vehicles most commonly targeted in residential burglaries, and writing to over 9,000 high-risk vehicle owners inviting participation in the trial.

RAC Insurance policyholders were given first access to the trial with 250 'priority installations' on offer. Registrations are now open to all invited owners of high-risk vehicles on the NMVTRC's special website, carsafetybeginsathome.com. For those that miss out on a free installation, the NMVTRC's website also features tips for motorists for protecting their home and car keys from theft including a downloadable home security assessment. Visit carsafetybeginsathome.com for more information.

Car Security Begins at Home campaign now showing



As reported in the July edition of Theft Torque, the NMVTRC has been working with operational, policy and communications experts from police, insurers, motoring clubs and local government to develop some general principles, overarching themes and key messages for a new suite of public education materials to tackle the increasing trend of thieves entering homes in order to steal the keys of late model, 'secure vehicles.' This has included the development of a suite of cinema and television advertisements with Melbourne-based production company NiceBike, as well as a dedicated website and a range of new educational materials.

The Car Security Begins at Home campaign is now in full flight, with all resources in use. The cinema

and television advertisements, which give a nod to three famous 'heist' scenes from iconic films including *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Mission Impossible*, and *Entrapment*, have formed a major component of the NMVTRC's partnership program with local government areas, *Operation Bounce Back* (OBB). The ads are currently being screened in cinemas in OBB participating municipalities, as well as run as community service announcements on Channel 9's regional television station NBN in Newcastle and on the Gold Coast. Negotiations are also currently underway for the ads to be shown in cinemas throughout northern Queensland.

The advertisements are fully supported by their own dedicated website and a range of educational

brochures and posters. The Car Security Begins at Home website also features tips for motorists to reduce their risk of theft and includes a downloadable Home Security Audit which can be used to assess the security of their home. Additionally, the site features two excellent interactive statistical tools allowing users to discover the theft profile of their vehicle and suburb.

Should you wish to reference the NMVTRC's Car Security Begins at Home advertisements in your own communications campaigns we invite you to link directly to them via carsecuritybeginsathome.com

Choose a Ride goes mobile



With more than half of all vehicle theft committed by young people in Australia, diverting young offenders to a non-offending lifestyle and ensuring young people at risk are exposed to realistic and engaging educational resources on car theft remain core aims of the NMVTRC's overall strategy.

Back in late 2011 the NMVTRC together with Glenorchy City Council and Tasmania Police launched 'Choose a Ride' – a YouTube-based film targeting young people between the ages of nine and 14, encouraging them to consider the consequences of becoming involved in vehicle theft before it happens.

Since then the film has had close to 3,000 views on YouTube and the video and its online resources

have been used extensively as part of the NMVTRC's *Operation Bounce Back* program, as well as in a number of police and school programs.

In order to build on these achievements, the video has now been optimised for tablet and smartphone use. This update will expand the potential uses and scenarios that the video can be utilised, including enabling Glenorchy City Council to have the videos available on tablets at their stall at the Royal Hobart Show this year for Show-goers to interact with.

The video can be viewed or downloaded along with the accompanying resources at choosearide.com



NMVTRC Executive Director Ray Carroll presents Synergy Repairs graduate Rycky Heyfron with the CAR-SAFE Achievement Award.

Synergy graduates driven to succeed

Cars are stolen for many reasons, but young people are still responsible for more than half of all vehicle thefts in Australia. In larger Australian cities it is not uncommon for a 'proficient' young thief to have stolen more than 300 cars by his or her late teens and this often leads to involvement in other forms of crime.

The NMVTRC has therefore been a leading advocate for the expert design and delivery of diversionary programs for young vehicle theft offenders based around technical training and the development of trade skills.

In September the inaugural group of trainees to enter the NMVTRC's unique partnership with Mission Australia (MA) and the Suncorp Group (SG) graduated with flying colours.

Seven of the eight participants that started the program in March graduated with a Certificate II qualification. The one that did not has returned to the education system indicating that the program had a positive influence on his attitude towards

school. All seven graduates have successfully gained transitional work experience and/or apprentice placements within SG's repairer network.

Synergy Repairs is a commercially based social enterprise providing training and work experience for young vehicle crime offenders aged 16–20 with a view to them securing full-time employment in the repair sector. Under trade-qualified supervision, participants complete repairs to Suncorp customers' vehicles that have sustained incidental or low range damage.

The program is delivered in a dedicated commercial workshop with the assistance of specialist support workers. The workshop uses a state-of-the-art, water based spray painting system.

Kangan TAFE's Automotive Centre of Excellence delivers formal Certificate II in Automotive Vehicle Body Repairs on-site every Wednesday.

Synergy's second intake commenced in October and is scheduled to graduate in March 2015.

Annual report available now



The NMVTRC's annual report is available now from the CAR-SAFE website. The 2013/14 year saw the hard work and cooperation of the NMVTRC's stakeholders deliver another reduction in vehicle theft numbers and a net community saving of more than \$53 million. Amongst a range of on-going projects, highlights for the year included completion of the most comprehensive audit of the auto recycling and scrap metal sectors compliance with local laws ever undertaken in Australia, the launch of the world's first 'commercial' enterprise work experience and training program for young car crime offenders and the establishment of the Vehicle Crime Managers' Network to facilitate the sharing of expert knowledge and intelligence.

To download the report go to carsafe.com.au

Christmas message



NMVTRC Councillors and staff would like to thank our readers and stakeholders for your wonderful cooperation and support in driving down vehicle theft in 2014. We wish you a very happy Christmas and a safe and festive new year!

Freeing up used vehicle imports will bring new problems

It has taken a lot of time and effort but Australia has dramatically reduced the rate of motor vehicle theft across the country over the past decade.

The figures confirm it: the number of cars stolen across Australia has fallen from more than 145,000 in 2001 to 53,450 last year, a drop of more than 60 per cent. This significant reduction is in a large part due to the many new practices and programs implemented by the NMVTRC's member organisations and stakeholders over the decade.

That is the good news.

The not so good news is that the gains of the past few years may be about to be undone, unintentionally, by Federal Government proposals that are aimed, at least in theory, at making it easier for individuals to import used or near-new cars from overseas.

At present, few individuals import cars or other motor vehicles directly into Australia because of strict restrictions designed to ensure all cars coming into the country meet safety and legal safeguards.

But under the proposals being considered by the Government as part of its review of the Motor Vehicle Standards Act, anyone will be able to jump on the web, for example, and order a car from overseas. All it would take is a click of your mouse – and your credit card.

Now, there may be some benefits in doing away with the existing restrictions on car imports but is it worth the risk?

The NMVTRC is concerned that the end result of the proposed changes could be an increase in car related crimes, including the importation of vehicles into the country with a suspect history.

There is no way that individuals and businesses importing cars privately using the internet or through other parallel markets will be able to check the historical and legal records or the real provenance of the imported car.

Consumers will have no way of knowing or checking whether the car they are importing has been reported stolen previously, whether it has been 'reconditioned' for sale, or even whether it has suffered from damage, such as flood damage, which is not visibly identifiable.

It is likely that many Australian consumers would buy their cars through illegitimate car exporters in other countries, often controlled by criminal gangs.

Unrestricted imports would not only result in stolen cars possibly being shipped to Australia but once such channels are established it is inevitable that local criminals will exploit related logistics systems to give the export of locally stolen vehicles the appearance of legitimacy.

The NMVTRC estimates that the export of domestically stolen vehicles already accounts for about one in 10 profit-motivated thefts in Australia. Currently these vehicles will generally be broken down into separated parts or passed off as scrap metal to avoid scrutiny. However, an exponential increase in the international movement of whole, used vehicles will provide a 'perfect veil' of apparent legitimacy with very little risk of detection.

Evidence from police investigations internationally and in Australia also indicates car crime networks are often involved in other serious crime including illicit drugs and weapons trafficking, money laundering, identity fraud, insurance/financial fraud and tax avoidance.

We fear that the work undertaken in the recent past, which has resulted in a reduction in car thefts nationally, will be wound back if we allow the unrestricted import of motor vehicles through these often shady parallel networks.

Car theft is a major global problem, with criminal gangs making millions of dollars by stealing cars and then re-birthing them for local and export markets.

We have worked hard in this country to bring down motor vehicle theft – and we still have a way to go. Why put these gains at risk?

Odd spot

Stolen vintage Jaguar XKE recovered after 46 years to be reunited with 82-year-old owner

*Originally featured on ABC News Online
18 September*

A rare Jaguar XKE convertible stolen 46 years ago will be returned to its owner thanks to an eagle-eyed customs agent.

The Californian Highway Patrol are trying to figure out who might have stolen it from outside a New York apartment and why it was in a Californian garage for 40 years.

A man who had recently bought the car submitted paperwork to US Customs and Border Protection in June, and an analyst who checked the vehicle saw it had been reported stolen.

By that time, the 1967 Jaguar was en route to the Netherlands, a hot market for vintage cars, and authorities arranged to have the ship operator bring the car back to California.

According to US Customs, the 82-year-old original owner of the car has called the find a 'miracle' and said he planned to restore it.

The car is worth \$US23,600 and not the \$US100,000 such a model could fetch because it had rust and needed parts replaced.

The Californian man who shipped the car bought it a few months ago from a man in Turlock, California, who in turn said it was in his garage for 40 years.

Public encouraged to join fight against car crime in South Australia

Public calls to Crime Stoppers lines help state and territory police solve thousands of crimes every year.

The NMVTRC and Crime Stoppers SA will join forces to deliver Australia's first car crime dial-in community campaign in early 2015. The program will encourage South Australians to report any activity suspected to involve criminals attempting to convert stolen vehicles into cash.

The campaign will include promotions on television, YouTube and direct to SA Police's 235,000 Facebook followers.