



National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council
driving down vehicle theft

Theft WATCH



National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council –
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2005/06 Delivers New 'Low' Benchmarks

Australia further improved its theft position in 2005/06 by bettering the 'record low' benchmarks set in the previous year, with total thefts falling by 8 per cent to 75,800. Theft per 1,000 population and registrations now stand at 5.2 and 3.7 respectively – the lowest levels since national records were first collated in 1978. Seventy-eight per cent of stolen vehicles (excluding motorcycles) were recovered by the end of June.

Older passenger and light commercial vehicles continue to account for the overwhelming volume of thefts, with vehicles manufactured prior to 1996 accounting for more than 7 in 10. By contrast these vehicles represent only around 42 per cent of the registered fleet.

The reduction in theft numbers for the year has saved the community an estimated \$44 million to \$83 million¹.

With the start of the 2006/07 financial year and the NMVTRC entering into a third term, Theft Watch will now follow a slightly different format.

In recognition of the fundamental differences between motorcycle theft and other vehicle theft, motorcycle data will be presented separately. Motorcycle theft has a very different profile to other vehicles, due to the tendency for thieves to target newer models more than older, and the volume of unregistered and off-road bikes stolen.

In the past, the NMVTRC has reported all vehicle data together rather than presenting motorcycle data separately. As such, rates per registrations and population will be different between past editions of Theft Watch and our quarterly reports. Future reports will present data for passenger and light commercial vehicles and motorcycles separately, and this should be kept in mind for anyone making historical comparisons. An adjusted table of thefts and recoveries for that period will be available soon from the website.

1. Based on independent economic analysis conducted by MM Starrs Pty Ltd for the NMVTRC (September 2005) which estimated victims' costs per incident to be in the range of \$6,230 to \$11,920 depending on a range of personal and other factors.

The reduction in theft numbers for the year has saved the community an estimated \$44 million to \$83 million¹.



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

2005/06 Delivers New 'Low' Benchmarks Continued

Part A: All Vehicles (Excluding Motorcycles)

Theft numbers for all vehicles (excluding motorcycles) dropped by 9 per cent² for the 12 months to the end of June 2006 as compared to the previous year to reach a new low of 69,112. This means that almost 7,000 fewer vehicles were stolen in the year across Australia.

South Australia performed particularly well for the year, with a 23 per cent drop in thefts (excluding motorcycles) or more than over 2,000 fewer thefts. Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria similarly performed well, with 9 per cent decreases in each of the latter two states, and an 11 per cent decrease in Queensland. Between these three States, more than 5,200 fewer vehicles (excluding motorcycles) were stolen for the year. Western Australia also experienced a 6 per cent drop, with 393 fewer vehicles stolen.

Our smaller states and territories, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), Tasmania, and the Northern Territory, experienced slight increases in the 12 months to June 2006, which given the low base from which the increases started is not considered notable.

Good news for insurers and vehicle owners alike as the June quarter saw a drop in the total estimated value of stolen passenger and light commercial vehicles (PLCs) of \$4 million – down from \$137 million in the first quarter of 2006 to \$133 million. Notably, \$3 million of this decrease related to unrecovered PLCs. This development breaks the trend of the value of stolen PLCs remaining static at around \$137 million for the previous three quarters.

2. The one percent difference between this figure and the reported decrease for all vehicle represents the removal of motorcycles from this analysis.

Table 1: Australia, theft snapshot (excluding motorcycles)

12 months to June 2006	
Number of thefts	69,112
% change from previous 12 months	-9.1
% of thefts recovered in year	78%
June 2006 quarter	
Number of thefts	17,019
% change from last quarter	-1.1
% change from same quarter previous year	-7.1
% of thefts recovered in quarter	72
Theft rate per 1,000 population	0.8
Theft rate per 1,000 registrations	1.2
Total value of stolen PLC vehicles [^]	\$133m
Total value of unrecovered PLC vehicles	\$43m
Number of claims (excluding zero cost*)	7,161
Average claim cost (\$)	10,154
Median claim cost (\$)	5,679
Average agreed value claim cost (\$)	12,628
Total sum of claims	\$73m

Top Opportunistic Theft Targets, June Quarter

	Number Stolen
Holden Commodore VN, VL, VK, VP	1,888
Ford Falcon EA, XF	773
Ford Laser KE, KC, KB	465
Holden Commodore VS, VT	432
Hyundai Excel X3	325

Top Professional Theft Targets, June Quarter

	Number Missing
Holden Commodore VT, VX, VY, VS	197
Ford Falcon AU, EL, BA	91
Toyota Landcruiser 100, 70 series	43
Mitsubishi Lancer CE	38
Hyundai Excel X3	35

* Passenger and light commercial (PLC) vehicles accounted for 96 per cent of total thefts. Values calculated using the resources of Glass's Information Services.

[^] There were 290 claims with a cost equal to zero.

Figure 1: Vehicles stolen by month (excluding motorcycles), January 2000 – June 2006

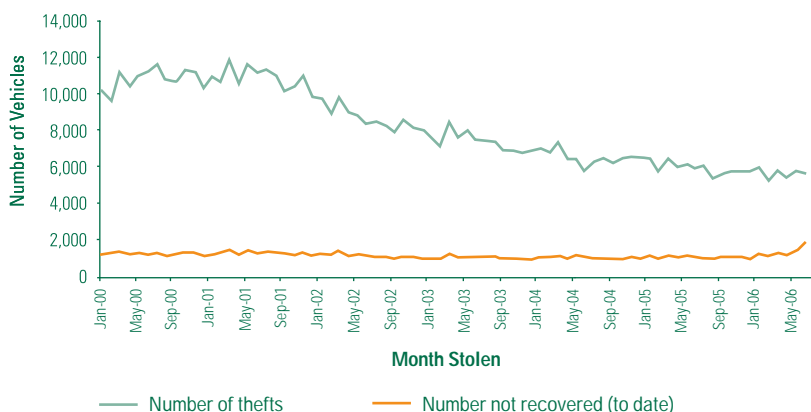


Table 2: State and territory snapshot (exclude motorcycles)

Jurisdiction	Number of thefts, June quarter	Change in theft numbers from last quarter	Number of thefts not recovered in the quarter	% of thefts recovered in the quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 population, June quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 registrations, June quarter	Thefts for 12 months to June 2006	Change in theft numbers from last 12 months
ACT	488	48	94	81	1.5	2.3	1,885	314
NSW	6,781	103	2,320	66	1.0	1.6	26,178	-2,517
NT	192	49	21	89	0.9	1.7	619	72
QLD	2,320	-92	630	73	0.6	0.8	9,637	-1,164
SA	1,665	9	265	84	1.1	1.5	7,030	-2,077
TAS	516	22	52	90	1.1	1.3	2,139	346
VIC	3,548	-389	1,045	71	0.7	0.9	15,890	-1,531
WA	1,509	67	323	79	0.7	1.0	5,734	-393
Australia	17,019	-183	4,750	72	0.8	1.2	69,112	-6,950

Part B: Motorcycles Only

Overall, Australia experienced a 4.5 per cent increase in motorcycle thefts in 2005/06. Whilst this only represents 288 more motorcycles stolen they continue to buck the trend of reduced theft in all other categories.

The larger states of Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria remained more or less stable for the year. New South Wales, which accounts for around a third of all motorcycle thefts in Australia, experienced a 2 per cent increase, and Queensland's level rose by 59 extra thefts (7 per cent). Victoria demonstrated an improving position with a drop of 3 per cent.

The Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory all experienced minor increases of between 9 and 36 thefts.

The recovery rate for motorcycles remains a concern, with only 33 per cent of stolen motorcycles recovered.

Table 3: Australia, theft snapshot (motorcycles only)

12 months to June 2006	
Number of thefts	6,689
% change from previous 12 months	4.5
% of thefts recovered in year	33

June 2006 quarter	
Number of thefts	1,688
% change from last quarter	3.4
% change from same quarter previous year	-0.4
% of thefts recovered in quarter	29
Theft rate per 1,000 population	0.1*
Theft rate per 1,000 registrations	3.5 [^]

* this is not presented elsewhere including the quarterly report

[^] must be regarded with caution as a large and unknown proportion of motorbikes are not registered.

Motorcycle theft has a very different profile to other vehicles, due to the tendency for thieves to target newer models more than older, and the volume of unregistered and off-road bikes stolen.

Figure 2: Motorcycles stolen by month, January 2000 – June 2006

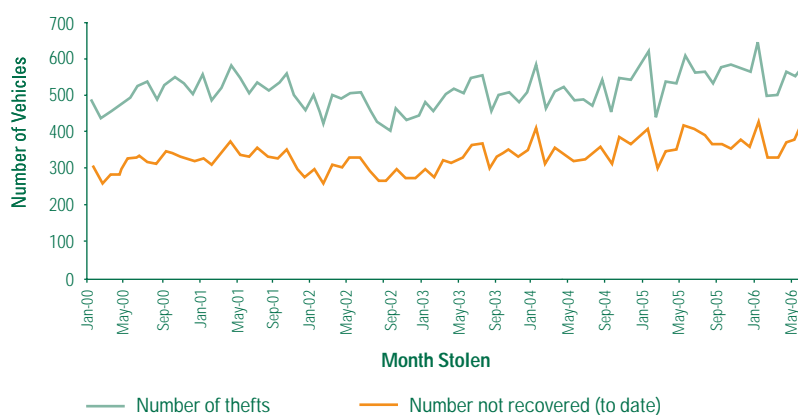


Table 4: State and territory snapshot (motorcycles only)

Jurisdiction	Number of thefts, June quarter	Change in theft numbers from last quarter	Number of thefts not recovered in the quarter	% of thefts recovered in the quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 population, June quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 registrations, June quarter	Thefts for 12 months to June 2006	Change in theft numbers from last 12 months
ACT	23	9	9	61	0.1	2.8	81	14
NSW	511	-58	368	28	0.1	4.2	2,232	52
NT	33	5	19	42	0.2	8.4	109	32
QLD	245	18	161	34	0.1	2.2	961	59
SA	121	-1	88	27	0.1	3.2	514	36
TAS	20	-5	13	35	0.0	1.7	81	9
VIC	352	66	298	15	0.1	2.8	1,226	-32
WA	383	22	235	39	0.2	6.4	1,485	118
Australia	1,688	56	1,191	29	0.1	3.5	6,689	288

Profile of Unrecovered Vehicles Shows Changes in Our Bigger States

The slightly lower than expected recovery rates for some of the larger States this quarter, has motivated the NMVTRC to delve into this issue a little further. New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria all returned recovery rates of less than 70 per cent, however individual profiles over time indicate different changes in each state.

Breaking the vehicles into age categories for the 2001/02, 2003/04, and 2005/06 financial years shows a very different picture between each State. With respect to New South Wales, Figure 3 illustrates the changing age profile in unrecovered vehicles.

Vehicles aged 6-10 years and 11 plus years have been increasing in their proportion of the unrecovered level at a similar rate to each other, whilst at the same time the newest vehicles (aged between zero and five years) have been steadily decreasing.

Victoria shows a similar pattern, with older vehicles (aged over six years) increasing in their proportion of the unrecovered rate, whilst newer vehicles have been gradually dropping.

Queensland is an example of almost the opposite phenomenon – overall, the recovery rate has been

dropping steadily, however breaking down the unrecovered vehicles into vehicle age shows a flat rate for each. This means that whilst the overall numbers are changing, the distribution of vehicle ages has remained more or less the same.

The increasing non-recovered rates in the larger jurisdictions will be the subject of more detailed analysis with stakeholders in coming months.

Figure 3. New South Wales, percentage of unrecovered vehicles by age category, June 2001 – June 2006

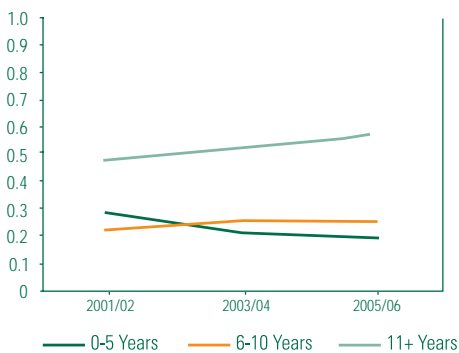


Figure 4. Queensland, percentage of unrecovered vehicles by age category, June 2001 – June 2006

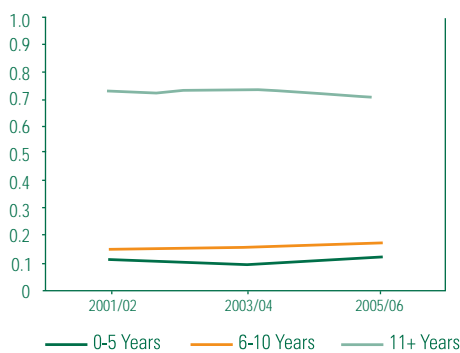


Figure 5. Victoria, percentage of unrecovered vehicles by age category, June 2001 – June 2006



Breaking the vehicles into age categories for the 2001/02, 2003/04, and 2005/06 financial years shows a very different picture between each State.



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The NMVTRC acknowledges all police services, registration authorities, participating insurers, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, Glass's Information Services and Insurance Australia Group for their supply of the data. Theft incident data may be subject to later revision by the data providers.

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