



**National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council**
driving down vehicle theft

Theft WATCH

National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council –
No.21 October 2006

Passenger Vehicle Thefts Continue to Fall as Motorbikes Remain Hot Targets

Table 1: Australia, theft snapshot, PLCs

12 months to September 2006	
Number of thefts	65,313
% change from previous 12 months	-8.3
% of thefts recovered in year	78
September 2006 Quarter	
Number of thefts	15,927
% change from last quarter	-2.0
% change from same quarter previous year	-4.2
% of thefts recovered in quarter	73
Theft rate per 1,000 population	0.8
Theft rate per 1,000 registrations	1.2
Total value of stolen PLC vehicles [^]	\$114m
Total value of unrecovered PLC vehicles	\$38m
Number of claims (excluding zero cost*)	7,759
Average claim cost (\$)	10,342
Median claim cost (\$)	5,685
Average agreed value claim cost (\$)	12,421
Total sum of claims	\$80m

Top Opportunistic Theft Targets, September Quarter

	Number Stolen
Holden Commodore VN, VL, VK, VP, VT	2,165
Ford Falcon EA, XF, AU	873
Ford Laser KE, KB, KC	537
Hyundai Excel X3	279
Toyota Corolla	275

Top Professional Theft Targets, September Quarter

	Number Missing
Holden Commodore VT, VX, VY, VS	194
Ford Falcon AU, BA, EL	83
Nissan Pulsar N16, N15	31
Mitsubishi Lancer CE	30

[^] Passenger and light commercial (PLC) vehicles accounted for 86 per cent of total thefts. Values calculated using the resources of Glass's Information Services.

* Excluding claims with \$0 cost. There were 285 claims with a cost equal to zero.

Australia's sustained focus on theft reform continues to push down the volume of stolen passenger/light commercial vehicles across the nation, as numbers fell to 15,927 in the September 2006 quarter.

The 12 month rolling figure also shows continued improvement in the theft position of PLCs with a strong 8 per cent decline as compared to the previous 12 months. The recovery rate for PLCs remains stable, with 78 percent of PLCs stolen in the year to September having been recovered.

The larger states showed positive results for the 12 months to September 2006, with decreases in PLC thefts of 6, 11, and 12 per cent for New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria respectively. South Australia also improved its position, with a 16 per cent drop as compared to the previous 12 months.

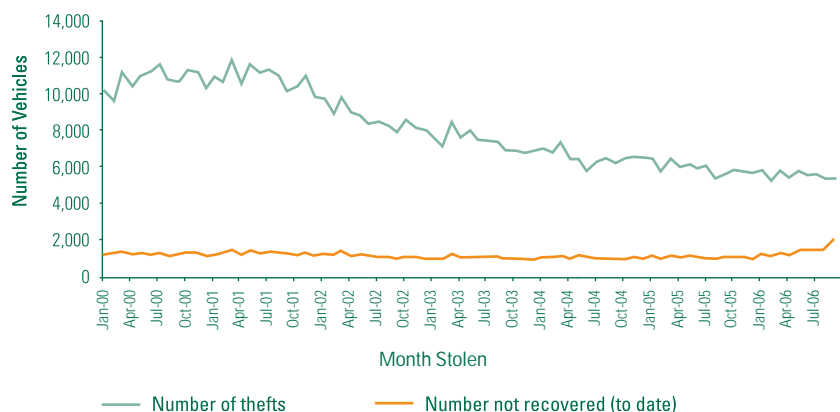
Following on from last quarter's improvements, the total value of stolen PLC vehicles dropped by another \$18 million to \$114 million, \$5 million of which related to unrecovered PLC vehicles.

Unfortunately the positive trend for PLCs was not mirrored in thefts of motorcycles, which continue to creep up slowly across the states and territories. Nationally, thefts of motorcycles increased by 4 per cent from the June 2006 quarter, with the rolling 12 month figure indicating a 3 per cent rise as compared to the 12 months to September last year. The Northern Territory, Tasmania, and Western Australia all experienced notable increases in the 12 months to September, with only the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales showing an improving position. These fluctuations are to be expected, however, due to the relatively low numbers in each state.

Table 2: Australia – Thefts and recoveries by vehicle type, July – September 2006

Vehicle type	Number of thefts	Number not recovered	% Recovered
Passenger/light commercial	15,927	4,366	72.6
Motorcycles	1,705	1,208	29.1
Heavy/other vehicles	699	257	63.2
Unknown	129	81	37.2
Total	18,460	5,912	68.0

Figure 1: Passenger/light commercial vehicles stolen and not recovered by month, January 2000 – September 2006



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

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Table 3: Australia, state and territory breakdown, PLCs

	Number of thefts, September 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, September quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 registrations, September quarter	Thefts for 12 months to September 2006	Change in theft numbers from last 12 months
ACT	622	+174	111	82	1.9	2.9	1,866	+146
NSW	5,896	-590	1,926	67	0.9	1.5	24,828	-1,595
NT	155	-29	21	86	0.8	1.5	616	+80
QLD	2,205	-20	578	74	0.5	0.8	9,019	-1,162
SA	1,837	+195	239	87	1.2	1.8	6,920	-1,347
TAS	400	-115	43	89	0.8	1.1	2,034	+192
VIC	3,441	+6	1,091	68	0.7	1.0	14,854	-2,000
WA*	1,371	+60	357	74	0.7	1.0	5,176	-187
Australia	15,927	-319	4,366	73	0.8	1.2	65,313	-5,873

* The Western Australia unrecovered rate is currently understated and may be adjusted at a later date as a result of Western Australia Police data management procedures.

Missing Motorcycles on the Rise

One of the defining features of motorcycle theft that sets it aside from other vehicle theft is the particularly low recovery rate. Roughly ranging between 20 and 40 per cent in Australia, the stolen motorcycle recovery rate remains a concern for the NMVTRC and its stakeholders.

Over the last few years, Australia has seen a distinct change in the proportion of unrecovered vehicles accounted for by different types of vehicles. Motorcycles are beginning to creep up as a percentage of unrecovered vehicles, whilst PLCs

are declining. Figure 2 illustrates this point, showing the percentage of all unrecovered vehicles accounted for by motorcycles as compared to PLCs.

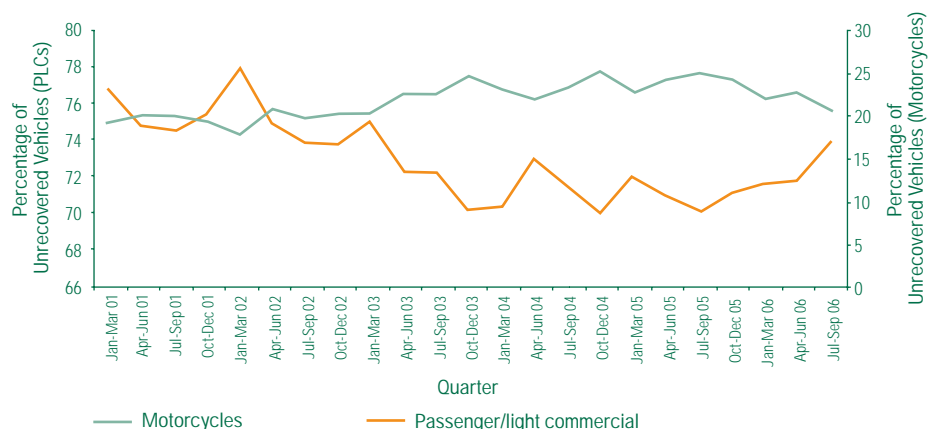
The NMVTRC's assessment is that reforms directed at improving vehicle identification are likely to deliver the best chance of reducing the non-recovery rate for stolen motorcycles.

Table 4: Australia, theft snapshot, motorcycles

12 months to September 2006	
Number of thefts	6,556
% change from previous 12 months	+3
% of thefts recovered in year	33
September 2006 Quarter	
Number of thefts	1,705
% change from last quarter	+4
% change from same quarter previous year	+6
% of thefts recovered in quarter	29
Theft rate per 1,000 registrations	^3.5

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

Figure 2: Proportion of unrecovered vehicles by vehicle type, January 2001 – September 2006*



* The line charts in Figure 2 represent the proportion of the unrecovered rate for all vehicles accounted for by motorcycles and PLCs respectively, rather than representing the individual recovery rates for these types of vehicles.



National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council Inc

50-52 Howard Street
North Melbourne Victoria 3051
Australia

Telephone (03) 9348 9600
Facsimile (03) 9348 9988
Email info@carsafe.com.au

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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