



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

Theft WATCH

National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council –
No.22 February 2007

PLC Thefts Drop by Over 5,000 in 2006

Table 1: Australia, theft snapshot, PLCs

12 months to December 2006	
Number of thefts	63,996
% change from previous 12 months	-7.4
% of thefts recovered in year	77.4
December 2006 Quarter	
Number of thefts	15,451
% change from last quarter	-3.2
% change from same quarter previous year	-8.1
% of thefts recovered in quarter	72
Theft rate per 1,000 population	0.75
Theft rate per 1,000 registrations	1.17
Total value of stolen PLC vehicles [#]	\$127m
Total value of unrecovered PLC vehicles	\$41m
Number of claims (excluding zero cost*)	7,191
Average claim cost (\$)	9,971
Median claim cost (\$)	5,339
Total sum of claims	\$71m

Top Short Term Use Targets, December Quarter

	Number Stolen
Holden Commodore VN, VL, VT, VS, VK, VP	2,272
Ford Falcon EA, XF	603
Ford Laser KE, KB	329
Hyundai Excel X3	296
Toyota Corolla	252

Top Profit-motivated Theft Targets, December Quarter

	Number Missing
Holden Commodore VT, VX, VY, VZ, VS	589
Ford Falcon AU, BA, EL	284
Hyundai Excel X3	162
Mitsubishi Lancer CE	76
Toyota Corolla ZZE122R	74

[#] Passenger and light commercial (PLC) vehicles accounted for 87 per cent of total thefts. Values calculated using the resources of Glass's Information Services.

* Excluding claims with \$0 cost. There were 314 claims with a cost equal to zero.

The final quarter of 2006 completed another year of continued success in vehicle theft reform, with passenger/light commercial (PLC) thefts continuing to fall another 3 per cent to a total of 15,451 thefts for the quarter. This brings PLC thefts down a total of over 7 per cent in the 2006 calendar year. The recovery rate for PLCs is still hovering around 77 per cent, while theft per 1,000 population and 1,000 registrations remained at 0.8 and 1.2 respectively for the quarter.

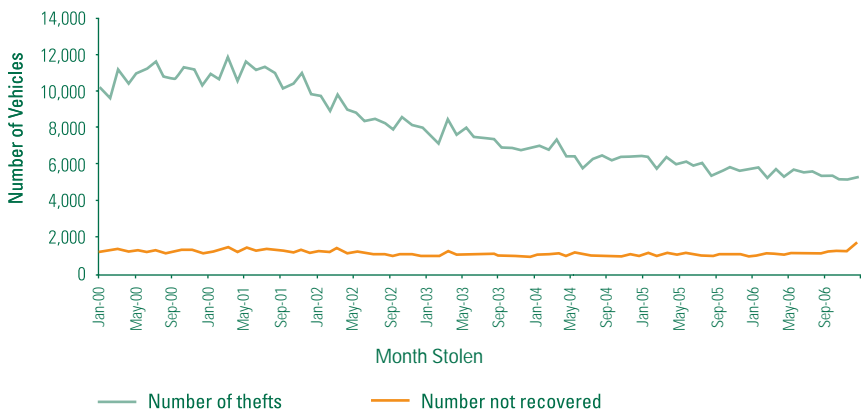
Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria all recorded notable decreases ranging from 10 per cent to close to 15 per cent in the 2006 calendar year. The Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory recorded increases of 18 and 11 per cent respectively, and Western Australia's PLC thefts went up 4 per cent. Our smaller states and territories, such as the ACT, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory, are prone

to frequent fluctuations (both up and down) because of their relatively low base position.

Interestingly, the total value of stolen PLC vehicles rose to \$127 million in the December quarter, an increase of \$13 million. Similarly, the total value of unrecovered PLCs rose \$3 million to \$41 million. This breaks the recent trend which was indicating that the value of stolen PLCs was dropping.

Defying the recent upward trend, motorcycle theft dropped by almost 4 per cent in the quarter, however the rolling 12 month figure still shows this type of theft creeping up. This is particularly the case for Victoria, which saw an 11 per cent increase from the 2005 calendar year. The motorcycle recovery rate remains consistently low, with only around 32 per cent of stolen bikes recovered in the year.

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



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State and Territory

Australian Capital Territory



PLC thefts	1,992
Change over last year	+298 or +18%
Recovered	85%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	9.36
Thefts per 1,000 population	6.1

As compared to the 1,992 passenger/light commercial thefts in 2006, there were only 79 motorcycle thefts in the Australian Capital Territory, which only represents around 4 per cent of all stolen vehicles – much lower than the national average of 9 per cent. The ACT's rates of theft per registrations and per population remain higher than the national average.

Northern Territory



PLC thefts	614
Change over last year	+61 or +11%
Recovered	89%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	6.11
Thefts per 1,000 population	3.0

The Northern Territory's lower base rate of theft means that an increase of only 61 thefts pushes up the state's theft volume by 11 per cent. Like Tasmania and South Australia, the high recovery rate of 89 per cent indicates that there is little profit-motivated vehicle theft in the territory and high level of stolen vehicles for short term use.

New South Wales



PLC thefts	24,382
Change over last year	-1,010 or -4%
Recovered	73%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	6.35
Thefts per 1,000 population	3.6

Because of its large population and vehicle fleet, New South Wales is one of the major drivers of Australia's overall theft performance, with 38 per cent of PLC thefts in 2006 occurring in New South Wales. This means that although the percentage decrease in New South Wales was relatively small (-4 per cent), the 1,000 fewer vehicles stolen in this state contributes strongly to Australia's overall drop of 5,115 vehicles.

Queensland



PLC thefts	8,731
Change over last year	-1,000 or -10%
Recovered	79%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	3.21
Thefts per 1,000 population	2.2

Queensland has comparatively lower rates of 2.9 vehicle thefts per 1,000 registrations, and 3.2 vehicle thefts per population. While the overall theft numbers for the state still seem high, this state has been experiencing a steady and consistent decrease in theft numbers.

Round-up, 2006

South Australia



PLC thefts	6,881
Change over last year	-1,011 or -13%
Recovered	88%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	6.71
Thefts per 1,000 population	4.4

South Australia, though having a lower base level of vehicle theft than New South Wales, Victoria, and to a lesser extent Queensland, contributed substantially to Australia's good performance in 2006. A decrease of 13 per cent, or 1,011 vehicles, was a substantial and commendable effort for the state.

Victoria



PLC thefts	14,920
Change over last year	-2,350 or -14%
Recovered	76%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	4.24
Thefts per 1,000 population	2.8

Victoria is another strong driver of Australia's overall vehicle theft level, and the 2006 decrease of 14 per cent, or 2,350 vehicles, accounts for almost half of the nation's performance.

Tasmania



PLC thefts	1,788
Change over last year	-310 or -15%
Recovered	93%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	4.92
Thefts per 1,000 population	3.7

Tasmania has by far the highest recovery rate out of all the states and territories, with 93 per cent of all vehicles stolen in 2006 ultimately recovered. A high recovery rate tends to indicate a high level of theft for short term use of the vehicle.

Western Australia



Thefts	5,318
Change over last year	+207 or +4%
Recovered	77%
Thefts per 1,000 registrations	3.83
Thefts per 1,000 population	2.6

Since 1998, Western Australia's rapidly increasing penetration of immobilisers has had notable success in bringing down the state's theft rate, and whilst this year's increase of 207 PLC thefts is relatively small, it may be something to keep an eye on in the future. Since 2000, Western Australia's monthly PLC theft rate has almost halved.

Table 2: Australia, thefts and recoveries by vehicle type, October – December 2006

Vehicle type	Number of thefts	Number not recovered	% Recovered
Passenger/light commercial	15,451	4,287	72.3
Motorcycles	1,649	1,157	29.8
Heavy/other vehicles	653	219	66.5
Unknown	109	64	41.3
Total	17,862	5,727	67.9

Table 3: Australia, state and territory breakdown, PLCs

	Number of thefts, December 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, December quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 registrations, December quarter	Thefts for 12 months to December 2006	Change in theft numbers from last 12 months
ACT	514	-110	93	82	1.6	2.4	1,992	+298
NSW	5,646	-275	1,828	68	0.8	1.5	24,382	-1,010
NT	139	-17	22	84	0.7	1.4	614	+61
QLD	2,008	-200	498	75	0.5	0.7	8,731	-1,000
SA	1,780	-59	281	84	1.1	1.7	6,881	-1,011
TAS	388	-12	40	90	0.8	1.1	1,788	-310
VIC	3,587	+143	1,090	70	0.7	1.0	14,290	-2,350
WA*	1,389	+12	435	69	0.7	1.0	5,318	+207
Australia	15,451	-518	4,287	72	0.8	1.2	63,996	-5,115

* 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.

Table 4: Australia, theft snapshot, motorcycles

12 months to December 2006		December 2006 Quarter	
Number of thefts	6,570	Number of thefts	1,649
% change from previous 12 months	2.7	% change from last quarter	-3.8
% of thefts recovered in year	32	% change from same quarter previous year	0.2
		% of thefts recovered in quarter	30
		Theft rate per 1,000 registrations	3.33



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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 provider.

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