



National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction Council
driving down vehicle theft

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

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comprehensive auto-theft research system

theft Watch

PLC theft down over 10 per cent in 2008/09

The 2008/09 financial year has seen passenger/light commercial vehicle (PLC) thefts fall by an outstanding 10.5 per cent from the previous 12 months – the largest annual percentage decrease since 2005. Overall, there were 6,000 fewer thefts, creating a new low benchmark of 51,315. Recoveries remained stable at 76 per cent and the theft rate per population and registrations fell to 2.37 and 3.75 respectively. The proportion of the vehicle fleet fitted with an Australian-Standards Equivalent (ASE) immobiliser reached a record high of 61 per cent.

South Australia and Victoria provided the most substantial contributions to the nation's good performance, with reductions of 16 and 14 per cent respectively, and New South Wales and Western Australia both experienced strong decreases of 13 per cent. Queensland and Tasmania also recorded 74 fewer thefts between the two states.

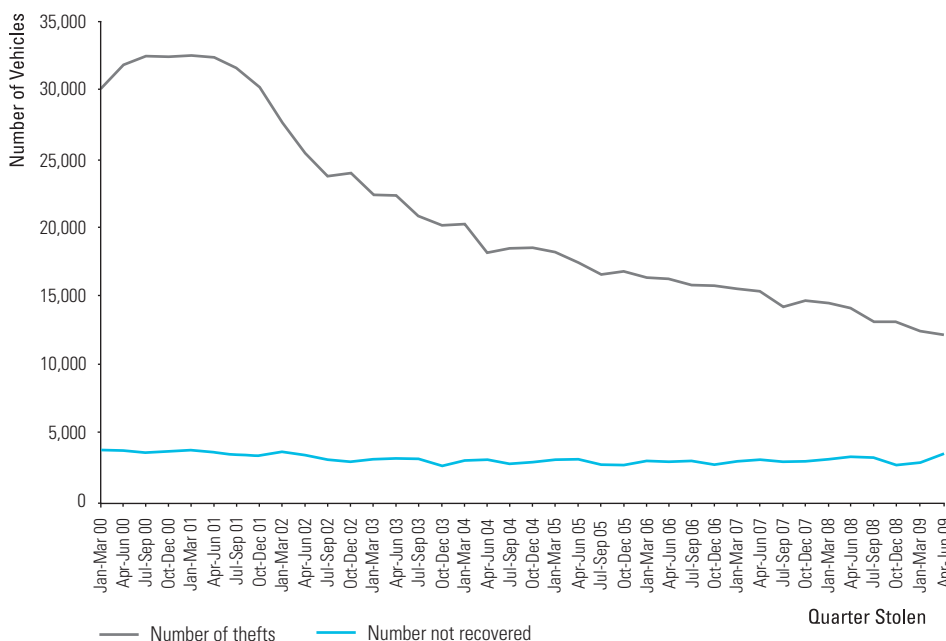
The Territories were the only two jurisdictions to see an increase; combined these amounted to just 294 additional thefts¹.

The total value of stolen PLCs fell below the \$500 million mark to \$495 million for the period, with vehicles stolen not recovered making up \$136 million.

The year also saw an overall drop in motorcycle theft of 4 per cent, with Victoria leading the way on a 14 per cent reduction. Increases among jurisdictions were marginal – between just one and 75 additional thefts. At 35 per cent, motorcycle recoveries were down slightly from the previous 12 months.

¹ Smaller jurisdictions are prone to frequent fluctuations (both up and down) due to their relatively low base position.

Figure 1: Passenger/light commercial vehicles stolen and not recovered by quarter, January 2000 – June 2009



State and territory wrap-up 2008/09

South Australia

PLC thefts	4,732
Change from 2007/08	-895 or -16%
Recovered	83%
Rate per 1,000 population	2.94
Rate per 1,000 registrations	4.29
Immobilised fleet	54%

Motorcycle thefts	492
Change from 2007/08	-79
Recovered	32%

- South Australia has continued its strong downward trend from 2008, achieving the largest percentage reduction in thefts for 2008/09.
- The State's recovery rate remains well above the national average of 76 per cent, indicating a prominence of theft for short term use.

Victoria

PLC thefts	11,681
Change from 2007/08	-1,881 or -14%
Recovered	78%
Rate per 1,000 population	2.18
Rate per 1,000 registrations	3.21
Immobilised fleet	60%

Motorcycle thefts	1,301
Change from 2007/08	-206
Recovered	22%

- Victoria contributed the second largest percentage decrease to the nation's good performance, following on from a series of sizeable quarterly reductions.
- The 1,881 fewer thefts make up over a quarter of the nation's overall reductions for the financial year.
- At only 22 percent, the State experienced the lowest motorcycle recovery rate, below the national average of 35 per cent. However, the State also recorded the strongest fall in motorcycle theft numbers.

Tasmania

PLC thefts	1,271
Change from 2007/08	-19 or -2%
Recovered	92%
Rate per 1,000 population	2.54
Rate per 1,000 registrations	3.36
Immobilised fleet	46%

Motorcycle thefts	79
Change from 2007/08	+2
Recovered	38%

- A substantial 26 per cent drop in the June quarter contributed to Tasmania's overall reduction of 19 thefts in 2008/09.

- Small states are prone to fluctuations in theft numbers (both up and down) due to their low base position.
- The high recovery rate and the relatively low portion of immobilised vehicles reflect the State's older, unsecured vehicle fleet and indicate a high level of opportunistic theft.

Northern Territory

PLC thefts	837
Change from 2007/08	+195 or 30%
Recovered	87%
Rate per 1,000 population	3.78
Rate per 1,000 registrations	7.51
Immobilised fleet	63%

Motorcycle thefts	179
Change from 2007/08	+1
Recovered	50%

- The Northern Territory's lower base rate means that an increase of 195 thefts puts up the Territory's theft volume by 30 per cent.
- Like South Australia and Tasmania, the high recovery rate indicates there is little profit-motivated theft in the area.

Western Australia

PLC thefts	4,777
Change from 2007/08	-710 or -13%
Recovered	85%
Rate per 1,000 population	2.17
Rate per 1,000 registrations	3.11
Immobilised fleet	85%

Motorcycle thefts	1,543
Change from 2007/08	+75
Recovered	51%

- Western Australia experienced a substantial reduction in 2008/09 of 13 per cent, the equal third largest national reduction.
- The very high proportion of ASE immobilised vehicles in the Western Australian fleet is due to the State's compulsory immobilisation scheme.
- The State's relatively high level of motorcycle theft remains, making up over a quarter of all thefts in the area.

Australian Capital Territory

PLC thefts	1,797
Change from 2007/08	+99 or 6%
Recovered	75%
Rate per 1,000 population	5.17
Rate per 1,000 registrations	8.1
Immobilised fleet	63%

Motorcycle thefts	125
Change from 2007/08	+18
Recovered	40%

- The Australian Capital Territory experienced a large reduction of 22 per cent in the March quarter. However, a sizeable increase in the last quarter has brought about an overall rise of 6 per cent for the year.
- The Territory's increased theft rate per population and registrations remains above the national averages of 2.37 and 3.75 respectively.

New South Wales

PLC thefts	18,921
Change from 2007/08	-2,784 or -13%
Recovered	68%
Rate per 1,000 population	2.69
Rate per 1,000 registrations	4.68
Immobilised fleet	64%

Number of motorcycle thefts	2,328
Change from 2007/08	-150
Recovered	29%

- New South Wales once again had the largest reduction in theft numbers, making up close to a half of all nation-wide PLC reductions for the year.
- The consistently low recovery rate indicates a higher incidence of profit-motivated theft compared with other jurisdictions.
- At 64 per cent New South Wales also has the second largest proportion of immobilised vehicles, indicative of a newer vehicle fleet.

Queensland

PLC thefts	7,299
Change from 2007/08	-55 or -0.7%
Recovered	79%
Rate per 1,000 population	1.68
Rate per 1,000 registrations	2.4
Immobilised fleet	60%

Number of motorcycle thefts	1,410
Change from 2007/08	+22
Recovered	37%

- Queensland's steady and consistent reductions over the past year have resulted in an overall fall of 55 thefts from 2007/08.
- The State had the lowest theft rates per population and registration – well below the national averages.