



National Motor Vehicle  
Theft Reduction Council

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# Tackling Vehicle Crime

## A Guide for Local Communities



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# Introduction

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Since the 1990s Australia has suffered from an entrenched culture of vehicle theft. Fortunately, the concerted effort of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) and its stakeholders in police services, insurance, the motor trades, vehicle manufacturing, registration authorities and justice agencies has seen total thefts fall dramatically over the past decade.

The NMVTRC is a joint initiative of Australian governments and the insurance industry. An independent, not-for-profit organisation, the NMVTRC's role is to drive down Australia's unacceptable level of vehicle theft.

Despite the fact that theft numbers have been moving in the right direction, one in every 150 households still falls victim to vehicle theft each year and the Australian community continues to bear the cost – estimated to be over \$680 million per year – through higher insurance premiums and demands on our justice system.

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The NMVTRC's assessment is that the principal vehicle crime concerns currently facing the nation are:

- the prevalence of residential burglaries to access the keys of 'secure' vehicles; and
- more than 10,500 passenger and light commercial vehicles that still vanish altogether from our roads each year – the surrogate indicator of the level of organised criminal activity seeking to convert stolen vehicles into cash.

There also remains more than three million older vehicles on our roads that are vulnerable to attack using simple tools such as a coat hanger and a screwdriver.

The consequences of vehicle theft are felt strongly by local communities. Vehicle theft and home burglary go hand in hand – more frequently we are seeing vehicle keys being stolen via house burglary and stolen vehicles are often used to transport stolen property. Car theft often results in extensive damage to property and sometimes, tragically, in the injury or death of innocent road users.

The NMVTRC maintains a national program to inform the public about the dynamics of vehicle crime and promote safe practices to further reduce it. At a local level, councils, chambers of commerce and economic development bodies, crime prevention and community safety groups, and other community-based organisations perform a vital role in complementing national strategies. Local organisations can be particularly influential in dispelling commonly held myths about car theft and informing motorists on how they can avoid becoming a victim.

This e-book: *Tackling Vehicle Crime – A Guide for Local Communities* is a starting point for local organisations interested in tackling vehicle crime. It provides facts about the problem, identifies some of the resources available to local groups and lists ideas for activities that can be undertaken effectively at the local level.

The Guide has been prepared by NMVTRC in conjunction with police and local government crime prevention officers.



# Vehicle theft in brief

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## An entrenched culture

- Since the 1990s Australia has suffered from an entrenched culture of vehicle theft fuelled by the absence of adequate transport alternatives in many Australian suburbs and towns, the high number of old and unsecured vehicles on the nation's roads, and a 'car culture' that is particularly strong amongst young males.
- The past decade has seen a clear shift in the nature of Australia's vehicle fleet away from the traditional large family sedan to an extensive array of smaller vehicles and SUVs.
- This shift has also been reflected in the theft dynamic. More than half of all stolen vehicles are now vehicles made from 2000 onwards with more than one in four being small passenger vehicles.
- Currently, around 55,000 vehicles are reported stolen each year in Australia. This equates to one theft for every 150 households or 150 thefts each day.

## Opportunity knocks

From organised criminals who are looking to steal cars for profit-motivated purposes, to opportunists who are after temporary transport, there are a range of players and motivations involved in vehicle crime.

Around three-quarters of cars are taken by opportunistic thieves looking for short term use of a vehicle for purposes such as joyriding, transport or the commission of another crime. While historically, older vehicles have been targeted for their lack of security, now over half of vehicles stolen are newer vehicles fitted with sophisticated security that cannot be started without access to an original key.

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Increasingly, thieves are entering homes via unlocked doors or windows in order to get hold of a vehicle's keys. In other cases the keys may have been carelessly left by the owner in the ignition in an unlocked car in the driveway or at a petrol station.

There are also still more than three million older vehicles on Australian roads that are vulnerable to basic attack using simple tools – such a coat hanger (to access the cabin) and a screwdriver (as a surrogate key). These older vehicles are particularly vulnerable, illustrated by the fact that while they make up just 23 per cent of the registered vehicle fleet, their share of total thefts is more than 40 per cent.

Opportunists are most commonly young males and their motivations include joyriding, the need or desire for transport or the need for a vehicle to commit other crimes such as home burglary or the purchase of drugs. A small number of opportunists are known to steal vehicles specifically to use in street drags and other high-risk illegal activities.

Most cars stolen by opportunistic thieves are eventually recovered, often within a day or two, and usually with substantial mechanical or collision damage. Others are found with vandalised interiors and some have been burnt in an attempt to remove traces of fingerprints or DNA.

Sometimes, erratically driven stolen cars are also involved in serious accidents in which the thief, their passengers or innocent bystanders have been injured or killed.

## Reducing vehicle theft in Australia

The NMVTRC was established in 1999 by Australian governments and the insurance industry upon the recommendation of a national task force. The formation of the NMVTRC marked a departure from the traditional view of vehicle theft as a 'police problem' and its operational model recognises the contribution of other players to both the problem and the potential solutions.

A real and sustained reduction in vehicle theft can only occur with a coordinated, national program of reform to address the public and private sector processes and infrastructure inadequacies that allowed the problem to flourish. The NMVTRC provides this coordinating function on behalf of Australian governments and the Insurance Council of Australia. Our members include the peak national bodies for policing, insurers, transport agencies, motor manufacturers, motor trades and motoring associations.

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**[Click here to view our 'Entrapment' video.](#)**

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**Keys are the only property stolen in up to one in four reported burglaries in which a vehicle is taken. Offenders are even prepared to enter occupied premises to quickly grab keys left in easily accessible spots.**

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[Click here to view our 'Raiders' video.](#)

# Local level theft prevention

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The NMVTRC continues to work with stakeholders across Australia to generate the commitment and partnerships to continue to drive theft levels lower. The NMVTRC recognises the influential role that local community organisations can play in reducing short term theft and provides a comprehensive range of data and resources to support appropriate campaigns.

At the broadest level, local government can incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles – a theory that draws a relationship between the incidence of crime and the design of the physical environment – into local settings and new developments. At a more direct level, local government and community groups are well placed to provide crime prevention advice and education to their communities.

## **‘It won’t happen to me’: the inconvenient truth**

Regular community surveys undertaken by the NMVTRC indicate that members of the public find vehicle security a perplexing issue. Nobody wants to be a victim of theft, but cutting through the clutter of products and promises in the vehicle security market is simply too much for most people to bother with.

Some motorists believe there is nothing they can do, or that their insurance will simply cover the cost if their vehicle is stolen. These misconceptions are barriers to effective theft prevention and embedding the mindset that reducing vehicle theft is a shared responsibility.

Clearly articulating the inconvenience and hidden costs of car theft is the most effective message. Whether it is for work or university, taking the kids to school or for social activities, most of us rely on our cars and having a car stolen can be stressful, inconvenient and costly. Insurance

## **The key message is that in the majority of cases, there are a number of simple things that car owners can do to reduce their risk.**

rarely covers the total cost of having a car stolen when other factors such as insurance excesses, public transport costs, etc, are taken into consideration. The key message is that in the majority of cases, there are a number of simple things that car owners can do to reduce their risk.

## **Three crucial elements: keys, immobilisers, and young people**

Combating short term theft relies on motorists understanding and acknowledging that theft prevention is a shared responsibility. The message should be that in the large majority of cases vehicle theft is preventable by taking a few simple steps to secure your car.

The communication of these two simple messages:

- **vehicle keys must be protected;** and
- **in the case of older vehicles – immobilisers work**

provides motorists with the information they need to slash the risk of falling victim and illustrates that prevention is far easier than dealing with the consequences.

## **Keys – protect your keys, protect your car**

Over the last decade the penetration of quality electronic immobiliser systems in the national vehicle fleet has grown steadily as older vehicles are replaced with newer, more secure models. While immobilisation has made a major

contribution to reducing vehicle crime, it has also resulted in a clear shift in the behaviour of some determined offenders.

The NMVTRC estimates that around seven in 10 immobilised vehicle thefts occurred because the thief was able to obtain access to an original key left in or near the vehicle by the owner, or by home or workplace break-in.

The theft of keys via home burglary is of particular concern. Research shows that keys are the only property stolen in up to one in four reported burglaries in which a vehicle is taken. Offenders are also becoming more brazen, even prepared to enter occupied premises to quickly grab keys left in easily accessible spots.

However, it is important to remember that these thefts are still opportunistic in nature – the thieves will look for vehicles parked on the street or in a driveway where there is the possibility of easy access to the keys. In the vast majority of cases the vehicles are recovered within a few days. The NMVTRC has developed a dedicated website and a range of resources to tackle this issue. See page 11 of this Guide for more information or [click here](#).

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# Local level theft prevention continued

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## Immobilisers – stopping theft before it starts

An engine immobiliser is an electronic device that interrupts the power supply to two or more systems required to start a vehicle's engine. Unless the correct electronic signal is received from a transponder in the key or key remote, the vehicle will not start. The signal to deactivate the system changes constantly, making it virtually impossible to 'crack'.

Auto-arming immobilisers became mandatory equipment on all new passenger vehicles sold in Australia from July 2001.

Despite these improvements there are still around three million older vehicles on Australian roads that have no immobiliser or are only fitted with a device that fails to meet the Australian Standard. When communicating with the owners of older vehicles the best theft prevention tip is to fit an Australian Standards approved immobiliser. They can be purchased and installed for as little as \$220 – a small price to pay to secure your car from opportunistic thieves.

**Click here** for more details on engine immobilisers.

## Young people – stealing for kicks

Young people who steal cars for kicks or simply for transport account for the largest proportion of stolen vehicles. The majority simply 'experiment' in the thrill but quickly 'grow out' of offending. A small number go on to become high-rate recidivist offenders and some become suppliers of vehicles to the illicit market.

Addressing youth offending is a vital element of reducing short term theft. Targeting young people at risk of offending before they actually become involved is likely to be the best approach for community level programs. The NMVTRC has developed an interactive video resource entitled *Choose a Ride*, which is designed for YouTube and can form the basis of a youth education campaign in your local area. The video is also accompanied by teacher/facilitator notes to assist in starting a conversation about youth offending, and other resource giveaways are available. To view *Choose a Ride* and download teacher/facilitator notes **click here**.

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## Electronic hacking: hype or reality?

Recent exposés on various methods of electronic vehicle hacking in mainstream and social media may have you wondering just how vulnerable vehicles are to electronic attack and what this means for the future of vehicle theft prevention campaigns.

Much of the media hype has centred on hi-tech methods that involve either passive keyless entry and start systems (known as a relay attack) or remote hacking via Wi-Fi connected entertainment systems. The fact is, however, that to replicate these methodologies is far from simple. Highlighted examples generally rely on hi-tech manipulation often involving complicated programming by computer experts who have unrestricted access to their target vehicle. The likelihood of an everyday thief having access to this technology and expertise is near zero.

While in Europe there have been a number of cases of electronic manipulation involving connecting preprogrammed diagnostic tools to the OBD port to either clone or override the immobilisation code, this has been far less common in Australia. In the few confirmed cases here the thieves were organised crime groups targeting specific makes/models for overseas export.

The reality is that in Australia there is presently no evidence of electronic hacking in vehicles stolen for short term purposes, and even in the case of profit-motivated theft the risk of electronic hacking is currently very low. The NMVTRC will continue to monitor developments in overseas markets and liaise with importers, insurers and police services to keep on top of these issues. In the meantime, while high-tech theft methods steal the limelight, the enduring message should be that more than 70 per cent of all theft is via the very low-tech method of simply stealing the owner's keys.

## Operation Bounce Back

*Operation Bounce Back* (OBB) is the NMVTRC's partnership with select local government areas (LGAs) in vehicle theft hot spots across Australia. It encourages the delivery of local initiatives to promote theft prevention in these areas to generate community awareness of vehicle security issues and help victims get on with life.

The strength of OBB is that it personalises the issue of car theft and reminds motorists that prevention is a shared responsibility. For more than 10 years OBB has consistently delivered positive outcomes for the communities involved by raising general awareness and strengthening the partnerships between local government, police and other community organisations. While the number of grants offered each year is limited, a number of successful, low-cost elements can be taken from the program to develop a localised theft prevention campaign for any community.

For more information on OBB **click here**. Or for more detailed information on specific OBB campaigns refer to the 'Case studies' on pages 16–18 of this Guide.



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[Click here to view our 'Mission' video.](#)

# Local level theft prevention continued

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## Elements of a successful campaign

- Get involved – direct community engagement through stalls at local shopping centres, community events and other related activities provide residents with a sense that their local council/organisation is concerned about their personal wellbeing, promotes interaction and allows people to feel part of the solution.
- Implement a ‘whole-of-community’ response – encouraging the widest possible range of groups and organisations within your local area to get on board with your initiative will not only spread your messages further, but also ensure motorists receive consistent advice about how to reduce their risk of theft.
- Engage your local police – police understand crime in the local area, their endorsement provides credibility and their on-the-ground involvement heightens the visible presence of the police in the community – a crime prevention strategy in itself.
- Consider other potential partners for your campaign such as:
  - the NMVTRC’s CAR-SAFE immobiliser installers ([click here](#) for more information);
  - local schools and other educational institutions;
  - youth organisations;
  - Neighbourhood Watch;
  - the local council;
  - local media;
  - insurers;
  - motor car dealers and others involved in the motor trades locally;
  - shopping centre management committees; or
  - chambers of commerce and industry.

- Target young people – young people are in the unique position of being both the primary perpetrators of vehicle theft and most likely victims (due to often owning older model vehicles) making it particularly important to engage this age group.
- Consider who makes up your community – the key to having your campaign messages heard and understood is to ensure they resonate with your target audience. In addition to young people this may mean promoting vehicle theft awareness to the elderly or those from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- Utilise social media – Twitter and Facebook provide ideal platforms to get your message out there in a way that is fast and easily digestible. Frequently posting theft prevention tips and statistics will extend the reach of your campaign and assist in capturing the all-important youth audience. Keep the information interesting and succinct. The NMVTRC can assist with putting together information for this purpose. Remember to link posts to the CAR-SAFE or Car Security Begins at Home website for further information.
- Get it in print, online or on radio – local media provides an opportunity to reach the people in your area. Continue reading for tips on writing a media release.
- Utilise the NMVTRC’s resources – all the NMVTRC resources are provided free of charge, cover a range of vehicle theft concerns and together make great take-home packs for motorists.

## News travels fast: Tips for a ‘theft prevention’ media release

- Most local newspapers are willing to report or publish a well-prepared media release and the readership of almost any publication available in your area will include motorists. Publications, both print and digital, put out by organisations such as the local council, the library, community centre, gym or chamber of commerce are worth approaching to run a support article on car theft to reach the people who use and park at their facilities.
- As well as focusing on the incidence of local vehicle crime your media release should include the recommended solutions, i.e. vehicle theft is the problem: key security and engine immobilisers are the solutions.
- Counteract the common myths about vehicle theft in your release. Most people do not realise that the majority of thefts occur at the home, rather than in the street or from a car park. Another popular myth is that most car thieves are professional and highly organised so “if they want my car, they’ll get it”. The fact is that most vehicles are stolen by opportunists and keeping your keys out of sight (and installing an engine immobiliser if it is an older car) can significantly reduce the risk.
- Ask a respected community leader such as the mayor, a councillor or a local police officer to act as a spokesperson for your media release (but make sure you provide them with background notes so they are not caught off guard!).
- The NMVTRC has Australia’s most comprehensive vehicle theft statistics. Be sure to contact us as we can provide both local statistics and a quote to include in appropriate media releases.
- Don’t create more ‘information’ clutter – cut through it by being specific. For example, call an immobiliser an ‘immobiliser’, not an ‘anti-theft device’.
- One or two statistics can make a point: any more creates confusion.
- If you can, supply a photograph or set up a photo opportunity to accompany your release.

# Resources available for local campaigns

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## Educational material and giveaways

The NMVTRC provides a range of resources, free of charge, to support local vehicle theft prevention initiatives. Resources offer advice on a wide range of vehicle theft prevention issues including general theft prevention tips, protecting keys, installing an immobiliser, conducting checks before purchasing a used vehicle as well information specific to motorcycle riders, and include:

- brochures and A3 posters;
- cinema/television advertisements (see below for more information);
- print advertisements;
- promotional items including stress cars, pens and drink bottles; and
- video and online youth resources.

**Click here** to check out the full range and place an order.

## Cinema/television ads

The NMVTRC has developed a suite of television/cinema advertisements on the critical issue of preventing key theft via residential burglaries. The 30 second ads give a nod to three famous 'heist' scenes from hit movies to raise awareness of the need to safeguard keys from would-be burglars in an over-the-top, non-threatening way. The ads are high quality and are ready for immediate placement in cinemas or with television stations. **Click here** to view the ads and request broadcast quality versions.

## Statistics

The NMVTRC has the most comprehensive and accurate database of motor vehicle theft statistics available. We collect statistical details on every vehicle theft reported to Australian police. Data is collated monthly in most states and can be provided by local government area, statistical local area, or suburb/postcode.

We also have a comprehensive suite of online data that provides fast and easy access to the latest statistics through a range of reports, tools and services at a national, state and local level. Here you can find out the theft risk rating of a particular make/model, find detailed information on theft in a particular area and discover current trends; plus plenty more.

**Click here** for more information.

## NMVTRC newsletters

- Theft Watch – a statistics-based newsletter, produced quarterly.
- Theft Torque – news in vehicle theft reform, produced quarterly.
- Theft Matters – a one-page issue in brief, produced quarterly.

All of our newsletters are published on the CAR-SAFE website and distributed to our database of stakeholders via email.

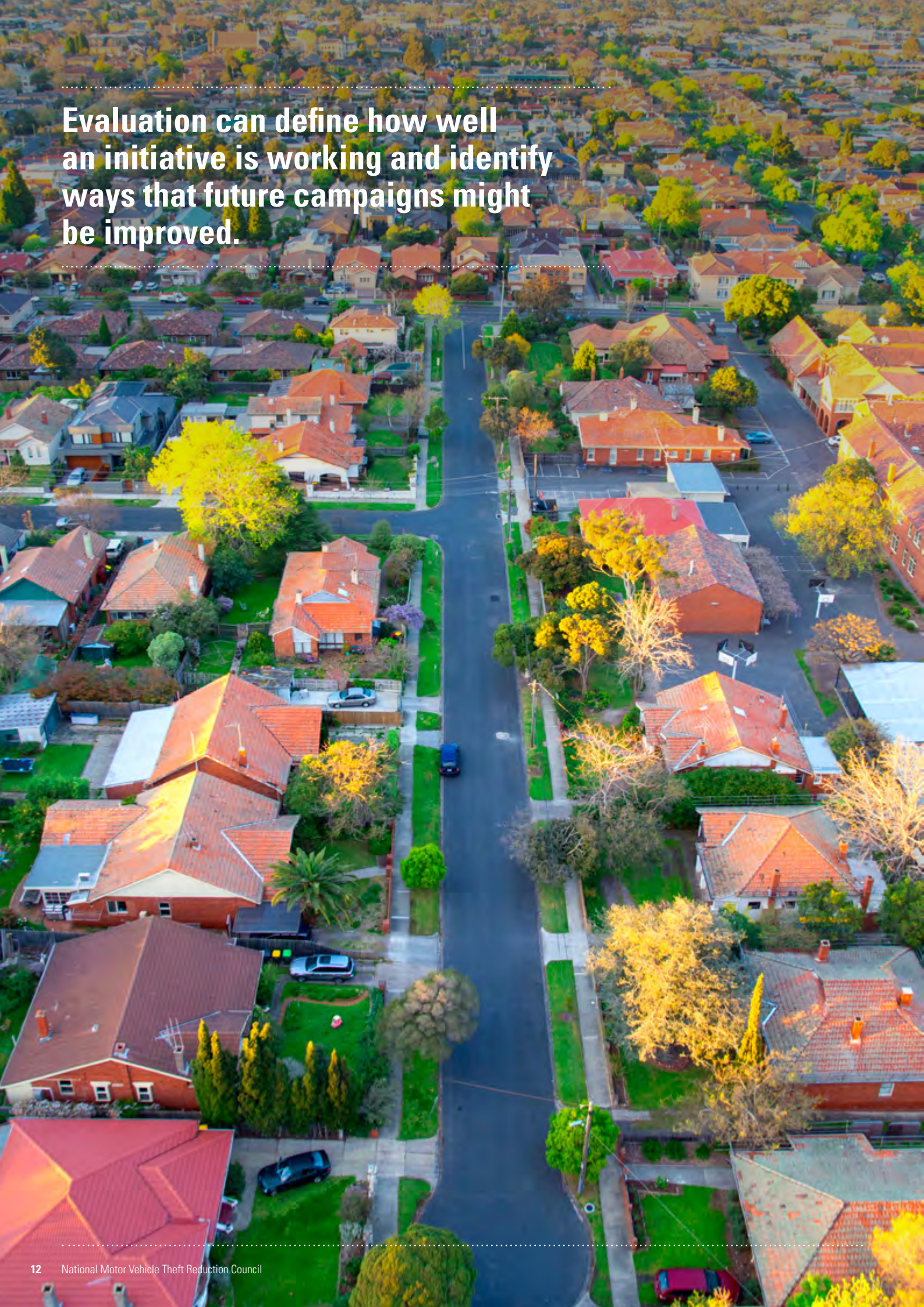
**Click here** to subscribe to receive our newsletters straight to your inbox.

## NMVTRC websites

- **carsafe.com.au** – the NMVTRC's main website features a wide range of theft prevention tips, statistics, resources and all the latest news in vehicle theft reform.
- **carsecuritybeginsathome.com** – specific to the issue of key theft via home burglary, this site is a great starting point for the community to learn more about protecting themselves from theft. Features a downloadable Home Security Audit.
- **protectyourbike.com.au** – website dedicated to motorcycle theft prevention. Features a motorcycle theft mapping tool.
- **choosearide.com** – youth resource aimed at nine to 14 year olds to encourage them to consider the consequences of becoming involved in vehicle theft. Includes downloadable teacher/facilitator notes.

The NMVTRC has the most comprehensive and accurate database of motor vehicle theft statistics available. We collect statistical details on every vehicle theft reported to Australian police.



An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood. A central street runs vertically through the middle of the frame. On either side of the street are rows of houses with red-tiled roofs. The houses are mostly single-story or two-story structures. There are green lawns, trees, and sidewalks. The lighting suggests it's either early morning or late afternoon, with a warm, golden glow. The text is overlaid on the top left of the image.

**Evaluation can define how well  
an initiative is working and identify  
ways that future campaigns might  
be improved.**



# A word about evaluation

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There are many good reasons for evaluating your local campaign and an abundance of evaluation literature and 'how to' guides available for practitioners. Evaluation can define how well an initiative is working and identify ways that future campaigns might be improved. An evaluation might highlight the need for further resources to be allocated to the problem of theft in your area or the need for resources to be allocated differently amongst the various elements of your program.

It is worth bearing in mind the need to be realistic when measuring the success of a local theft prevention initiative. Just because the number of thefts in your local area did not decline during your initiative does not mean it was unsuccessful. While the overall goal of 'reducing the number of vehicle thefts' is a desirable outcome and is easy to measure using the NMVTRC's CARS data, external factors that impact on theft, such as the age of the local vehicle fleet, are almost impossible to control at the local level.

More realistic evaluation measures might relate to, for example:

- successfully distributing educational information to a large number or targeted group of people;
- having a large number of people view the Car Security Begins at Home advertisements and other multimedia;
- generating discussion on social media websites about your campaign;
- improved security practices for your own organisation's vehicle fleet;
- increasing the number of immobilisers installed by local CAR-SAFE installers;
- changes in the level of community awareness;
- creating opportunities for police to be visible in the community; and
- successfully getting together community groups and individuals that have not previously worked together.

Producing sustainable theft reduction requires the commitment and persistence from a range of stakeholders on all levels. Over time, your initiative will contribute to achieving this.

**An evaluation might highlight the need for further resources to be allocated to the problem of theft in your area or the need for resources to be allocated differently amongst the various elements of your program.**

# Ideas for local theft prevention initiatives

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- Promote the Car Security Begins at Home website in your local area.
- Organise with your local cinema or television station to run the NMVTRC's Car Security Begins at Home advertisements as community service announcements (CSAs), free of charge.
- Run the NMVTRC developed Car Security Begins at Home print advertisements in your local paper or similar publication.
- Integrate vehicle theft prevention education into local community safety events.
- Local councils: provide a Car Security Begins at Home brochure with each newly issued parking permit.
- Work with uniformed police and parking officers to distribute CAR-SAFE materials to commuters at the local railway station. Providing a display or information and free coffee will attract more people to the activity.
- Download the NMVTRC's Home Security Audit and provide copies to community members as part of your educational material or conduct a letter box drop in your local area.
- Put together a promotional 'goody bag' with items such as balloons, key rings and pens as well as CAR-SAFE material. Combining resources in a free show bag increases the likelihood that the information will be picked up and read.
- Work with police and volunteers to organise an audit of a large commuter or shopping centre car park (always check with centre management first if auditing a shopping centre). Follow up with an educative letter from the police including tips on preventing theft to owners of unlocked vehicles or vehicles with valuables left in them.
- Get young people involved. Consider ways to target this at-risk group such as working with youth networks to develop car theft prevention initiatives, school presentations or hosting a youth forum. Show the NMVTRC's *Choose a Ride* film at these events.
- Set up a motor vehicle theft steering group at your local council to allow for small groups of people to work on varying initiatives and report back to a guiding committee.
- Work with local councils to erect signpost reminders to lock vehicles and not leave valuables visible when parking.
- Provide your local used car dealerships with NMVTRC brochures including copies of the *Wish you'd checked your used car was legit* brochure for distribution to car purchasers.
- Be on the lookout for any potential funding sources from government, business or philanthropic organisations for your theft prevention program.
- Join the NMVTRC's mailing list to keep up to date with statistics, trends and new developments in the fight against vehicle crime.
- Set a good example to the community by protecting your group or organisation's vehicles against theft. For fleet vehicles, make sure that your organisation has a system in place to know where its vehicles are and to ensure that keys are secured safely against theft when the vehicles are not in use.
- Provide information to residents specific to their local area, such as the top vehicle theft targets and hot spot locations – the NMVTRC can assist with putting together these statistics.
- Get in touch with local councils and organisations that have previously run vehicle theft prevention campaigns for their advice on successful initiatives. You will find a list of past OBB participants on the CAR-SAFE website.



**Be on the lookout for any potential funding sources from government, business or philanthropic organisations for your theft prevention program.**





# Case studies

## Logan City Council Targeting young people

Logan City Council is a long-time supporter of initiatives that engage young people at risk of vehicle theft. Recently as part of its OBB program, the municipality worked with the Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) to incorporate vehicle theft awareness into a young driver education program.

PCYC's Braking the Cycle program aims to assist disadvantaged youth in obtaining their driver's licence through the support of a volunteer mentor network. As part of the program Logan City Council arranged for a Car Security Workshop to be added to the curriculum to educate participants on how to reduce their risk of theft once they are on the road. The workshop was attended by 30 young people and included presentations from Queensland Police, the Department of Transport and Main Roads as well as a driving school instructor and a hands-on presentation about basic car maintenance. The NMVTRC's *Choose a Ride* resource was also utilised.

The council reported working with the PCYC to be extremely valuable to the success of the program in ensuring that the number of workshop attendees was high and that the selection of guest presenters was appropriate for the age group.



## Glenorchy City Council The importance of partnerships

Glenorchy City Council has been participating in OBB for over a decade, which has seen the Council receive a number of national awards for its car crime initiatives. The municipality credits the success of its programs to the effectiveness of its partnerships, working closely with police and neighbouring local government areas. The council also utilises its Safer Communities Committee as an overall steering group for the project, which enables smaller teams to work on varying initiatives and to report back to a guiding committee to ensure the project's overall objectives are being met.

Recent initiatives have included:

- Together with Clarence and Hobart City Councils, Glenorchy engaged a local film production company (with the guidance of a prominent advertising agency and young local film makers) to develop a series of television CSAs. The 30-second CSAs focused on encouraging motorists to consider the attraction of their unsecured cars to thieves, and were promoted through a media launch before airing on television station Southern Cross and in local cinemas. **Click here** to view each of the ads.
- Working with the NMVTRC to develop the *Choose a Ride* interactive video including holding youth workshops on issues facing young people in relation to vehicle crime. See page 8 for more information on *Choose a Ride*.
- Establishing a relationship with the Royal Hobart Show in order to hold a stall at the show to promote car theft prevention. Having a stall enabled Glenorchy City Council staff to engage with show-goers and distribute education material. Additionally, the municipality screened the NMVTRC's Car Security Begins at Home advertisements and ran a competition with questions relating to the ads. A number of tablet devices were also set up with the NMVTRC's *Choose a Ride* video for young people to watch and interact with.

- Developing a vehicle theft quiz and distributing it at local shopping centres to allow for owners of at-risk vehicles to win a free engine immobiliser. A quiz or other interactive activity can act as an ice-breaker between staff and the community and provides an opportunity to informally discuss vehicle theft with local residents and understand community concerns.



## Brimbank City Council Looking out for one another – CarWatch campaign

As part of OBB, Brimbank City Council implemented the high-level public education campaign CarWatch in the local area. The program focused on creating a 'whole-of-community' response to the issue of vehicle theft prevention by looking out for one another and encouraging motorists to take simple steps to secure their vehicle and valuables from theft at one of Brimbank's busiest train stations. The campaign enlisted the support of a number of partners including Victoria Police, Metro Trains and other key community organisations and was promoted intensively over a two-week period. Initiatives included:

- distribution of campaign materials including NMVTRC brochures and promotional material;
- installation of fence signs and footpath stencil markings leading to the station to remind motorists not to leave valuables in their car;



- installation of a car prop in the target area with key messages printed on the vehicle;
- development of additional promotional items including postcards, bookmarks, air fresheners, sun visors and carry bags with key messages such as 'Leaving your valuables in your car could shatter your day' and 'Value your belongings or someone else will';
- distribution of free engine immobiliser vouchers supplied by the NMVTRC;
- a joint Council/Police/NMVTRC flyer distributed to motorists identified as potential victims of theft; and
- having Brimbank City Council staff and partners on site to distribute materials and discuss vehicle theft security with commuters at peak periods.



### Lake Macquarie City Council Television advertising for Car Security Begins at Home

Support for the series of Car Security Begins at Home advertisements has been very strong among the NMVTRC's OBB partners with the ads screening in most participating municipalities. Lake Macquarie City Council, however, took this one step further and was able to secure a deal with Channel 9's regional television station, NBN, to run the series of advertisements as CSAs. NBN is based in Newcastle and services northern NSW and parts of south east Queensland.

The NMVTRC's three Car Security Begins at Home advertisements are available in television/cinema-ready format for any local organisation wishing to utilise them.



### Darebin City Council Community engagement – 'Hot Brew' mornings

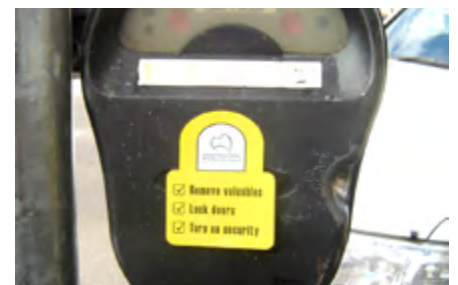
Darebin City Council partnered with Melbourne's train operator, Metro Trains, and Victoria Police to implement 'Hot Brew' mornings to promote vehicle theft prevention at Darebin train stations. Free hot drinks were provided along with a show bag containing NMVTRC materials and OBB branded 'KeepCups' to commuters during the peak commuter rush. Victoria Police officers were present at the stalls to interact with commuters and provide further information. Feedback suggests that having a police presence at information displays can add credibility to the promotion and encourage further interaction from community members.



### Launceston City Council 'Whole-of-community' approach

While strong media coverage and promotion is crucial to the success of vehicle theft prevention campaigns, the other key driver is a collective response to the issue. Involving a wide range of organisations, businesses and groups within the community is essential to implementing a successful campaign. Launceston City Council's recent OBB campaign successfully implemented this holistic approach by:

- providing a number of community organisations and outlets throughout the LGA with public education material to distribute. By encouraging local organisations to become involved they are made to feel part of the program and a part of the solution to reducing crime in their area;
- launching the program centrally with the Mayor in attendance;
- targeting promotion to a number of sectors of the community including youth through the local university and TAFE, senior citizens through the local paper, and newly arrived people to Australia through the Migrant Centre; and
- encouraging all motorists to be responsible for reducing their risk of becoming a victim of theft. Promoting theft prevention as a shared responsibility encourages motorists to become involved in reducing crime in their area and counteracts the notion that car theft is purely a 'law and order' issue.



# Case studies continued

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## City of Gosnells

### Generating publicity

The City of Gosnells put together a strong public education campaign that resulted in widespread media coverage for its OBB program. In order to achieve this the municipality focused on utilising a diverse range of promotional activities and advertising platforms including:

- Radio advertising – the municipality negotiated with a local radio station to record and air 15 second community service announcements reminding motorists of the importance of vehicle theft security during its radio programs throughout the campaign period.
- Bus advertising – NMVTRC print advertisements were adapted to suit the advertising space on buses in the Gosnells area.
- Door-knocks in hot spot areas – crime prevention packs were put together that contained NMVTRC education material and were distributed by local police through weekly door-knocks in hot spot areas.
- Community events – Car Security Begins at Home advertisements were screened at an outdoor cinema at a local multicultural food fair, where an information stall manned by City of Gosnells staff was also set up.
- Website promotion – vehicle theft prevention tips were replicated and reinforced by the City of Gosnells website with links to the CAR-SAFE website in order to add value and tie together the campaign.



## Bankstown City Council/ Canterbury City Councils

### Applying for government grants in vehicle theft prevention

The neighbouring cities of Bankstown and Canterbury in NSW have been successful recipients of funding as part of the NSW Department of Attorney-General and Justice's Crime Prevention Grants Program. The LGAs have been long-time supporters of the NMVTRC's OBB program and were keen to expand the initiative to maximise the positive outcomes brought about in the two areas. The additional funding enabled the LGAs to target a larger sector of the community by increasing and expanding the campaign advertising. As a result over 550 free engine immobilisers were distributed to owners of older at-risk vehicles throughout the municipalities.

Funding grants offered by government, insurers and philanthropic organisations can be great tools in assisting local organisations to run vehicle theft prevention campaigns, so keep an eye out for them in your local area.



# Further information

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To view and order resources or find out more about the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council or vehicle theft in Australia:

[carsafe.com.au](https://carsafe.com.au)

[info@carsafe.com.au](mailto:info@carsafe.com.au)

1300 668 410

