



National Motor Vehicle
Theft Reduction
Council

theft matters

Monitoring Motorists' Attitudes



In February the NMVTRC commissioned Nexus Research to conduct an on-line national survey of awareness and perceptions of car theft amongst a representative sample of drivers across Australia.

The survey aimed to establish amongst car drivers:

- Concern about car theft
- Perceptions of car theft: culprits, type of cars and where it occurs
- Concern about present levels of crime in Australia in particular, car theft
- Response to residential burglaries and car theft
- Differences in perceptions over time

A total of 1,219 drivers were interviewed within the capital cities of Australia. The sample was weighted to represent almost 12.9 million people aged 18 years or over. Survey results were also filtered by a range of demographics including age and geographical location.

Overall, survey results remained consistent with the 2019 survey and reflect a growing awareness of the current dynamics of car crime.

A large majority of motorists in Australia remain concerned about vehicle theft (67 per cent).

Pleasingly, more than half of participants surveyed (54%) understood vehicle theft to be mostly committed by 'young people and the like for short-term use,' and 46 percent of motorists perceived newer model vehicles to be the primary targets of theft over their older model counterparts. It is also clear that Australian motorists are security conscious, with 4 in 5 indicating that they park

their car in a driveway or garage to reduce the risk of theft.

Theft by keys via residential burglary is currently the most common method of car theft in Australia. When asked directly, motorists were 'not surprised' about the shift to residential burglaries to steal keys and the fact that it is becoming more common (74 per cent).

The survey also showed a growing understanding of the importance of safeguarding keys. Almost 3 in 5 drivers indicated that they keep their keys 'out of sight' in the home and media recall of stories on residential burglary and keeping keys safe was quite strong at 56 per cent.

However, while there are signs that messaging around key theft and security is resonating with motorists, only 21 per cent of respondents nominated the home as the primary target location (with a larger number nominating the 'street.'). Similarly, close to a third were unsure as to the most common method used by thieves to steal cars. This suggests there remains some confusion around key theft from the home and how best to reduce the risk.

Given the predilection of the media to feature stories of violent, home invasions and residential burglaries in order to steal keys, there is the potential for increased fear amongst communities and a sense of loss of control.

It is therefore important that the NMVTRC's educational material counteracts the fear by focussing on direct messaging about how car theft occurs, and the simple steps people can actively take to reduce their risk of becoming a victim.

For a copy of the full report [click here](#)

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