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THEY'RE ALL SHINY, BUT SOME ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS

As thousands of Victorians make their way to the Melbourne International Motor Show this weekend, the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) has indicated that in terms of active vehicle security some makes are well ahead of others.

Car makers have made a concerted effort in recent years to render cars much harder to steal, thanks to improved security technologies, and motorists should consider these security features when purchasing a new vehicle, according to David Morgan, Chairman of NMVTRC.

In order to highlight the most advanced examples of improved vehicle security to counter car theft, Mr Morgan pointed to the nine current model vehicles that represent Australia's most secure cars in their class according to Insurance Australia Group's (IAG) latest vehicle security rankings.

Each of the 'winning' vehicles has been expertly assessed against their market competitors in relation to the security of their—

- entry systems (such as door, ignition and fuel filler locks, rear seat/boot access and glazing);
- theft resistance systems (such as alarms, engine immobilisers, sound systems, wheel and component substitution protection); and
- vehicle identification (body stamping, security labelling and microdotting).

Australia's most secure vehicles are in the—

- **small car** category—the Volkswagen Polo, 5-door Hatch and Citroen C2, 3-door Hatch, Citroen C3 – 5-door Hatch (Combined winners);
- **medium car** class—the Subaru Liberty GT spec-B Wagon;
- **large car** group—the Hyundai Grandeur Limited Sedan;
- **luxury car** class—the Audi A8 Sedan;
- **SUV** group—the Audi Q7, 5-door Wagon;
- **people mover** category—the Subaru Tribeca Premium Wagon; and
- **commercial** class—the Citroen Dispatch HDi 120 LWB Van.

A summary of the winning vehicles' key features is attached—See Appendix A

Mr Morgan said "As secure as these current vehicles are, vehicle manufacturers and consumers cannot afford to be complacent in the search for continuous improvement in security technology to help Australian motorists feel more personally secure about (and in) their vehicles.

Mr Morgan foreshadowed “even better vehicle security within the last year in the form of high-tech secure compliance labels has made cars more difficult for car thieves to dispose of as whole—or as components—for illegal cash profit.”

The adoption of the new, high-tech secure compliance label by a number of car companies including Hyundai, Nissan, Renault and Audi last year has propelled these brands ahead in their overall security ranking. The durable label, which cannot be transferred between vehicles without easy detection, represents a major breakthrough in vehicle identification.

“Thanks to the combined effort of car makers, police, the insurance industry and transport agencies, Australia has taken great strides in reducing car theft, with an over 50 per cent reduction in thefts since 2001,” Mr Morgan explained.

Mr Morgan said car makers and smart choices by new car buyers alike can help maintain the decline in vehicle thefts experienced across Victoria and Australia.

“I congratulate car makers who have incorporated a range of innovative design features to make their new vehicles harder to steal.

“By supporting these manufacturers and considering vehicles with improved security motorists can also help to complement the ongoing strategies of police whose efforts continue to limit the significant practical and emotional difficulties of vehicle theft.”

A 3D virtual car with state of the art security features has also been developed by the NMVTRC in consultation with Australia’s leading independent security experts in order to offer Australian motorists a glimpse at the family car of the future.

A summary of the Virtual Car’s breakthrough security features, which include biometric access controls and satellite tracking is attached—See Appendix B.

The NMVTRC is a joint initiative of all Australian Governments and the insurance industry.

All vehicles assessed with the assistance of the IAG Research Centre, Sydney.

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SUMMARY OF CLASS WINNERS' KEY SECURITY FEATURES

Class	Vehicle	Key Security Features								
		Immobiliser system integrated into vehicle LAN	Deadlocking doors	2-stage unlocking	VIN Microdot ID	Headlights on timed dimmer	Cabin lights on unlock	Panic alert	Secure Compliance Label	Other
Small	VW Polo	✓	Passive	✓		✓	✓			Alarm as standard
	Citroen C2, C3	✓	Remote			✓	✓			2 nd non-transferable VIN
Medium	Subaru Liberty	✓			✓		✓	✓ *		
Large	Hyundai Grandeur		Passive				✓	✓		
Luxury	Audi A8	✓	Passive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
SUV	Audi Q7	✓	Passive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
People Mover	Subaru Tribeca	✓			✓		✓	✓ *		
Commercial	Citroen Dispatch	✓	Remote			✓	✓			2 nd non-transferable VIN

Explanatory Notes:

Integration of engine immobiliser with on-board LAN computer protects system from by-passing by substituting core components.

Deadlocking doors means doors cannot be unlocked by smashing window and releasing door button.

2-stage locking allows you to unlock the only the driver's door, preventing a stranger from entering the car from the other side.

VIN microdots provide comprehensive vehicle identification via more than 5,000 tiny polymer dots each bearing the vehicle's unique 17-digit VIN.

Headlight timers can help you out of a dark car park and switch off after a set time.

Interior light can be activated by the remote when the doors are unlocked to let you see if anyone is inside.

Panic alert on the key fob remote to sound the car's horn.

Secure compliance label sets a new level of identification by providing high levels of counterproof and tamper protection, meaning that the label cannot be copied or transferred between vehicles without easy detection.

*Aluminium compliance plate with DataDotDNA Technology.

All vehicles assessed with the assistance of the IAG Research Centre, Sydney



Appendix B

KEY FEATURES OF NMVTRC 'VIRTUAL' FAMILY CAR OF TOMORROW

ACCESS CONTROLS

- Smart access and starting systems meaning the car can only be driven with recognition of an authorised driver's fingerprints or eyes
- Doors that automatically lock when you are stationary at the traffic lights, and when you leave your vehicle will 'deadlock' to ensure that they cannot be opened by simply smashing a window and releasing the door button from inside
- No visible door locks, eliminating costly damage from attempted break-ins
- Impact-resistant side glass
- An intelligent alarm that will not be set off by a motorbike passing by, but will activate when warranted

PERSONAL SECURITY

- A centrally monitored two-way communications system receiving information directly from your car, including an interior camera and panic alert
- A transponder built into the car's electronic brain—its black box—to transmit the car's unique identification number and location
- A satellite global tracking system pinpointing your car's exact location at all times
- Programmable lighting allowing the car's lights to stay on for a desired period after you've parked to guide you from dark places

VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION & ELECTRONIC COMPONENT PROTECTION

- Unique integrated wiring, prohibiting interference with critical components, or parts from another vehicle being interchanged to bypass primary security system
- An improved identification system whereby every major component is overtly marked with your car's unique Vehicle Identification Number