



IT'S 'SHOW TIME' FOR CAR THIEVES

As thousands of Victorians flock to the Royal Melbourne Show this weekend the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) urges motorists to be vigilant in securing their cars to minimise the risk of vehicle theft.

In recent years up to 16 per cent of all vehicle thefts in the surrounding areas of Ascot Vale and Flemington occurred in September. The NMVTRC's Executive Director Ray Carroll warned that unsecured vehicles parked in the surrounding areas are most vulnerable to opportunistic theft.

"The hundreds of unsecured cars parked in the streets around Ascot Vale and Flemington, coupled with an influx of people in the area can make show-time particularly lucrative for opportunistic car thieves.

"Older cars are the most vulnerable as they lack adequate security and can be easily broken into and driven away with as little as a coat hanger and a screw driver."

Mr Carroll foreshadowed, "If you are smart and catching a train to the show remember the same risks apply to train station car parks; be sure to secure your car."

Late-model vehicles left at home while people attend the show, particularly in the surrounding areas are also at risk, and motorists are advised to keep their car keys with them at all times.

"The majority of newer vehicle thefts occur where the thief has gained access to the keys. If your car is worth \$20,000, that could be the value of your keys to a thief.

"A good rule is if your car is at home but you are out make sure all the keys are with you," Mr Carroll said.

Mr Carroll called for all motorists to follow these simple car safe tips to reduce their risk of theft:

- If you are going out and leaving the car behind, be sure to take all keys with you.
- Park wisely – use off-street parking where possible or even better, park in a garage or behind lockable gates.

- Lock all doors and close windows when parked. On a safety note, never leave children or animals locked in an unattended vehicle.
- Keep in mind that it is a road rule offence to not secure your car if you are more than three metres away from the vehicle. Lock your car and close all windows to avoid risking an infringement notice.
- Be sure to remove both personal navigation devices and their holders from parked vehicles. Be aware that the suction cup mark left on the windscreen can alert thieves to there being a navigation device in the vehicle even after it is removed from view.
- If you own an older vehicle, consider installing an engine immobiliser to greatly reduce your risk of theft.

“By following these precautions all motorists can greatly reduce the risk of a day at the show being ruined by discovering your car has been stolen – it is simply a matter of being aware and taking simple security measures,” Mr Carroll said.

The top theft targets in the suburbs of Ascot Vale and Flemington in 2008 were:

Toyota Camry SV20, SV21, SV22
Holden Commodore VC, VP, VL
Ford Falcon EL, EA
Holden Apollo JK

The NMVTRC is an initiative of all Australian governments and the insurance industry.

Further Information: Ray Carroll, Executive Director, NMVTRC, (03) 9348 9600

www.carsafe.com.au