



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

## Over 5,000 fewer thefts to kick off 2009

A strong start to the year has brought about the largest theft reduction for the rolling 12 month period since March 2005. Passenger/light commercial (PLC) thefts were down nationally close to 10 per cent from the previous 12 months, with individual state and territory reductions ranging from 4 per cent to an impressive 25 per cent in South Australia. These figures resulted in a substantial overall reduction in volume of 5,726.

Strong performances from all states and territories also resulted in a 6 per cent reduction from the previous quarter. The Australia Capital Territory, New South Wales, and, in particular, the Northern Territory were the biggest contributors experiencing declines of 10 per cent, 22 per cent and an outstanding 35 per cent respectively. Tasmania, the only jurisdiction to record a minor increase, had just 44 additional thefts. Recoveries stayed constant at 71 per cent for the quarter and 75 per cent for the year.

The total value of PLC vehicles fell \$2 million to \$123 million; and the total value of unrecovered PLCs remains stable at \$41 million for the March quarter.

Motorcycle theft was up marginally as compared to both the previous quarter and the year, at 2 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. The motorcycle recovery rate remains low at 33 per cent for the 12 months to March 2009.

# Passenger and light commercial (PLC) vehicles accounted for 82 per cent of total thefts. Values calculated using the resources of Glass's Information Services.

\* Excluding claims with \$0 cost. There were 268 claims with a cost equal to zero.

Table 1: Australia, theft snapshot, PLCs

12 months to March 2009	
Number of thefts	52,753
% change from previous 12 months	-9.8
% of thefts recovered in year	74.7
March 2009 quarter	
Number of thefts	12,343
% change from last quarter	-6.3
% change from same quarter previous year	-15
% of thefts recovered in quarter	71.1
Theft rate per 1,000 population	0.57
Theft rate per 1,000 registrations	0.88
Total value of stolen PLC vehicles#	\$123m
Total value of unrecovered PLC vehicles	\$41m
Number of claims*	5,276
Average claim cost*	\$10,529
Median claim cost*	\$5,873
Total sum of claims	\$55m

Top short term use targets, March quarter

	Number stolen
Holden Commodore	
VN, VT, VL, VS, VP, VR, VX, VZ, VY, VK	1,767
Ford Falcon EAll, EF, EL, XF, BA	507
Hyundai Excel X3	288
Toyota Camry SV21, SV22	241
Toyota Corolla AE82, AE92	191

Top profit-motivated theft targets (aged less than 10 years), March quarter

	Number unrecovered
Holden Commodore VX, VT, VY, VZ, VE	137
Ford Falcon BA, AU, BF	88
Toyota Corolla ZZE122R, ZRE152R	38
Ford Falcon Ute BA, AU	30
Toyota Land Cruiser 70 Series, 100 Series	28

Figure 1: Passenger/light commercial vehicles stolen and not recovered by quarter, January 2000 – December 2008

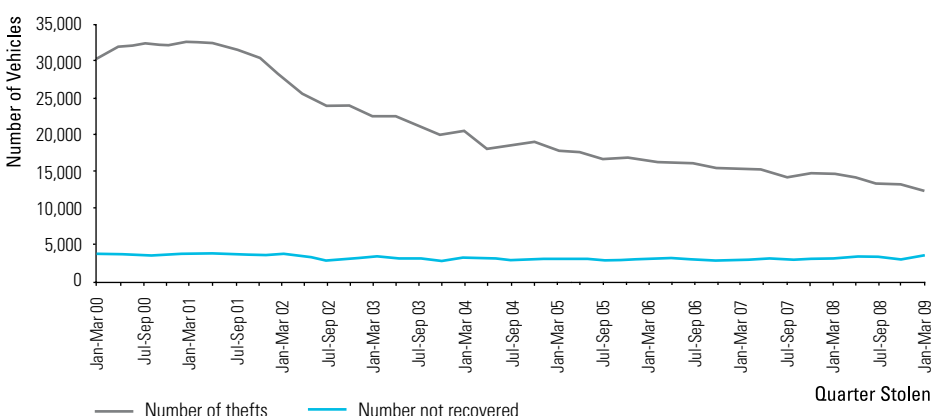


Table 2: Australia, thefts and recoveries by vehicle type, January – March 2009

Vehicle type	Number of thefts	Number not recovered	% Recovered
Passenger/light commercial	12,343	3,569	71.1
Motorcycles	1,865	1,275	31.6
Heavy/other vehicles/unknown	817	371	54.6
Total	15,025	5,215	65.3

Table 3: Australia, state and territory breakdown, PLCs

	Number of thefts, March quarter	Change in theft numbers from last quarter	Number of thefts not recovered in the quarter	% of thefts recovered in the quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 population, March quarter	Theft rate per 1,000 registrations, March quarter	Thefts for 12 months to March 2009	Change in theft numbers from last 12 months
ACT	354	-102	99	72.0	1.02	1.60	1,592	-153
NSW	4,457	-475	1,749	60.8	0.64	1.10	19,487	-2,912
NT	173	-95	25	85.5	0.78	1.55	831	168
QLD	1,881	-2	458	75.7	0.44	0.62	7,253	-328
SA	1,096	-30	225	79.5	0.68	0.99	4,955	-1,239
TAS	368	44	35	90.5	0.74	0.97	1,357	71
VIC	2,929	-89	781	73.3	0.55	0.81	12,495	-825
WA	1,085	-74	197	81.8	0.50	0.71	4,783	-508
Australia	12,343	-823	3,569	71.1	0.57	0.88	52,753	-5,726

Table 4: Australia, theft snapshot, motorcycles

March 2009 quarter		12 months to March 2009	
Number of thefts	1,865	Number of thefts	7,609
% change from last quarter	1.6	% change from previous 12 months	3.9
% change from same quarter previous year	-9.5	% of thefts recovered in year	32.9
% of thefts recovered in quarter	31.6		
Theft rate per 1,000 registrations*	2.93		

\* Must be regarded with caution as a large and unknown proportion of motorbikes are not registered.

## Thefts down as scrap metal prices plummet

This time last year we reported that the elevated precious metals market had increased demand for all kinds of scrap metal. With reports of vehicle metal fetching over \$300 per tonne, this demand coincided with a rise in the number of older vehicles (11 plus years) stolen and not recovered. However, as an unexpected benefit of the global financial crisis, scrap metal prices had fallen to just \$10 per tonne by the end of 2008. This drop in price corresponded with a substantial decline in older passenger/light commercial (PLC) thefts and non-recoveries.

Figures for the December 2008 quarter showed that thefts of PLC vehicles aged 11 years and over fell by 18 per cent and recoveries were up 19 per cent from March 2008. The biggest reduction was in vehicles manufactured in the 1980s, with thefts falling by 26 per cent and the proportion not

recovered down 29 per cent. First quarter figures for 2009 see the overall number of PLCs aged 11 years plus stolen and not recovered starting to rise, matched again by rising metal prices; however

1980s vehicle thefts continue to decline. Rates will be closely monitored over the coming months to try to further identify the relationship between scrap metal prices and theft.

Figure 2: 1980s passenger/light commercial vehicles stolen and stolen not recovered by quarter, 2006-2009

