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# Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy 2016 - 2019





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## **PART 1: Background of the Council and strategy**

### **Executive summary**

The 11-member Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council was created by statute in 1991 to combat motor vehicle theft in Illinois. Each year, the Council collects and administers a special trust fund derived from a \$1 assessment on all private passenger insurance policies written by insurers in Illinois. The Council makes grants to those who implement programs to combat or prevent vehicle theft.

A statewide motor vehicle theft prevention strategy centered on expert opinion, data analyses, public input and the effectiveness of funded programs is adopted by the Council every four years. The strategy describes the nature and extent of vehicle theft in Illinois, regions where the problem is greatest, particular problems that the Council should focus on, and the types of programs that should be supported.

Since the Council's inception in 1991, vehicle theft offenses have dropped statewide by 77 percent. Motor vehicle theft remains concentrated in the metropolitan areas of Illinois.

The Council's funded programs have achieved impressive results as witnessed in the increases in the number of arrests, prosecutions, and convictions for vehicle theft and related offenses and reductions in vehicle theft-related offenses in Illinois. Multi-jurisdictional task forces coupled with appropriate prosecutorial resources continue to be an effective law enforcement approach to vehicle theft.

The Council's 1991 to 2015 achievements include:

- 36,710 criminal investigations initiated.
- 68,159 audits of vehicle-related businesses.
- 41,217 stolen vehicles recovered worth more than \$342 million.
- 14,373 violation letters issued to audited businesses.
- 17,641 persons arrested.
- 7,072 convictions obtained.

An overall decrease in Council programming was seen in 2015 in accordance with Illinois Executive Order 8, which suspended state grant programs. Despite the suspension of grant funds, the Council remains dedicated to combating motor vehicle theft in Illinois in partnership with the insurance industry.

The statewide motor vehicle theft prevention strategy was drafted utilizing available data and input from practitioners and experts. Due to careful planning and strategizing in 2016 and the ongoing efforts of the Council to keep abreast of the state's auto theft problem, the strategy focuses the direction of the Council's efforts for 2016-2019.

### **The Council**

The Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act that took effect on Jan. 1, 1991, created the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council. The Council has the statutory responsibility to “ prevent, combat and reduce motor vehicle theft in Illinois; to improve and support motor vehicle theft law enforcement, prosecution and administration of motor vehicle theft laws by establishing statewide planning capabilities for and coordination of financial resources.”

### **Duties and responsibilities**

The primary duties and responsibilities of the Council are:

- < To establish priorities for, allocate, disburse, contract for, and spend funds that are made available to the Council from any source to effectuate the purposes of the Act.
- < To make grants and to provide financial support for eligible recipients to effectuate the purposes of the Act.
- < To assess the scope of the problem of motor vehicle theft, including particular areas of the State where the problem is greatest and to conduct impact analyses of State and local criminal justice policies, programs, plans and methods for combating the problem.
- < To develop and sponsor the implementation of statewide plans and strategies to combat motor vehicle theft and to improve the administration of motor vehicle theft laws and provide an effective forum for identification of critical problems associated with motor vehicle theft.
- < To coordinate the development, adoption and implementation of plans and strategies relating to interagency or intergovernmental cooperation with respect to motor vehicle theft law enforcement.

**Trust fund**

The Act established the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund, a special trust fund in the State Treasury, from which the Council makes grants to eligible applicants for programs that address the problem of motor vehicle theft in Illinois.

The Act requires all insurance companies licensed to write private passenger vehicle physical damage coverage included in Class 2 and Class 3 of Section 4 of the Illinois Insurance Code to pay annually into the special trust fund an amount equal to \$1 for each earned car year of exposure for physical damage insurance coverage during the previous calendar year.

About \$6.4 million is deposited into this fund annually. Trust funds may be awarded to federal and state agencies, units of local government, corporations, and neighborhood, community and business organizations.

**Purpose of funds**

The Act provides that the Council may award these funds:

- < To law enforcement and correctional agencies, prosecutors, and the judiciary for programs designed to reduce motor vehicle theft and to improve the administration of motor vehicle theft laws.
- < For federal and state agencies, units of local government, corporations and neighborhood, community or business organizations for programs designed to reduce motor vehicle theft and to improve the administration of motor vehicle theft laws.
- < To conduct programs designed to inform owners of motor vehicles about the financial and social costs of motor vehicle theft and to suggest to those owners' methods for preventing motor vehicle theft.

**Statewide strategy**

Every four years the Council develops the Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy. The strategy includes an overview of the motor vehicle theft problem in Illinois including discussions of the nature and extent of the problem, current efforts to address the problem, resource needs, and areas of greatest need within the state. The strategy is the foundation upon which the state's efforts to combat motor vehicle theft will be built through the use of trust funds granted by the Council.

The Council solicits and negotiates program proposals. Priority is given to eligible programs in areas with the greatest need. To that end, and based upon the statewide strategy, the following criteria are used to identify eligible recipients as evidenced by an analysis of demographic, insurance, and criminal justice data, comments from the general public, and federal, state, and local officials, and current research findings.

The Council designates programs, implementing entities, and funding amounts which address one or more of the purposes consistent with the Act and the statewide strategy. Decisions are based upon:

1. The recommendations and advice of its Grant Review Committee.
2. The recommendations of the ICJIA executive director.
3. Comments from the general public, and federal, state and local officials.
4. The proven effectiveness of a program or similar program, or a prudent assessment of a problem to be addressed by the proposed program.
5. The likelihood that a proposed program will achieve the desired objectives. The Council makes prudent assessments of the concepts and implementation plans included in a proposed program and takes into account the results of any evaluations, previous tests, and demonstrations.
6. The availability of funds.
7. The overall cost of the proposed program.
8. The implementing entity's ability to effectively and efficiently carry out the program.
9. The relation of the proposed program to and impact on other proposals or funded programs.

### **Objectives of the statewide strategy**

The goal of the 2016-2019 Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy is to establish statewide planning capabilities for improving and supporting motor vehicle theft law enforcement, prosecution, and the administration of motor vehicle theft laws to prevent, combat, and reduce motor vehicle theft and fraud related motor vehicle theft in Illinois.

The objectives of the strategy are:

- To reduce the number of motor vehicles stolen in the state.
- To reduce the number of fraud related motor vehicle thefts.
- To increase the number of stolen motor vehicles recovered.
- To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws that result in arrests.
- To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws that result in criminal prosecutions.
- To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws that result in convictions and jail or prison sentences.
- To reduce the recidivism of motor vehicle theft offenders.

### **Participation in the development of the statewide strategy**

The Council is committed to ensuring that the statewide strategy reflects not only the interests and concerns of those federal, state, and local officials whose duty it is to enforce the criminal laws and to direct the administration of justice in Illinois, but also the views of the insurance industry, citizens, neighborhood and community groups, professional organizations. To that end, the Council undertakes a number of measures to provide ample opportunity for comment on the statewide strategy to combat motor vehicle theft.

### **Public input**

As an aid in the development of the strategy, the Council regularly invites public input to:

- < Ensure that all appropriate agencies, units of government, private organizations and combinations thereof are considered in the development of this strategy.

- < Aid in the definition of the nature and scope of the motor vehicle theft problem in Illinois.
- < Help identify areas of greatest need within the state.
- < Assist in targeting potentially effective programs so that the impact of the Act is maximized.

Witnesses are asked to present oral or written testimony that:

- < Identifies the most pressing motor vehicle theft-related problem(s) facing their agency, taking into account the purposes of the Act.
- < Presents statistical data or other information that document the scope and nature of the problem(s).
- < Identifies the resources presently available to address the problem.
- < Discusses why a particular approach shows more promise than other approaches.
- < Discusses the relevance of recent developments in law enforcement - such as community policing, technological advances, multi-jurisdictional initiatives, to their agency's or area's motor vehicle theft problem(s).

### **2016-2019 strategy development**

As part of the 2016-2019 strategy development, in February 2015, the Council solicited written input on its strategy to date and the programs it supports. The solicitation was posted on the Web sites of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois Chiefs of Police Association, Illinois Sheriff's Association and the Illinois State's Attorney's Association. The solicitation was also mailed to insurance agencies that wrote motor vehicle insurance policies in the State of Illinois (A copy of the notice is contained in Appendix B). Time was set aside at the May 13, 2015, Council meeting for all interested parties to provide verbal or written input on the strategy and programs currently funded by the Council.

On February 24, 2016, the Council held a Strategy Development Hearing, hosted by the Grant Review Committee. The hearing was a one-day event consisting of five panel discussions on topics impacting the development of the *Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy*. Each panel consisted of several professionals in the given topic areas and roundtable discussions were held. (*Appendix C*).

### **Public review**

The strategy itself was discussed at an open meeting of the Council for approval. Interested officials and citizens that were unable to attend that meeting were notified of their opportunity to read and comment on the strategy via the Council's web-site, newspaper articles, and legal notice published in the *Breeze-Courier*. A summary of the strategy also was prepared and distributed to the insurance industry, police chiefs, sheriffs, state's attorneys, and others after approval by the Council.

### **Part 2: The nature and extent of motor vehicle theft**

This section provides an overview of national, statewide, and/or local motor vehicle theft issues and data sources used by the Council.

#### **Motor vehicle theft data sources**

National statistics showing the extent of motor vehicle thefts include:

- National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Collects victimization data and information concerning the circumstances of crime from individuals who take the survey.
- Uniform Crime Reports (UCR). The FBI's UCR reporting system collects data on crimes reported to approximately 17,000 city, county, and state law enforcement agencies in the United States. These reports are compiled and analyzed in a yearly publication entitled Crime in the United States.
- The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). NICB partners with insurers and law enforcement agencies to facilitate the identification, detection, and prosecution of insurance criminals.
- The State University of New York at Albany's Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, a compilation of data from various sources about the criminal justice system in the United States.
- U.S. Census Bureau. This resource provides population data, including data on age, sex, race, and ethnicity.

Local statistics reporting motor vehicle theft in Illinois include:

- Law Enforcement Agencies Data System (LEADS): The Illinois State Police LEADS system is a computerized telecommunications system that provides current and valuable crime-related information to the law enforcement agencies and criminal justice community in Illinois.
- The Motor Vehicle Theft Intelligence Clearinghouse, a Council-funded program that provides analytical support for motor vehicle theft task forces and the Illinois law enforcement community using LEADS and other data sources on all motor vehicles thefts in the state, even those occurring outside of Council-funded task force areas.
- The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) reports on imprisonment and sentence length for vehicle theft-related crimes.
- The Illinois State Police publishes an annual report based on UCR data, Crime in Illinois, patterned after the FBI's Crime in the United States.
- The Illinois Secretary of State tracks vehicle registration for the State of Illinois.

Data limitations include:

- Some data are available only at a national or state level.
- UCR tallies both attempted and completed motor vehicle thefts, whereas only completed motor vehicle thefts appear in LEADS.
- Factoring the number of vehicle insurance fraud cases/thefts from NCIC and ISP data is not possible, as the crimes are labeled generally as general motor vehicle theft.

### **Types of motor vehicle theft**

Although motor vehicle thefts are committed for a variety of reasons, four common motives are:

**Joy riding:** Theft of a vehicle for the purpose of riding around. These vehicles are usually recovered quickly, close to the location from which they were stolen.

**Transportation:** Theft of the vehicle for personal use. The stolen vehicle is usually abandoned at the destination.

**Commission of other crimes:** Theft of the vehicle for transportation to and from a crime scene. The vehicle is abandoned after the crime has been committed.

**Profit/commercial thefts:** Thefts perpetrated for financial gain.

Commercial theft is classified into several categories, the most common of which include:

1. *Counterfeit title:* Through the use of counterfeit titles, stolen vehicles can be sold cheaply and quickly. Out-of-state vehicle titles are most commonly counterfeit.

2. *Out-of-state/Non-title vehicles*: Vehicle title laws vary in the United States. In some states evidence of ownership may be accomplished by registration certificate, and transfer of cars other than those sold as new is by bill-of-sale. Frequently, stolen cars are registered through applications mailed-in to the Illinois Secretary of State. No evidence of ownership is required on older model vehicles in some states, and in these scams an application is completed which reflects the purchase of the vehicle from a fictitious person in another state. A registration certificate and license plates are obtained and the thief then sells the vehicle with this documentation of "ownership."
3. *Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) Switching*: The intentional alteration of the VIN and the use of the fictitious VIN on counterfeit ownership or registration documents allows the vehicle to be sold to an unsuspecting buyer.
4. *Counterfeit manufacturer's certificate of origin*: The manufacturer of a new vehicle includes a Manufacturers Certificate of Origin or MCO. In many states, the MCO is the foundation for all subsequent registration and title documents. Counterfeit MCOs are used to misrepresent stolen vehicles as new.
5. *Salvage switches*: Salvage switches involve purchase of wrecked vehicles from insurance companies or auto wreckers. The salvaged vehicle is usually dismantled then its VIN plate, license plates, title, or bill-of-sale is retained for re-use. A vehicle of similar make and model is then stolen, the identity of the salvage vehicle is transferred to it, and the stolen vehicle is then sold under this identity.
6. *Key cuts*: An offender targets a vehicle to steal, obtains the vehicle's public VIN, then goes to a dealership and orders new keys, claiming the keys were lost.
7. *Importation operations*: Organized car theft rings take advantage of inconsistent and sometimes ineffective foreign titling and registration laws by importing high-priced stolen European cars into the United States.
8. *Chop shops*: Chop shops are places where stolen cars are dismantled for parts and accessories that can be sold for profit. Sometimes parts are purchased by body shops or repair garages for repairs to damaged vehicles.
9. *Identity theft*: Identity theft occurs when someone uses personal information such as your name, social security number, or bank account number without your knowledge to commit fraud or theft. Identity thieves can purchase vehicles using the personal information of an unsuspecting victim. The victim may not receive any indication of the problem until three months after the car has been purchased, usually in the form of a late payment inquiry from a finance company.
10. *Vehicle cloning*: In this scam, a thief will copy a VIN from a legally owned vehicle, steal a vehicle similar to it, and replace the stolen vehicle's legitimate VIN tag with the counterfeit one.
11. *Insurance frauds*: These are simple or complex schemes intending to defraud insurance companies by making false vehicle theft reports.

- a. Simple insurance frauds

In contrast to highly sophisticated schemes, simple frauds are generally considered to be afterthoughts. For example, a simple fraud may be invented to cover up some other criminal offense. Sometimes allegations are made that a vehicle was stolen in order to provide an alibi in a hit-and-run, drunken driving, or other offense. A fraud is committed when a vehicle owner recovers the vehicle and neglects to

advise the insurance company, which has already compensated the owner. Another type of fraud, "owner give-ups," are arranged by the vehicle owner. The owner leaves the vehicle and keys at a certain location. The vehicle will then be:

- Reported stolen and recovered stripped. In this way the damaged or worn-out parts are replaced via the insurance settlement.
- Reported stolen and recovered stripped and burned. In addition to the insurance settlement, stripped parts are sold for profit.
- Reported stolen and not recovered.

Fraud also is committed by owners who abandon their vehicles in hopes that it will be stripped or stolen. Shortly after abandoning the vehicle, the owner reports the theft to police and the insurance company.

b. Complex Insurance Frauds

Complex frauds, well-planned schemes that may involve thousands of dollars, generally fall within one of four types:

1. *Duplicate title fraud*: In this kind of fraud, after an insured vehicle is sold, the former owner obtains a duplicate title to the vehicle, reports it stolen, and then surrenders the duplicate title to the insurance company. Proceeds stem both from the sale of the vehicle and the vehicle theft settlement from the insurance company.
  2. *Counterfeit title fraud*: This scam usually involves a heavily financed vehicle that is reported stolen. The perpetrator presents his insurance company with a counterfeit title listing himself as the sole owner, omitting the bank or finance company as a lien.
  3. *Paper vehicle fraud*: This fraud involves the sale of a fictitious vehicle, especially an older one, made possible as a result of weak or inadequate vehicle title laws in some states and provinces in the United States and Canada. With evidence of ownership by registration certificate and transfer by bill-of-sale, few older vehicle inspections are done to determine the validity of their VIN and other registration information. In instances where registrations are issued by mail, once the registration is received, the application is then made to a state that does not require a vehicle inspection for a title. The fictitious titled vehicle is then insured, and the final step in the fraud is reporting the fictitious vehicle stolen to the police and insurance company.
  4. *Salvage Vehicle Fraud*: This fraud is similar to paper vehicle fraud except it involves actual vehicles sold as salvage. Vehicles are registered and titled as "operational," insured, and then reported stolen.
12. *Carjacking*: Carjacking, also referred to as vehicular hijacking, is theft of an attended or occupied vehicle by force or the threat of force. Media attention has been focused on this type of vehicle theft since it presents the most harm to the victim but statistics regarding occurrence of this crime are limited. Some law enforcement agencies record carjacking as robbery or strong-arm robbery. Also, as a type of motor vehicle theft, this crime would typically fall into the "joyriding" or "for transportation" category because most often vehicles are recovered intact.

## **Nationwide comparisons**

### Thefts

According to [Crime in The United States 2015](#), motor vehicle theft comprised nearly 9 percent of all property crime in the United States. The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics report [Criminal Victimization, 2014](#), revealed motor vehicle theft was the property crime most often reported to police.

The FBI reports 707,758 vehicles were stolen in the United States in 2015, at a rate of 220 thefts per 100,000 general population. From 2011 through 2015, the FBI reported a 4 percent overall decrease in the vehicle theft rate in the U.S. (*Table 1*).

**Table 1**  
**National motor vehicle theft trends, 2011 – 2015**

YEAR	TOTAL MOTOR VEHICLE THEFTS	RATE PER 100,000 PERSONS	CHANGE IN RATE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
2011	716,508	230.0	-3.8
2012	723,186	230.4	.2
2013	700,288	221.3	-3.9
2014	686,803	215.4	-2.7
2015	707,758	220.2	2.2

Source: [Crime in the United States, 2015](#), Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D.C., suffered the highest motor vehicle theft rate in the country in 2015, while Illinois ranked 37<sup>th</sup>. Eight of the 10 states with the highest theft rates were located in the western region of the country (*Table 2*).

**Table 2**  
**States with the highest motor vehicle theft rates and Illinois ranking, 2015**

RANK	STATE	RATE PER 100,000 PERSONS
1	Washington, DC	485.5
2	California	436.8
3	New Mexico	408.9
4	Hawaii	403.7
5	Nevada	392.7
6	Washington	374.7
7	Colorado	293.2
8	Utah	290.6
9	Missouri	279.4
10	Alaska	277.1
<b>Illinois</b>		
37	<i>Illinois</i>	<i>137.3</i>

Source: [Crime in the United States, 2015](#), Federal Bureau of Investigation

Table 3 depicts the 10 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) with the highest motor vehicle theft rates per 100,000 persons in 2015. MSAs are major metropolitan areas established by the U.S. Census Bureau, representing cities and adjacent metropolitan regions and border areas. Chicago's MSA ranked 129<sup>th</sup> in motor vehicle theft rates that year.

**Table 3  
Ten MSAs with the highest motor vehicle theft rates and Chicago's ranking, 2015**

<b>RANK</b>	<b>CITY</b>
1	Modesto, California
2	Albuquerque, New Mexico
3	Bakersfield/Delano, California
4	Salinas, California
5	San Francisco/Oakland/Hayward, California
6	Stockton/Lodi, California
7	Pueblo, Colorado
8	Merced, California
9	Riverside/San Bernardino/Ontario, California
10	Vallejo/Fairfield, California
129	Chicago/Elgin/Naperville, Illinois

Source: National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB)

The FBI estimated the average value of one stolen vehicle in 2015 at \$7,001 and estimated the total value of stolen cars that year at \$4.9 billion dollars. Approximately 55 percent of locally stolen motor vehicles (those stolen within the jurisdiction of the law enforcement agency that submitted the report) were recovered. Table 4 lists the 10 most stolen vehicles in the United States in 2015.

**Table 4  
10 most stolen vehicles in the United States, 2015**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Make</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>Number of thefts</b>
1	1996	Honda	Accord	52,244
2	1998	Honda	Civic	49,430
3	2006	Ford	Pickup (full size)	29,396
4	2004	Chevrolet	Pickup (full size)	27,771
5	2014	Toyota	Camry	15,466
6	2001	Dodge	Pickup (full size)	11,212
7	2014	Toyota	Corolla	10,547
8	2015	Nissan	Altima	10,374
9	2002	Dodge	Caravan	9,798
10	2008	Chevrolet	Impala	9,225

Source: National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB)

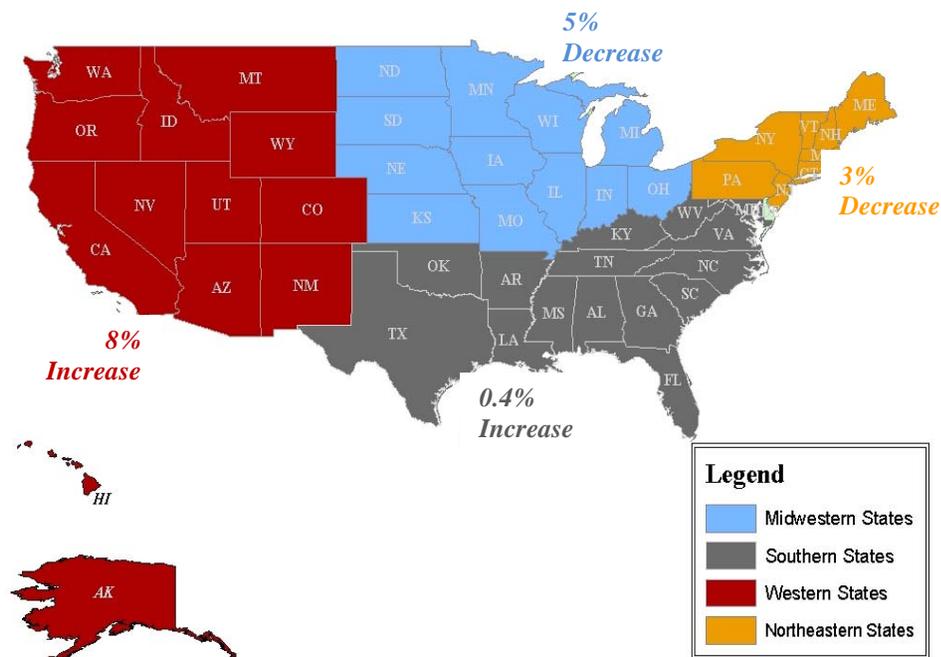
### Arrests

A total of 77,979 vehicle theft arrests were reported to the FBI in the United States in 2015. Males comprised 79 percent of motor vehicle theft arrestees. Seventeen percent of those arrested for motor vehicle theft in the United States were under the age of 18, nearly 30 percent lower than the age group in the population at large (24 percent).

## Regional comparisons

According to *Crime in the United States, 2015*, from 2014 to 2015, the Northeast and Midwest regions in the United States reported a decrease in the vehicle theft rate the Western region reported an increase. In 2015, approximately 40 percent of vehicle thefts occurred in the Western region and 35 percent occurred in the Southern region. The Midwest region accounted for approximately 17 percent of vehicle thefts and 8 percent of vehicle thefts occurred in the Northeast region. The Midwest region experienced the greatest decrease in vehicle theft rate with a 4.8 percent decrease. The Southern region remained relatively stable with a 0.4 percent increase while the Western region's vehicle theft rate increased 8.2 percent during the time period (*Figure 1*).

**Figure 1**  
**Changes in vehicle theft rates by region, 2014 - 2015**



Source: *Crime in the United States, 2015*, Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Midwestern region is comprised Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Since 1991, Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota have implemented an Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA).

The vehicle theft rate decreased in seven Midwestern states from 2014 to 2015, including Illinois. The Midwestern states with a decrease in their motor vehicle theft rate were Kansas (0.1 percent), Illinois (1.1 percent), Indiana (2.8 percent), Ohio (5.0 percent), Minnesota (5.2 percent), Nebraska (12.2 percent), and Michigan (25.8 percent). South Dakota saw the greatest rate increase at 17 percent, followed by Wisconsin (10.7 percent), Iowa (4.3 percent), and Missouri (3.5). North Dakota remained stable from 2014 to 2015.

## Motor vehicle theft in Illinois

At 57,918 square miles, Illinois is the 24<sup>th</sup> largest state in the nation in area. As of July 1, 2015, Illinois had an estimated population of 12,859,995, and is the fifth most populous state in the country. Extending approximately 385 miles from north to south and 218 miles across at its widest point, the state has a complex mixture of large urban population centers and vast rural areas.

Home to more than 65 percent of the state's 12.9 million residents, Illinois' major population center includes Cook County and its collar counties of DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will.

Chicago had an estimated 2,720,546 residents in 2015, 21 percent of the statewide population. Chicago is in Cook County which in 2015 boasted an estimated population of 5,238,216. The five collar counties accounted for 3,163,099 additional residents. The remainder of the state had an estimated 4,458,680 residents, or 35 percent of its total population, dispersed among 96 counties ranging in population density from approximately 4,100 to 289,000 residents.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2015, 77 percent of the state population was white, 15 percent was black, and the remainder was comprised of other racial groups. Seventeen percent of all Illinois' racial groups were ethnically Hispanic. Twenty-three percent of Illinois residents were under the age of 18 and 49 percent were male.

Because of deficiencies in the reporting of Illinois arrest data, the characteristics of auto theft arrestees are not known, although those arrested for auto theft probably fit the pattern found among vehicle theft arrestees in the United States, especially because the proportion of racial groups, males and females, and those under 18 are similar in Illinois and the United States.

While Chicago residents accounted for 21 percent of Illinois' population and held 12 percent of the state's vehicle registrations, they were victims of 57 percent of the state's motor vehicle thefts. A total of 93 percent of registrations in Chicago and 70 percent in the rest of Cook County were for passenger vehicles. Vehicle registrations in Cook and the collar counties accounted for 47 percent of all Illinois vehicle registrations in 2015 (Table 5). Seventy-eight percent of state vehicle registrations were for passenger cars, 18 percent were for trucks and 3 percent were for motorcycles.

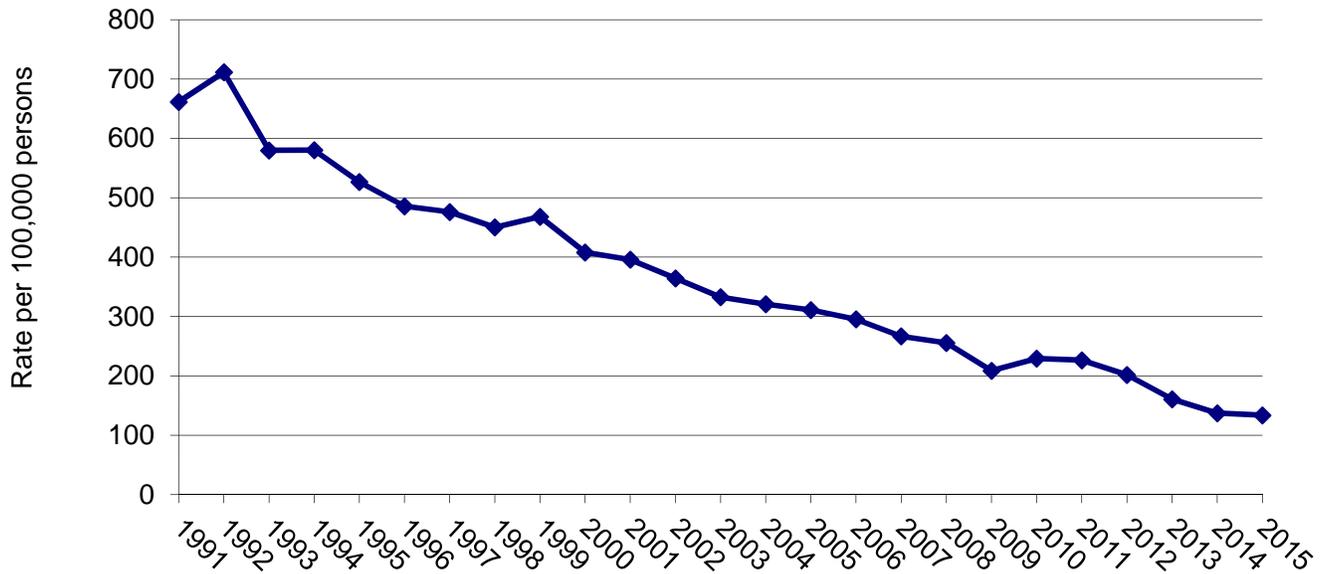
**Table 5**  
**Motor vehicle registrations in Illinois, 2015**

AREA	PASSENGER CARS	TRUCKS	MOTORCYCLES	TOTAL
City of Chicago	1,133,290	59,789	21,567	1,214,646
Suburban Cook	551,014	120,653	22,857	694,524
<b>Cook County</b>	<b>1,684,304</b>	<b>180,442</b>	<b>44,424</b>	<b>1,909,170</b>
DuPage	724,443	95,072	21,534	841,049
Kane	326,664	63,835	12,788	403,287
Lake	488,412	76,121	18,472	583,005
McHenry	214,509	49,045	13,619	277,173
Will	439,169	85,661	18,863	543,693
Collar Counties Total	2,193,197	369,734	85,276	2,648,207
State outside Cook and Collar	3,720,581	1,244,795	200,903	5,166,279
State outside Cook	5,913,778	1,614,529	286,179	7,814,486
State	7,598,082	1,794,971	330,603	9,723,656

Source: Illinois Secretary of State

About 17,214 vehicles were stolen in Illinois in 2015, a 3 percent decrease from 2014. The Illinois rate also decreased approximately 3 percent from 2014 to 2015, from 137.1 to 133.6 offenses per 100,000 persons in the population as reported in *Crime in Illinois, 2015*. When compared to the other states, Illinois ranked 37th in vehicle theft rates per 100,000 persons in 2015. The motor vehicle theft rate in Illinois declined 67 percent between 2000 and 2015 (*Figure 2*).

**Figure 2**  
**Illinois motor vehicle theft rates, 1991 to 2015**



Source: Illinois State Police, *Crime in Illinois, 2015*

In 2014, Council-funded task forces recovered 993 stolen vehicles and assisted in the recovery of 342 additional vehicles. The Illinois Law Enforcement Agencies Data System (LEADS) indicates 74 percent of stolen vehicles were recovered in 2015.

The time between theft and recovery of a stolen motor vehicles averaged 24 days in 2015. Most stolen motor vehicles were recovered without damage (92 percent). Others were found destroyed (6 percent), stripped (2 percent), and burned (1 percent). Seven of the top 10 vehicles stolen in 2015 were passenger cars (*Table 6*).

**Table 6**  
**Top 10 most stolen vehicles in Illinois, 2015**

Make and model	Year
Dodge Caravan	2000
Chevrolet Impala	2008
Honda Civic	2000
Honda Accord	1997
Chevrolet Malibu	2011
Chevrolet Pickup (full size)	1999
Ford Pickup (full size)	2006
Toyota Camry	2014

Jeep Cherokee/Grand Cherokee	2000
Nissan Altima	2014

Source: NICB

A total of 3,837 arrests were reported to the Illinois State Police for motor vehicle theft in 2015, a 7 percent increase from 2011 when 3,574 arrests were reported.

The Illinois Department of Corrections *Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report* indicated 660 inmates were serving their time for motor vehicle theft, or 1.4 percent of the prison population. In addition, 547 persons were on parole for motor vehicle theft that year, or two percent of the parole population.

### Motor vehicle theft in Illinois counties

The 10 Illinois counties with the highest number of motor vehicle thefts in 2015 were Cook, Winnebago, St. Clair, Lake, Will, DuPage, Sangamon, Kane, Champaign, and Madison. Champaign, Sangamon, Winnebago, and Lake counties saw significant jumps in number of vehicle thefts between 2014 and 2015 (*Table 7*).

**Table 7**  
**Motor vehicle theft trends in the**  
**10 most victimized counties, 2014 to 2015**

COUNTY	2014	2015	% CHANGE
Cook	12,807	12,547	-2.0%
Winnebago	484	618	27.7%
St. Clair	441	428	-2.9%
Lake	309	368	19.1%
Will	352	358	1.7%
DuPage	358	338	-5.6%
Sangamon	179	251	40.2%
Kane	222	239	7.7%
Champaign	118	196	66.1%
Madison	201	187	-7.0%

Source: Illinois State Police, *Crime in Illinois, 2015*

According to Illinois State Police, Cook County accounted for 73 percent of all motor vehicle thefts in Illinois in 2015, and the City of Chicago accounted for 83 percent of thefts within Cook County (*Table 8*). Figure 3 shows the number of motor vehicle thefts in each county during the year.

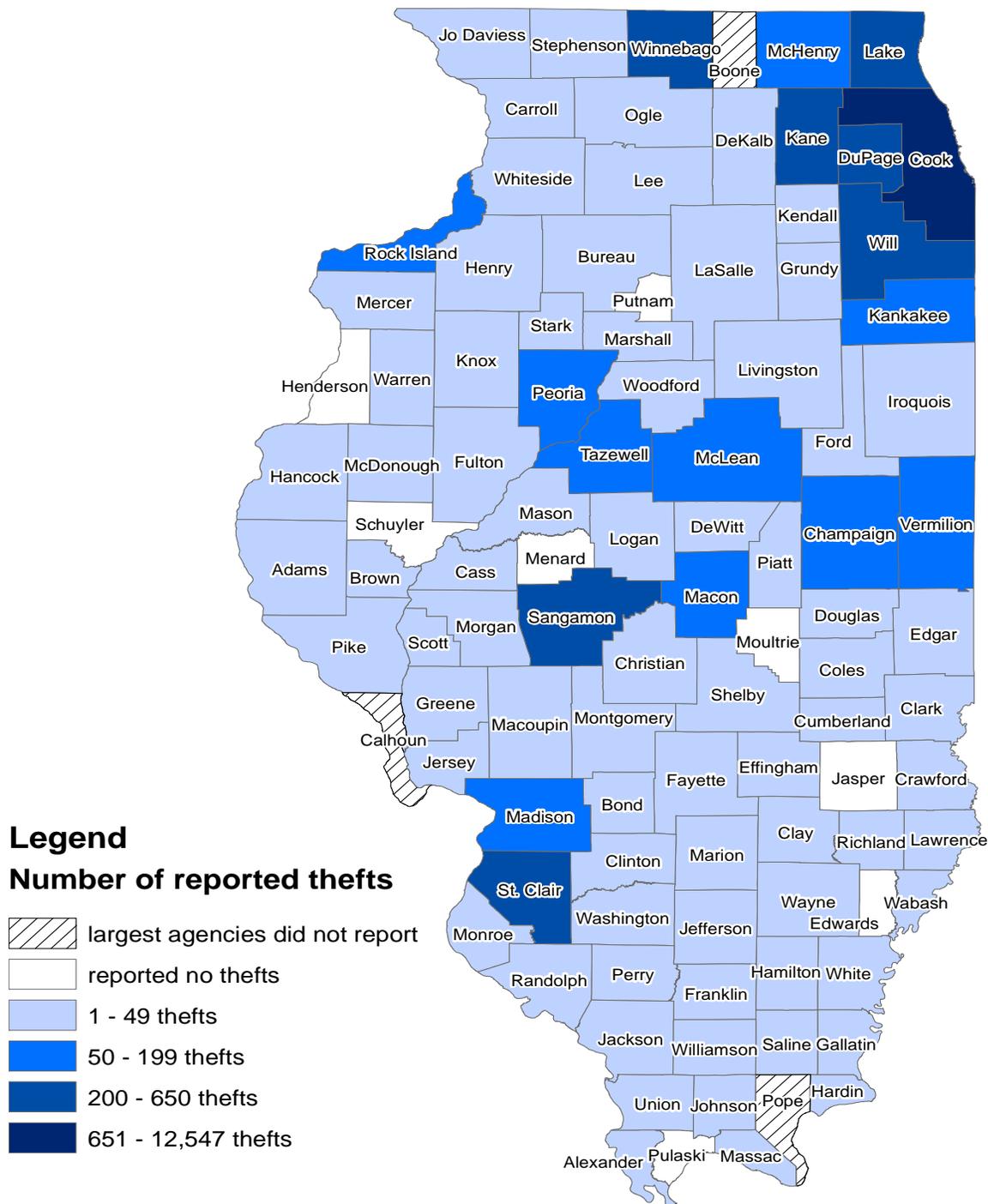
**Table 8**  
**Percentage of statewide motor vehicle thefts by county type, 2015**

AREA	2015
City of Chicago	57%
Suburban Cook	16%
Cook County total	73%
Northern (minus Cook) counties	11%
Central counties	7%

Southern counties	6%
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Source: Illinois State Police, *Crime in Illinois, 2015*

**Figure 3**  
**Number of reported motor vehicle thefts by county, 2015**



**Motor vehicle theft in Illinois cities**

Chicagoans suffered the most motor vehicle thefts in the state in 2015, comprising 59 percent of all such thefts statewide. The 10 cities in Illinois with the most motor vehicle thefts that year comprised 65 percent all vehicle thefts across the state (*Table 9*).

**Table 9  
Ten Illinois cities with the highest motor vehicle thefts  
and their percentage of state total, 2015**

CITY	NUMBER OF THEFTS	PERCENT
Chicago	9,980	54%
Rockford	427	2%
Waukegan	279	2%
Springfield	245	1%
Cicero	194	1%
East St. Louis	188	1%
Aurora	148	1%
Joliet	148	1%
Peoria	147	1%
Harvey	143	1%

Source: Law Enforcement Agencies Data Systems, September 2016

**Table 10  
Ten Illinois cities with the highest number  
of motor vehicle theft recoveries, 2015**

CITY	NUMBER RECOVERED
Chicago	8,081
Rockford	375
Springfield	198
Waukegan	175
East St. Louis	145
Peoria	139
Harvey	137
Joliet	113
Cicero	106
Aurora	103

Source: Law Enforcement Agencies Data System, September 2016

**PART 3: Input on the Council’s strategy**

The following is a summary of input and comments received by the public, law enforcement, prosecutions, insurance industry, and non-profit community organizations during strategy development.

**Vehicle theft in Illinois**

- The data indicates motor vehicle theft in Chicago is a serious problem that drives the theft rate in the rest of the state.

- The Council should work with the Secretary of State's office to address problem in titling and registering heavy construction equipment. Such vehicles should be registered with the state.
- The Council should investigate statutory language changes that would allow the use of statewide grand juries to investigate auto theft rings that cross county lines.
- The Council should investigate clarification of language in existing statutes regarding immunity, mandatory reporting of suspected insurance fraud, and information sharing.
- Multi-jurisdictional task forces with dedicated prosecutors have an impact on combatting motor vehicle theft. Without dedicated units, law enforcement and prosecution departments do not have the manpower to focus solely on vehicle theft and related offenses. As a result, these offense are left last on the priority list. The Council's focus on areas of greatest need is still relevant and appropriate for future consideration.
- The task forces should strengthen collaboration with the special investigative units of insurance companies. This collaboration would help with prevention and investigation of vehicle theft and related offenses.
- Diverse geographical areas experience different types of vehicle theft problems and no single solution that can be applied unilaterally across the state.
- Automobile theft rates are declining across the state but there are pockets where it is rising. The Council should work to provide assistance to areas not covered by task forces. This could include: educational activities, public awareness initiatives, VIN etching, and short-term projects with local law enforcement.
- About 25 percent of vehicles stolen in Illinois in 2015 were not recovered. According to task force members, organized criminal elements involved in auto theft are suspected of exporting many of these vehicles.

#### **Data quality issues affecting auto theft**

- Uniformity in motor vehicle data collection at a statewide level is of paramount importance. Two main reasons are data are required to assess the need for and impact of motor vehicle theft reduction programs and data is required to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's statewide strategy.
- Computerized mapping and intelligence sharing through law enforcement should continue to focus on auto theft trends. Mapping has shown that the majority of cars stolen from DuPage County are recovered in Chicago, on the city's west side.
- Geographical mapping showing locations of certain junkyards, streetlights, bushes, auto repair stores and other places should continue as it can help reveal where vehicles have been stolen from and recovered.
- There are issues with capturing the number of insurance fraud vehicle thefts in NCIC and ISP data. When entered into these systems the cases show up as a general motor vehicle theft.

#### **Insurance fraud**

- The insurance industry estimates that 10 percent of auto thefts involve owner fraud. This figure represents individual owners who are experiencing financial difficulty or mechanical trouble with the vehicle and report the car stolen.
- Prosecution of auto theft-related insurance fraud is rare because the crime is difficult to prove.
- The ease of reporting a vehicle stolen to law enforcement contributes to the prevalence of insurance fraud. The Council should support in-person reporting, if feasible. Vehicle owners who are claiming theft should sign a police document or report acknowledging the commission of a criminal act if it is discovered they have given false information.
- The Council, National Insurance Crime Bureau, (NICB) and the insurance and allied industries should continue to address the impact of insurance fraud. The NICB is a non-profit organization supported by about 1,000 insurance and self-insured companies dedicated to fighting insurance-related crime. A continued partnership between these allies will enable the statewide initiative to identify insurance fraud and apprehend offenders.
- The insurance industry should pass information of suspected owner "give ups," where the vehicle owner disposes of the vehicle and files a claim for theft, along to the Council's task forces. The industry should also give this information to the NICB. In turn, the task forces should give each suspected fraud serious attention.

- Auto theft task force directors have been successful in instilling in their officers the importance of looking at each auto theft case as a possible insurance fraud.
- Law enforcement would be greatly helped by information on multiple fraud claims made by single individuals. Linkage of insurance information systems to task force data would greatly assist law enforcement.
- The Council and the NICB continue to work together with the insurance industry to raise insurer investigator awareness about Illinois reporting statutes. These statutes require insurance companies to report suspected motor vehicle fraud to a law enforcement agency. A legislative work group should be formed to discuss how to clarify which law enforcement agency is appropriate for receiving tip and/or reports of suspected fraud.
- More emphasis is needed on marking vehicle parts, making their movements more traceable and assist in law enforcement investigations.
- The Council should seek to determine what percentage of stolen vehicles are being submitted for insurance claims.

### **Carjacking/ vehicular hijacking**

- According to the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, carjackers seek money quickly, are not opposed to using violence, roam around looking for someone to victimize, and often need money to pay for drugs. Judges are inclined to give the maximum penalty and disinclined to plea bargain these cases.
- Self-service gas stations and convenience stores are prime targets for carjackers. The public needs to be made aware of this trend and to take measures, such as getting gas during the day and in well-lighted areas.
- Auto thieves have been forced to come up with new ways to steal cars due to the increase of technology in the security of today's vehicles.

### **Juveniles**

- Youth steal cars for many reasons. Some reasons include the sense of immediate gratification, the profit obtained by selling the car, the excitement of being caught, the increased status and prestige experienced with peers and in the neighborhood, and a gang initiation. These factors should be taken into account when refining Council-funded prevention and law enforcement initiatives.
- To deter repeat juvenile offenders who commit three or more motor vehicle offenses, law enforcement comments that they should be sentenced to Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice where juveniles can participate in programs geared toward positive youth outcomes.
- Public relations efforts should be employed to help young offenders understand how auto theft victimizes real people and the society.

### **Law Enforcement**

- An overall decrease in Council programming was seen in 2015 in accordance with Illinois Executive Order 8, which suspended state grant programs and terminated the dedicated task forces purposed with auto theft prevention. This provides an opportunity for dialogue that explores auto theft prevention outside of the task force model and how to enhance future task forces.
- The Council should continue to fund multi-jurisdictional task forces. This model has shown to be the most effective model for combatting motor vehicle theft. Police department have limited resources to battle auto theft. Task forces can dedicate their time to auto theft. Task forces that cover multiple jurisdictions is a better model for motor vehicle theft crimes that often span multiple areas.
- Law enforcement should focus on the professional auto theft of luxury vehicles, fraud, export, and credit fraud cases. These account for the vehicles that are never recovered.
- Operations can be run like drug units by purchasing vehicles off internet to reach criminals at the professional level.

- Task force units should build units to account for a wide spectrum of skills necessary for auto theft cases—from mechanic to analyst.
- The model of specialized law enforcement and specialized vertical prosecution has worked successfully to reduce auto theft and should continue to be funded. Success of the model is based on
- Law enforcement should enhance relationships with the insurance industry by utilizing the technology of the insurance industry.
- To combat auto theft in areas without task forces, the Council may consider creating mini-task forces within police agencies. Cycling police officers in and out of mini-auto-theft task forces could bring more knowledge.
- Combining drug and auto theft task forces can help to save overhead costs.
- Combating motor vehicle theft in areas where task forces no longer exist may require other strategies such as having trained officers from multiple police departments work together in smaller areas, creating mutual agreements between agencies that band together to fund dedicated auto theft officers in areas of need, or consolidating former task forces in two major task forces, one for metro and one for rural areas.

### **Prosecution**

- The firm partnership established between motor vehicle theft task forces and prosecution personnel should be continued.
- Having a dedicated state’s attorney is key to the process. Dedicated prosecutors supported by task force grant funding become part of the team, offering police on building successful prosecution cases from the beginning. Dedicated prosecution also can aid in asset forfeiture of criminal’s equipment which prevents repeat thefts.
- The best way to prosecute insurance fraud is obtaining an admission from an offender. Consensual overhears, the interception of an electronic communication where one party has given prior consent to recording, of such admissions usually result in pleas of guilty, and therefore court-ordered consensual overhears should be used more frequently in auto theft cases.
- It is sometimes difficult for prosecutors to deconstruct complex auto theft cases for a judge and/or jury due to the complex scams used by some offenders. Use of audio/visual aids, courtroom computers, and large screens should be supported by the Council, if funds become available.
- Tactical support by intelligence analysts results in the completion of analytical materials that assist with case organization, reveal conspiracies, and lead to successful convictions. As a result, Council should consider funding for intelligence analysts in police and prosecution units.
- To increase the chances of a conviction in front of the court, prosecution should focus on bridging the gap between probable cause to arrest.
- Long-term investigation is needed for convictions in complex cases. Allowing the time and money for such investigations to be conducted can improve prosecution of auto-theft cases.
- Prosecutors have access to very little information obtained by insurance companies. A sustained collaboration between prosecutors and the insurance industry is important for long-term investigations.
- Information sharing forums should be initiated by the Council for collaboration and analysis of information between law enforcement, prosecution, insurance companies, and other organizations.
- Council funding is crucial to maintaining a dedicated prosecution.
- Having analyst available to help with review of documents can help with prosecution of cases and should be a component supported by the Council, if funds are available.
- Expanding the mandate of the Council to include insurance fraud, especially fraud rings, would improve prosecution of auto-theft and auto-theft related insurance fraud.

### **Recycling and salvage industries recommendations**

- Used essential parts should be tracked to prevent unscrupulous recyclers, rebuilders, and repairers from selling and/or using stolen/illegal parts.

- The following types of vehicles should be tracked: those sold at auctions, to dealers both in state, out of state, and those exported; salvage titled vehicles, especially those determined to be “unprofitable” to repair; flood vehicles; high theft vehicles; and total burn vehicles.
- Practices of licensed vehicle related businesses should be monitored and reviewed to assure compliance with state mandated rules and regulations. Coupled with special police programs, this should help combat public perception that these businesses are run by unscrupulous dealers who trade in stolen/illegal vehicles and parts.
- The number of vehicles that have had vehicle identification numbers removed and/or destroyed by damage, fire, or individual error, needs to be reduced to provide less opportunity for vehicle re-tagging.
- An advisory committee consisting of representatives of the insurance industry, recycling/salvage industry, and the Secretary of State should be established to set up a uniform identification process between salvage and junk titled vehicles.
- Licensed dealers who that have met state guidelines for business operations should receive public recognition.
- A legislative committee of the industry and the Secretary of State should review and recommend changes to the rules and regulations governing the industry.
- Multi-jurisdictional inspections to identify potential stolen cars and parts need to be conducted. Reverse role operations, successfully employed in other states, can be initiated to identify illegal activities. At the same time, local public officials can commend legitimate business owners who refuse to accept stolen goods.

### **Insurance partnership**

- To better working relationships between insurance companies, prosecution, and law enforcement, the Council is encouraged to provide trainings specific to auto theft issues and to provide a formalized platform for consistent information sharing.
- Sharing information on multiple fraud claims made by single individuals can help law enforcement and prosecutions in auto theft cases.
- Auto theft prosecutors should foster working relationships with insurance industry individuals who have access to the data they need. Data is secured and mandated by International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and some data is mandated by National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB).
- There is a need to better educate law enforcement of what NICB can provide. NICB had many systems that are available to law enforcement for free.

### **Public awareness**

- The NICB has developed a “layered approach” encouraging motorists to layer their vehicle with an appropriate degree of anti-theft protection based on factors such as the popularity of the vehicle for theft, value of the vehicle, and the vehicle’s location. The Council should reinforce this message in its own public awareness activities and publications and support the NICB’s efforts wherever possible.
- The Council should encourage public awareness campaigns that highlight theft prevention techniques, such as VIN etching, the use of audible alarm, and steering wheel incapacitation systems.
- Working with insurance companies and state agencies to distribute public information messages should be implemented.
- Public education is needed to show that a \$1 state tax is added to each insurance bill to support the Council and programs that prevent auto theft.
- The Council should focus on name recognition and education. Educating insurance companies, the public, and businesses, such as car dealerships, can help with motor vehicle prevention.
- The Illinois Secretary of State can be a good place to promote public awareness because of their access to vehicle owners. If funds become available, public outreach should include mentioning the Council on their literature, putting up poster and fliers in the DMV centers, and placing a link to the Council on their cyber drive Illinois website.

- IMVTPC literature can also be disseminated to other agencies such as the Illinois Toll Authority, emissions testing services, and insurance companies.
- In an added effort to combat the 25 percent of vehicles stolen by professionals, the Council should include financial institutions, car dealerships, and national auto-dealers associations in its public awareness efforts.
- The Council must inform the public about the link between identity theft and auto theft. Criminals are using identity theft to purchase cars.
- Public awareness should address the spike in vehicle theft during the winter. The majority of theft during the winter are due to people who leave their car warming up with the keys inside.
- Use social media to display and send out information.
- The Council should collaborate with local police to promote public awareness.
- In a collaborative effort, the Council may solicit insurance companies to add some information about the Council or the Council's logo and web address on their forms and fliers.

### **Motor vehicle theft investigation training**

- Sending local law enforcement officers to the 8- and 36-hour motor vehicle theft prevention training courses is recommended along with assigning them to temporary 90-day duty with motor vehicle task forces. Industry investigators and task force directors identified the need for advanced auto theft investigators. Prosecutors indicated trained officers prepare better cases for prosecution. Chiefs and sheriffs favor continued statewide officer training in motor vehicle theft investigation. Officers attending vehicle theft training show more ability in conducting investigations. A survey indicated trained officers asked more and better questions, identified theft patterns, increased their skills and techniques for discovering false theft claims and insurance fraud, and displayed better understanding of transportation theft, stolen parts, and VIN switching and retagging.
- Roll call training should be used to advise all police officers of insurance fraud indicators.
- Support is needed for regional in-service training seminars for patrol officers and experienced auto theft investigators. Interview/interrogation techniques, construction equipment, and specialty vehicle theft investigation should also be emphasized.
- Because auto theft and other criminal activity are interrelated, auto theft investigator training curriculum should include cross-training, as well as in-depth training on offender types, such as career criminals, juveniles, gang members, and the drug users/dealers.
- Technology based trainings should be provided to law enforcement officers and prosecutors in order to combat organized crime.
- Attending conferences for motor vehicle theft provides an opportunity for law enforcement and prosecution to learn strategies and trends seen by other law enforcement organizations throughout the country.
- Prosecutions remarks that there is a generally held myth that that auto theft cases are not complicated cases. As a result, there is little importance and time allocated to auto theft cases in the court system. To maintain the integrity of cases, Council should focus on dispelling the myth. The nature of auto theft crimes has become more sophisticated and complicated because of the advancement of auto technology. Educating judges on the complexities of motor vehicle theft cases and the work that law enforcement does may help to dispel the myth and to allocate the time needed in the court room.

### **Theft by fraud**

- Organized crime elements continue to be involved in auto theft. Emphasis should be placed on stopping their involvement in the export, re-tagging, and cloning of stolen vehicles.
- Car thieves who use identity theft techniques are a growing problem and increased enforcement, prosecution and training concerning this evolution of criminal activity is needed.
- One trend being seen to perpetrate theft by fraud is credit profile numbers (CPN) which is legal numbers sold online that use stolen credit scores to buy cars. Other trends include buying fake social security numbers, cloning vehicles, chop shops, sale/purchase of vehicles online, technology based crimes, and exporting high end vehicles.

- Criminals involved with identity theft usually obtain drivers' licenses and other documents with the names of victims who have a good credit history. They then target dealerships that promote no money down, low financing, and other sales incentives.
- Dealerships often fail to verify identification to track fraud. Dealerships should be educated, monitored, and held accountable. False information provided to dealerships hampers law enforcement from effectively investigating theft of a vehicle.
- The Council needs to decide what role task forces should play in combating identity theft. While an individual's credit rating is always adversely affected by this crime, another victim in any identity theft is the product's seller, (usually an automobile dealer), and the financial entity that secured the purchase. The Council should consider whether these other victims are included in its mission statement.
- The Council needs to consider whether automobile identity theft prosecution is more appropriate in a specialized task force that includes financial institutions, automobile dealers, and merchandise retailers, or if it should be pursued separately by the task forces alone.
- Criminal enterprises are using the internet to sell stolen vehicles. Task forces should continue to use the internet as a search tool to potentially identify criminal enterprises.

## **PART 4: The Council's funding strategy**

### **Priority problem areas**

Based upon public input, successful activities from previous strategies, input from experts on the Strategy Development Hearing Panels, and analysis of available data, the Council identified the following priorities to be addressed by its 2016-2019 Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy.

#### **Increase law enforcement resources and infrastructure**

Most law enforcement agencies do not have personnel to devote to motor vehicle theft cases and, unless someone is apprehended in a stolen vehicle, most departments spend little time investigating motor vehicle thefts.

The drain on resources caused by drug and gang problems facing many communities adversely affects anti-vehicle theft efforts. Individual law enforcement agencies are not adequately equipped or staffed to implement sustained, organized enforcement efforts. Multi-agency cooperation and investigative teams work to lower the rate of thefts and improve the recovery rates of stolen vehicles.

Limited local resources translate into a need for a task force approach to the problem. Task forces reduce jurisdictional constraints that occur when the site of theft differs from site of recovery. Task forces can follow offenders across many small jurisdictions. They are more knowledgeable about violations than local departments and they can coordinate investigations across jurisdictions.

#### **Strengthen criminal prosecutions and encourage enhanced penalties for motor vehicle theft**

Public input indicates that motor vehicle theft cases can be extremely complex, involving sophisticated schemes and vehicle identification issues, and criminal prosecution is often difficult with vertical prosecution being an effective method of handling the most complex cases.

It has also been indicated the current penalties for motor vehicle theft do not address the problem and that there is a need for additional and enhanced penalties. Therefore, the Council should encourage, support and pursue legislative efforts to add and enhance penalties for motor vehicle theft.

#### **Educate monitor and hold accountable auto dealers for their role in vehicle theft**

Some dealers of vehicles, parts, and scrap are involved in the motor vehicle theft problem. Even some reputable dealers may sometimes purchase and use essential parts removed from stolen vehicles. Retagging operations and thefts of whole vehicles are generally very organized and sophisticated enterprises. Used vehicle dealers can be outlets for profitable retagging operations.

Dealerships are being involved in auto theft by identity fraud. Criminals are buying fake social security numbers and Credit Profile Numbers to buy cars. Many of these vehicles are being exported and sold abroad. There is a need for dealerships to be monitored, educated on identity theft, and help responsible.

#### **Address increased use of Internet to commit motor vehicle theft-related crimes**

Stolen vehicles are purchased and sold online. Council supported programs should consider securing funds to operate "buy busts" of vehicles advertised on the internet. Public input indicated that this method would allow law enforcement to catch sophisticated criminals.

#### **Employ innovative combat strategy and policy**

Council-supported programs should strive to target both receivers of stolen vehicles and parts and the marketplace

for contraband. Coordinated efforts between motor vehicle theft task forces and special investigations units should be undertaken to employ innovative means, such as reverse roll “stings,” in identifying and arresting perpetrators.

Historically, many vehicle thefts occurred to obtain/ remove major external parts and sell them to salvage yards or repair shops. When good quality recycled parts are available, the demand for stolen parts decreases. Increasingly, vehicles are stolen and stripped only for valuable accessories such as seats, expensive radios, wheels, air bags, and electronic components.

The Federal Anti-Car Theft Act of 1992 (FACTA) expanded vehicle part markings to include all vehicle make and models by the end of 1997. The Act also requires repair shops, insurers, recyclers and dismantlers handling a used part to check the part’s VIN against a national vehicle database.

If possible, legislative efforts should be pursued by the Council to increase the severity of penalties for existing statutes regarding salvage parts and scrap dealers.

### **Insurance fraud and theft by fraud**

The insurance industry estimates 25 percent of reported stolen vehicles are fraudulent claims. This figure is derived from a combination of fraud indicators in an insurance claim, including recovered vehicles that display conditions other than a normal theft, such as keys in the ignition, no damage to critical areas of the vehicle, or arrests for and admissions to committing fraud.

Vehicle owners continue to be involved in vehicle thefts, conspiring to defraud insurance companies. Owner involvement in fraudulent activities has become increasingly widespread as owners stage the disappearance or destruction of their vehicle to receive an insurance settlement, to end car payments, to end repair bills, to avoid selling a vehicle, to break a restrictive car lease, or as part of a drug sale. There is a need to expand the mandate of the MV Council’s program to include auto-theft related insurance fraud, especially focusing on fraud rings.

The insurance industry recognizes the tremendous cost of insurance fraud has had a profound effect on the affordability of automobile insurance. Illinois insurers have taken several initiatives including formation of and increased staffing of special investigative units; continuous education and training of all insurance company personnel in the recognition and resistance of fraudulent claims; increased public awareness activities on the direct effect that insurance fraud has on insurance premiums; and offering premium discounts to policyholders who install anti-theft devices in their vehicles.

Information sharing between law enforcement and the insurance industry has improved but more can be done. Illinois has insurance fraud reporting and immunity laws but many company employees are not aware of these laws and are reluctant to release claim file information unless ordered to do so by subpoena. Insurance companies can improve the release of claim file materials to law enforcement by educating employees on these statutes.

The Council should continue to support joint association memberships for task force officers and insurance investigators, as well as cross-training and networking aimed at improving the lines of communication between law enforcement and the insurance industry.

### **Identity theft-related vehicle theft**

Improve and standardize collection, analysis, accuracy, completeness and sharing of ID-related vehicle theft statistical data and criminal intelligence data.

Accurate statistical data concerning motor vehicle theft continues to be of critical importance to the Council for two reasons. First, data are required to assess the need for and impact of motor vehicle theft reduction programs. Second, this information is required to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council’s statewide strategy.

One of the continuing concerns with current UCR and LEADS data is that for evaluation purposes it is dependent on the consistency of reporting practices that vary from one law enforcement agency to the next. For example, one agency may count an entire vehicle as “recovered” if one major part of the vehicle is recovered, while another

may consider a vehicle recovered if most of it is retrieved, and a third agency may record a recovery based on whether major parts were recovered.

Establishing an intelligence clearinghouse would be an effective resource for motor vehicle theft data collection and dissemination in the state and should be supported by the Council.

Establishing some type of forum for sharing of data between law enforcement, prosecution, and insurance companies should be supported by the Council as a method for successful development of cases and convictions, especially for those cases involving professional car thieves.

### **Continue training law enforcement, prosecutorial agencies, and others combating vehicle theft**

Continued training is needed for patrol officers, investigators, insurance representatives, and prosecutors on stolen vehicle recognition. Training topics include:

- 1) Laws governing vehicle theft, types of thefts and the trends governing them.
- 2) How to recognize stolen vehicles.
- 3) Investigation of occupied vehicles.
- 4) Modus operandi of the vehicle thief.
- 5) Vehicle identification numbers, sources of information.
- 6) Preliminary investigation subsequent to the recovery of the vehicle.
- 7) Qualifications for testifying.
- 8) Insurance fraud schemes (including identity theft).
- 9) Title washing schemes, among others.
- 10) Technology and Stolen Vehicles
- 11) Insurance Industry and Auto-theft: Insurance Fraud Reporting and Immunity Laws

### **Improve public awareness/education efforts**

The following themes for public awareness/education activities were identified:

- Efforts to discourage motor vehicle theft by leaving running vehicles unattended, leaving keys in the ignition of vehicles, leaving cars unattended, and leaving registration or title documentation in the vehicle.
- Support a layered approach to vehicle theft protection as promoted by the National Insurance Crime Bureau. Layers of protection include switches that disable the engine, steering column locks and alarms. This plan promotes the concept that the more layers of protection on the vehicle, the more difficult it becomes to steal.
- Strategies to promote name recognition and motor vehicle theft prevention education.

### **Program areas**

To address these priorities, the Council's 2016-2019 Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy should encourage programs in five broad program areas.

1. LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Council's position is that to effectively deal at the state level with motor vehicle theft and fraud-related motor vehicle theft focused law enforcement and investigative efforts that address problem areas of greatest need should be given priority.

*A. Multi-Jurisdictional Task Forces*

The Council should continue to support and fund multi-jurisdictional task forces and ensure that the law enforcement agencies and prosecutors are equipped to deal with fraud as well as theft.

The Council believes multi-jurisdictional efforts are generally more productive than independent uncoordinated enforcement activities. Multi-jurisdictional task forces should focus the majority of their work on auto thefts, insurance fraud related to motor vehicle theft, and the growing problem of the exportation of stolen vehicles.

Multi-jurisdictional activities and street-level enforcement will both be encouraged as part of a larger coordinated and systemic effort.

*B. Special investigative activities*

In areas where multi-jurisdictional task forces are not operating or are not feasible, the Council could support special undercover investigations. "Sting" operations have been successful in recovering vehicles and leading to arrests and convictions.

There should be concerted efforts by multi-jurisdiction task force directors and special investigative team personnel to coordinate "reverse role" operations and arrest offenders purchasing stolen or fraudulent parts, or distribution of letters of commendation for those not purchasing contraband items.

The Council should support special investigative activities which target:

1. Career auto thieves.
2. Auto theft "rings."
3. Chop shops.
4. Illegal activities of salvage yards, vehicle repair shops, rebuilders and recyclers of vehicles, and related businesses.
5. Street gangs involved in auto theft.
6. Insurance defrauders.
7. Carjackers.
8. Export operations.
9. Insurance fraud.
10. Thefts of construction equipment and ATV's.
11. Internet sales of stolen vehicles

*C. Specialized Prosecution Units*

The Council acknowledges an effective battle against motor vehicle theft must take a systemic view of the problem and potential solutions. In addition to increasing resources devoted to the apprehension of motor vehicle theft offenders, resources must also be used to address the prosecution systems these offenders will deal with. Similarly, the Council recognizes that increased enforcement and prosecution efforts will eventually impact the state's court systems, probation, and correctional agencies.

## 2. THE INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT

### A. *The collection, analysis, and sharing of criminal intelligence information regarding motor vehicle theft and fraud related motor vehicle theft*

Intelligence efforts should provide investigative support to task forces, investigative units, and prosecution units. The Council encourages that law enforcement and prosecution units receive tactical support from intelligence including, but limited to, state regional profiling, assistance on active cases, and computerized mapping.

### B. *Training*

The Council supports the development and implementation of training programs for law enforcement officers. Training is a crucial component to the infrastructure of the statewide strategy. The Council supports the implementation of an updated statewide training program that focuses on vehicle theft for patrol officers and investigators. In addition, an advanced training seminar related to motor vehicle theft designed for experienced auto theft investigators should be developed and implemented.

The Council believes training for state's attorneys should be part of the strategy. A training program will be developed and implemented to instruct prosecutors statewide in auto theft terminology, insurance terminology, insurance fraud and related crimes.

The Council also believes that training for judges and insurance representatives should be supported for topics related to auto theft investigations, insurance fraud reporting statutes, and immunity laws.

### C. *Partnerships with Law Enforcement*

Council-funded task forces and specialized prosecution activities are improving inter-agency coordination through joint investigative activities. These partnerships need to be continually encouraged and supported.

Task force directors should partner with insurance company investigators in developing lines of communication that can lead to better and more comprehensive vehicle theft and fraud investigations.

The task force directors are encouraged to form a task force directors association.

The Council is a member of the National Association of Auto Theft Prevention Authorities, an organization that provides governmental entities, criminal justice officials, insurance organizations, vehicle-related business, and other interested parties with information on the status of theft prevention initiatives. This resource should be utilized to enhance law enforcement activities.

The Council should work with vehicle manufacturers and encourage them to take measures to assist theft prevention efforts, such as innovative theft deterrent devices, accelerating the marking of essential vehicle parts with the vehicle's identification number, and other measures.

Task forces and special investigations should partner with vehicle related businesses should partner to formulate strategies to combat vehicle theft. These partnerships should extend to the automobile recycling, repair industries, towing companies, car dealerships in order to identify and respond to problem areas of auto theft as they relate to vehicle titles, transfer, and definitions of “salvage” and “junk” vehicles.

The Council continues to support the work of the Vehicle Theft Committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. This committee fosters networking opportunities for states with, or those interested in starting, auto theft prevention initiatives in their areas.

The Council should support the National Insurance Crime Bureau, the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators, and the International Association of Special Investigation Units in efforts to improve anti-fraud activities between insurers and law enforcement.

### 3. PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Council supports programs that:

1. Inform owners about the financial and social consequences of motor vehicle theft;
2. Suggest methods for preventing motor vehicle theft.
3. Encourage the general public to report motor vehicle theft and related crimes and participate with law enforcement efforts.
4. Highlight the work of multi-jurisdictional task forces, special investigative activities, and other law enforcement efforts to deter vehicle owner participation in insurance fraud and illegal activities in vehicle repair shops, salvage yards, and related businesses.
5. Provide name recognition and branding for the Council.

To help motorists make smarter decisions in protecting their vehicles from theft, the Council, without endorsing individual products, should promote the concept of a layered approach to protection, which reasons that the more layers of protection on the vehicle the more difficult it will be to steal.

### 4. EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

One of the Council’s duties under the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act is to “conduct impact analyses of state and local criminal justice policies, programs, plans, and methods for combating” motor vehicle theft. The Council should support efforts to conduct impact analyses.

The Council should support research aimed at identifying motivations for vehicle theft.

In addition, the internal evaluation and assessment of Council-funded programs by Council staff should be continued and where appropriate, expanded.

### 5. INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

The Council supports the development and implementation of creative and innovative approaches to dealing with the motor vehicle theft problem in the state. Innovative programs that meet the criteria set forth in the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act and the rules and guidelines adopted by the Council may be considered for funding.

## **Council response to motor vehicle theft in Illinois**

The MVTPC has supported a variety of theft prevention programs since the Council’s inception in 1992 aimed at

combating the motor vehicle theft problem in Illinois from a well-rounded concerted effort. Since its inception, approximately \$133 million has been awarded for vehicle theft programs in Illinois. About 90 percent of all the funds awarded have gone to the law enforcement to increase investigation and prosecution of vehicle theft, insurance fraud, and related crimes (*Figure 4*).

The majority of the funding has emphasized specialized law enforcement and specialized prosecution tasked with handling vehicle theft and vehicle theft related crimes. Law enforcement efforts are made up of tasks forces that consisted of officers from both local and state law enforcement agencies. Prosecution teams consist of specially trained prosecutors assigned cases from submission through trial in vertical prosecution, a method considered critical for prosecuting vehicle theft cases. Motor vehicle theft attorneys prosecute career auto thieves and individuals involved in chop shop operations, insurance fraud, organized street gang operations, carjacking, and illegal rebuilding and scrap dealing.

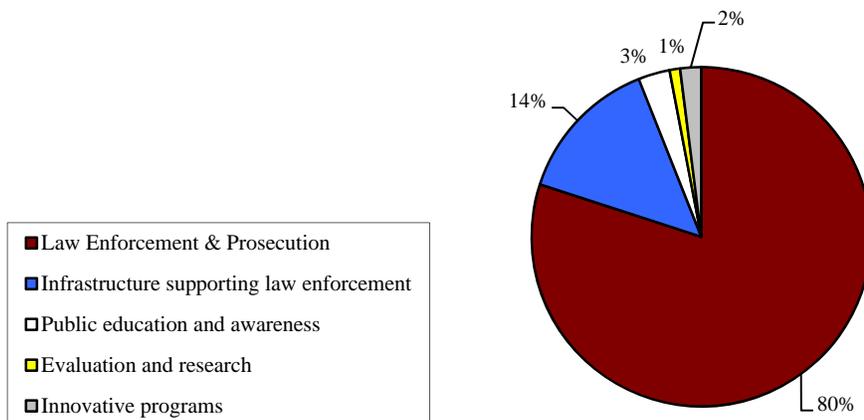
The Council funds vehicle theft investigation training programs to increase awareness and understanding of motor vehicle theft in the law enforcement community and insurance industry.

To police the marketplace for stolen vehicles and parts, the Council supports special audit teams that monitor salvages, rebuilders, repairers, insurance pools, and scrap processors for compliance with regulations governing record-keeping of vehicles and vehicles part transactions.

Council-funded data intelligence programs provide focused analytical support for motor vehicle task forces and the Illinois law enforcement community.

Public awareness has been encouraged by the Council and carried out by the task forces at the local community level. Task forces provide community residents with informational talks with regarding auto theft and utilized local media to campaign for locking vehicles that are left by the vehicle owners warming up during the winter months.

**Figure 4**  
**Funding awarded in targeted program areas**  
**1992-2015**



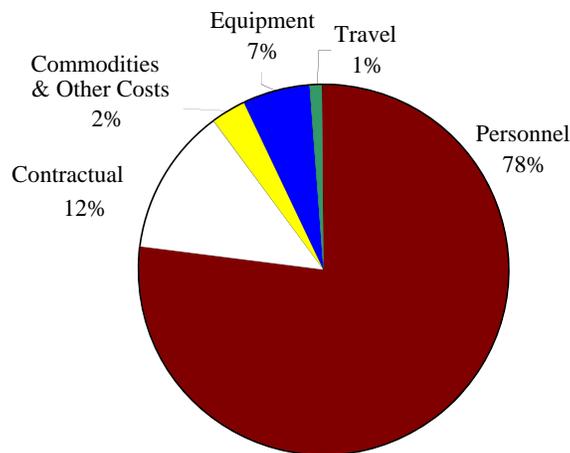
### What costs are covered by trust funds?

The first grants made by the Council in 1992 included significant one-time “start-up” costs associated with equipment and other items initially needed to implement programs. Since 2010 the programs funded have consisted almost exclusively of personnel costs.

The following breakdown of costs for 1992-2015 programs show the overwhelming percentage used for staffing costs (*Figure 5*):

- **Personnel:** Salaries, fringe benefits, and overtime - 78%
- **Contractual:** Ongoing costs such as utilities, leases, telecommunications, vehicle operating expenses, other - 12%
- **Commodities/other costs:** Consumable office supplies, evidence kits, other - 2%
- **Equipment:** Computers, radios, other- 7%
- **Travel:** Training, conferences, seminars, witness/suspect transportation, other - 1%

**Figure 5**  
**Program Expenditure**  
**Category Percentages, 1992-2015**



### Are matching funds required?

The *Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act* does not require grant recipients to contribute matching funds. Nevertheless, the Council may require matching funds as they deem necessary. Matching funds may consist of both hard (cash) and/or in-kind (soft) match and be of a percentage determined by the Council.

Historically, because of limited trust funds, most grant-funded programs have included local matching funds, creating truly cooperative ventures.

### Areas of greatest need

The Council has determined that an effective statewide strategy must involve efforts in areas of the state where the problem is most prevalent. Public hearing testimony and data analysis support the notion that motor vehicle theft is largely concentrated

in the urban areas of the State.

The Council determines these 10 counties to be the areas in greatest need of motor vehicle theft prevention program activities for 2016-2019. To the extent feasible, all programs the Council funds should have a direct impact on the theft problem in these areas:

1. Cook County
2. Winnebago County
3. St. Clair County
4. Lake County
5. Will County
6. DuPage County
7. Sangamon County
8. Kane County
9. Champaign County
10. Madison County

## **Conclusion**

The goal of the 2016-2019 Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy is to establish statewide planning capabilities for improving and supporting motor vehicle theft law enforcement, prosecution, and the administration of motor vehicle theft laws to prevent, combat, and reduce motor vehicle theft and related fraud in Illinois.

The objectives of the strategy are:

- To reduce the number of motor vehicles stolen in the state.
- To reduce the number of fraud related motor vehicle thefts.
- To increase the number of stolen motor vehicles recovered.
- To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws that result in arrests.
- To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws that result in criminal prosecutions.
- To increase the percentage of offenses that result in convictions and jail/prison sentences.
- To reduce the recidivism of motor vehicle theft offenders.

These objectives should be addressed to the extent possible with limited resources and with emphasis on maximizing the return on the Council's funding investment.

# Appendix A

## THE ILLINOIS MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT PREVENTION ACT

**(20 Illinois Compiled Statutes 4005)4005/1. Short title.** This Act shall be known as the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act.

**4005/2. Purpose.** The purpose of this Act is to prevent, combat and reduce motor vehicle theft in Illinois; to promote and support motor vehicle theft law enforcement, prosecution and administration of motor vehicle theft laws by establishing statewide capabilities for and coordination of financial resources.

**4005/3. Definitions.** As used in this Act

(a) "Authority" means the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

(b) "Council" means the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council, established within the Authority by this Act.

(c) "Trust Fund" means the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund.

**4005/4. Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council—Members—Chairman—Terms—Meetings.** There is hereby created within the Authority an Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council, which shall exercise its power, duties and responsibilities independently of the Authority. There shall be 11 members of the Council consisting of the Secretary of State or his designee, the Director of the Department of State Police, the State's Attorney of Cook County, the Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, and the following 7 additional members, each of whom shall be appointed by the Governor: a state's attorney of a county other than Cook, a chief executive law enforcement official from a jurisdiction other than the City of Chicago, 5 representatives of insurers authorized to write motor vehicle insurance in this State, all of whom shall be domiciled in this State.

The Governor from time to time shall designate the Chairman of the Council from the membership. All members of the Council appointed by the Governor shall serve at the discretion of the Governor for a term not to exceed 4 years. The initial appointed members of the Council shall serve from January 1, 1991 until the third Monday in January, 1995 or until their successors are appointed. The Council shall meet at least quarterly.

**4005/5. Compensation of members.** Members of the Council shall serve without compensation. All members shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with their duties.

**4005/6. Personnel.** The Executive Director of the Authority shall employ, in accordance with the provisions of the Illinois Personnel Code, such administrative, professional, clerical, and other personnel as may be required and may organize such staff as may be appropriate to effectuate the purposes of this Act.

**4005/7. Powers and duties of council.** The Council shall have the following powers, duties and responsibilities:

(a) To apply for, solicit, receive, establish priorities for, allocate, disburse, contract for, and spend funds that are made available to the Council from any source to effectuate the purposes of this Act.

(b) To make grants and to provide financial support for federal and State agencies, units of local government, corporations, and neighborhood, community and business organizations to effectuate the purposes of this Act.

(c) To assess the scope of the problem of motor vehicle theft, including particular areas of the State where the problem is greatest and to conduct impact analyses of State and local criminal justice policies, programs, plans and methods for combating the problem.

(d) To develop and sponsor the implementation of statewide plans and strategies to combat motor vehicle theft and to improve the administration of the motor vehicle theft laws and provide an effective forum for identification of critical problems associated with motor vehicle theft.

(e) To coordinate the development, adoption and implementation of plans and strategies relating to interagency or intergovernmental cooperation with respect to motor vehicle theft law enforcement.

(f) To promulgate rules or regulations necessary to ensure that appropriate agencies, units of government, private organizations and combinations thereof are included in the development and implementation of strategies or plans adopted pursuant to this

Act and to promulgate rules or regulations as may otherwise be necessary to effectuate the purposes of this Act.

(g) To report annually, on or before April 1, 1992 to the Governor, General Assembly, and, upon request, to members of the general public on the Council's activities in the preceding year.

(h) To exercise any other powers that are reasonable, necessary or convenient to fulfill its responsibilities, to carry out and to effectuate the objectives and purposes of the Council and the provisions of this Act, and to comply with the requirements of applicable federal or State laws or regulations; provided, however, that such powers shall not include the power to subpoena or arrest.

**4005/8. Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund.** (a) A special fund is created in the State Treasury known as the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund, which shall be administered by the Executive Director of the Authority at the

direction of the Council. All interest earned from the investment or deposit of monies accumulated in the Trust Fund shall, pursuant to Section 4.1 of the State Finance Act, be deposited in the Trust Fund.

(b) Money deposited in this Trust Fund shall not be considered general revenue of the State of Illinois.

(c) Money deposited in the Trust Fund shall be used only to enhance efforts to effectuate the purposes of this Act as determined by the Council and shall not be appropriated, loaned or in any manner transferred to the General Revenue Fund of the State of Illinois.

(d) Prior to April 1, 1991, and prior to April 1 of each year thereafter, each insurer engaged in writing private passenger motor vehicle insurance coverages which are included in Class 2 and Class 3 of Section 4 of the Illinois Insurance Code [FN2] as a condition of its authority to transact business in this State, may collect and shall pay into the Trust Fund an amount equal to \$1.00, or a lesser amount determined by the Council, multiplied by the insurer's total earned car years of private passenger motor vehicle insurance policies providing physical damage insurance coverage written in this State during the preceding calendar year.

(e) Money in the Trust Fund shall be expended as follows:

(1) To pay the Authority's costs to administer the Council and the Trust Fund, but for this purpose in an amount not to exceed ten percent in any one fiscal year of the amount collected pursuant to paragraph (d) of this Section in that same fiscal year.

(2) To achieve the purposes and objectives of this Act, which may include, but not limited to, the following:

(A) To provide financial support to law enforcement and correctional agencies, prosecutors, and the judiciary for programs designed to reduce motor vehicle theft and to improve the administration of motor vehicle theft laws.

(B) To provide financial support for federal and State agencies, units of local government, corporations and neighborhood, community or business organizations for programs designed to reduce motor vehicle theft and to improve the administration of motor vehicle theft laws.

(C) To provide financial support to conduct programs designed to inform owners of motor vehicles about the financial and social costs of motor vehicle theft and to suggest to those owners methods for preventing motor vehicle theft.

(D) To provide financial support for plans, programs and projects designated to achieve the purposes of this Act.

(f) Insurers contributing to the Trust Fund shall have a property interest in the unexpended money in the Trust Fund, which property interest shall not be retroactively changed or extinguished by the General Assembly.

(g) In the event the Trust Fund were to be discontinued or the Council were to be dissolved by act of the General Assembly or by operation of law, then, notwithstanding the provisions of Section 5 of the State Finance Act, any balance remaining therein shall be returned to the insurers writing private passenger motor vehicle insurance in proportion to their financial contributions to the Trust Fund and any assets of the Council shall be liquidated and returned in the same manner after deduction of administrative costs.

**4005/12. Repealer.** Sections 1 through 9 and Section 11 are repealed January 1, 2016. P.A. 97-141, eff. 7-14-11.

(Source: Public Act 86-1408, effective January 1, 1991. Amended by Public Act 89-277, effective August 10, 1995, Public Act 91-85, effective July 9, 1999, and Public Act 93-172, effective July 10, 2003. Amended by Public Act 95-0212, effective January 1, 2008)



# Written Input Sought for the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council's Statewide Funding Strategy

**Due date: April 1, 2015**

Written comment is being sought on the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council's statewide motor vehicle theft prevention strategy and the programs it supports. As in past years, this input will be used to help identify and clarify issues or problem areas, effective approaches, needed legislative or regulatory remedies or any other information relevant to the vehicle theft problem in this State. The written input will culminate in the development of a revised statewide strategy for 2016 - 2019. You are invited to submit written comments.

## **Background**

In 1990, the Illinois General Assembly took action against steadily rising auto theft rates by passing the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act - legislation crafted by an association of law enforcement and insurance industry officials called the Illinois Anti-Car Theft Committee.

The Act, which took effect on January 1, 1991, established the eleven-member Council and gave it the responsibility for managing a unique cooperative venture between business and government to curb motor vehicle theft in Illinois.

The Act requires all insurance companies licensed to write private passenger motor vehicle physical damage coverages in Illinois to pay annually into a special trust fund an amount equal to \$1.00 for each earned car year of exposure for physical damage insurance coverage (comprehensive coverage) during the previous calendar year. About \$6.4 million is collected each year.

Once every four years the Council adopts a statewide motor vehicle theft prevention strategy that is derived from public input and data analyses. The strategy describes the nature and extent of the motor vehicle theft problem in Illinois, areas of greatest need, problems to be addressed, and eligible programs the Council should support. The Council grants awards to programs that are consistent with the statewide strategy.

## Written Comments

A critical component of developing the strategy revolves around the fact that as program costs continue to increase, the amount of funding available for programs costs remains constant.

**With this in mind, written comment is being sought on the strategy and the programs it supports. This input will be used to identify issues and/or problem areas and will be the subject of Council discussions later this year during the development of the 2016 – 2019 Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council’s Statewide Funding Strategy.**

**Note: This is not a request for funding proposals. Please do not submit a grant application.**

Please address the following issues in distinct sections of your comments:

**Problem statement** - The major problem(s) facing you or your agency with respect to motor vehicle theft in Illinois.

**Data** - Data that documents the nature and extent of the problem(s) identified.

**Resources** - The resources currently available to address the problem(s); identification of current funding sources and availability of matching funds; and an identification of existing services.

**Approach** - An explanation of why a particular approach to the problem(s) shows more promise than other approaches. Include a discussion of recent developments in law enforcement or other areas that affect efforts to combat motor vehicle theft.

**Relation to Statewide Strategy** - A discussion of the relation of the problem(s), resources, and approach identified to the Council's statewide motor vehicle theft prevention strategy.

### *Current focus of statewide strategy*

The current statewide motor vehicle theft prevention strategy is aimed at addressing the following problems:

1. The collection, analysis, accuracy, completeness and sharing of vehicle theft statistical data and criminal intelligence.
2. The traditionally fragmented and uncoordinated response of the criminal justice system to the motor vehicle theft problem.

3. Training of law enforcement, prosecutorial agencies, and others combating vehicle theft.
4. Limited law enforcement resources.
5. Motor vehicle theft enterprises in some areas of the State involve dealers of vehicles, parts, and scrap.
6. Insurance fraud.
7. The complexity of criminal prosecutions.
8. Strategies to address juvenile and habitual offenders.
9. The lack of public awareness of motor vehicle theft and the public's involvement in reduction and prevention efforts.

### *Geographic areas of greatest need*

The Council focuses its support with programs in seven geographical areas of the state; these areas show the greatest need in terms of the nature and extent of the motor vehicle theft problem. These areas are Cook County, DuPage County, Kane County, and the metropolitan areas of Chicago, East St. Louis, Joliet, Rockford, Peoria, and Naperville.

### *Eligible program areas for funding*

**Law enforcement** - multi-jurisdictional task forces, special investigative programs, and specialized prosecution units.

**The infrastructure supporting law enforcement efforts** - the collection, analysis, and sharing of criminal intelligence information regarding motor vehicle theft; the development and implementation of training programs for law enforcement officers; training for state's attorneys and the judiciary; the development and implementation of training programs dealing with record keeping and theft prevention procedures aimed at vehicle related businesses and license-holders including salvage yards, rebuilders, recyclers, scrap processors, new and used car dealerships; and, building additional alliances with agencies and organizations involved in fighting vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

**Public awareness** - public education and prevention efforts which: inform owners about the financial and social consequences of motor vehicle theft; suggest methods for preventing such thefts; encourage the general public to report motor vehicle theft and related crimes; and highlight the work of task forces, special investigative activities and other efforts funded by the Council.

**Evaluation and research** - assessments of the administration and operation of funded programs as well as their impact on the motor vehicle theft problem; and, research supporting the identification and implementation

of strategies for combating vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

**Innovative programs** - to encourage the development and implementation of creative and innovative approaches to respond to the motor vehicle theft problem in Illinois.

#### *The focus of current programs*

Since March of 1992 (when the first grant awards were made), the Council has awarded funds to programs designed to combat motor vehicle theft in Illinois. The programs include:

- Multi-jurisdictional law enforcement task forces around the State that include special prosecutors;
- A statewide auditing program focusing on vehicle and parts-related businesses, and insurance pools throughout Illinois;
- A statewide law enforcement training program;
- A statewide specialized crime analysis and intelligence gathering clearinghouse; and,
- The coordination of law enforcement agencies on the federal, state and local levels by Council funded task force units.

#### *How trust funds are used*

Trust funds have mainly been used to fund law enforcement personnel. In 2013, a total of 100 persons were supported or assigned to Council-funded programs.

- These personnel include:
  - 72 **investigators and auditors** who perform sworn and civilian investigative functions;
  - 12 **assistant state's attorneys** prosecuting motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases;
  - 12 **support personnel** including data input operators, clerical support, and others; and,
  - 4 **technical and professional positions** including intelligence analysts, social workers, intake specialist and law clerks.
- 

#### **Accomplishments of funded programs**

Over the past 22 years Council-funded multi-jurisdictional task forces have conducted over 35,674 investigations. The work of the Council-funded task forces has resulted in approximately 17,203 arrests and

6,842 convictions. The task forces recovered about 39,877 vehicles, resulting in an estimated recovery value of \$321 million.

#### *The objectives of the statewide strategy*

The objectives of the statewide strategy are:

1. To reduce the number of motor vehicles stolen in the State;
2. To increase the number of stolen motor vehicles recovered;
3. To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws, which result in arrests;
4. To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws which result in criminal prosecutions;
5. To increase the percentage of offenses for violations of motor vehicle theft laws which result in convictions and jail or prison sentences;
6. To reduce the number of fraud related motor vehicle thefts; and
7. To reduce the recidivism of motor vehicle theft offenders.

#### **Invitation to provide verbal input**

Interested parties are invited to provide verbal input at the May 13, 2015 Council meeting in Chicago, IL. The meeting will be held at the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority, 300 West Adams Street, Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60606. The meeting will begin at 9:00 am Central time.

Verbal input will be limited to five minutes per person.

#### **Submit written comments to:**

Mr. Greg Stevens, Program Director  
Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council  
300 West Adams Street, Suite 200  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3997

Or, by email at: [Gregory.Stevens@Illinois.gov](mailto:Gregory.Stevens@Illinois.gov)

#### ***For further information, contact the Council at***

***(312) 793-8550 (TDD: 312-793-410).***

# Appendix C

Strategy Development Hearing  
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority  
300 West Adams Street, Suite 200  
Chicago, IL 60606

February 24, 2016

9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. Call to Order/ Introduction

9:15 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.

Panel 1: The Nature and Extent of Motor Vehicle Theft Problem

- What are the national, regional, and Illinois trends?
- What are the top ten counties for MV theft? Have these changed over the past ten years?
- What additional crimes are being committed with motor vehicle theft? What does this tell us – if anything?
- What types of vehicles are being stolen in Illinois?
- What types of vehicles are being recovered in Illinois and where?

Panelists:

Kristie Dwyer, Field Information Analyst, National Insurance Crime Bureau

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Panel 2: Law Enforcement and the Investigation of Motor Vehicle Theft and Vehicle Theft by Fraud

- What law enforcement approaches are being used to investigate vehicle theft and vehicle theft by fraud?
- How does law enforcement utilize prosecution to combat vehicle theft?
  - What are effective strategies?
  - What are obstacles to law enforcement and prosecution partnership?
  - How can this partnership be enhanced?
- How does law enforcement utilize the insurance industry to combat vehicle theft?
  - What are effective strategies?
  - What are obstacles to law enforcement and insurance industry partnership?
  - How can this partnership be enhanced?
- What is the role of the multi-jurisdictional task force?
- How does law enforcement combat vehicle theft in geographic areas where task forces no longer exist?
- What new or innovative strategies are suggested?
- What training topics should be addressed by the Council to help law enforcement fight the vehicle theft problem?

Panelists:

Lt. Elmer Garza, Secretary of State Department of Police

Dwayne Killian, Program Director, Tri-County Auto Theft Task Force

Lt. Dan Likens, Illinois State Police

Sgt. Robert Wheeler, Chicago Police Department

Charlie Worsham, Director of Field Operations- Midwest Region, National Insurance Crime Bureau

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Lunch

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Panel 3: Prosecution of Motor Vehicle Theft

- What approaches are currently being used to prosecute vehicle theft and vehicle theft by fraud in Illinois?
- How does prosecution utilize law enforcement to combat vehicle theft?

- What are effective strategies?
- What are obstacles to prosecution and law enforcement partnership?
- What can enhance this partnership?
- How does prosecution utilize the insurance industry to combat vehicle theft?
  - What are effective strategies?
  - What are obstacles to prosecution and insurance industry partnership?
  - How can this partnership be enhanced?
- What new or innovative strategies are suggested?
- What obstacles, if any, exist in the successful prosecution of vehicle theft cases? What training topics should be addressed by the Council to help prosecute vehicle theft?

Panelists:

Dant Faulk, Assistant State's Attorney, Will County State's Attorney Office  
 John Maher, Assistant State's Attorney, Cook County State's Attorney Office  
 Christopher Regis, Inspector General, City of Joliet

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. Break

2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Panel 4: Insurance Partnership to Combat Motor Vehicle Theft

- What is the insurance industry's role in reducing auto theft?
- How does the insurance industry utilize prosecution to fight vehicle theft?
  - What effective strategies are being utilized?
  - What are obstacles to insurance industry and prosecution partnership?
  - How can this partnership be enhanced?
- How does the insurance industry utilize law enforcement to combat vehicle theft?
  - What effective strategies are being utilized?
  - What are obstacles to insurance industry and law enforcement partnership?
  - How can this partnership be enhanced?
- What insurance industry initiatives are underway to deal with vehicle theft by fraud?

Panelists:

David O'Carroll, Senior Special Investigator, President, Illinois International Association of Special Investigations Units  
 David Sowinski, Senior Special Investigator, Farmers Insurance Exchange  
 Anthony Tolbert, Auto/Property Special Investigator, Allstate Insurance Company  
 Charlie Worsham, Director of Field Operations- Midwest Region, National Insurance Crime Bureau

3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Panel 5: Public Awareness and Education Efforts

- What public awareness and educational efforts are being undertaken in Illinois to help combat vehicle theft?
- Are these effective?
- How do you measure effectiveness?
- How do you encourage partnerships between the insurance industry and other state entities to promote public awareness?

Panelists:

Lt. Thomas Chandler, Secretary of State Department of Police  
 David O'Carroll, Senior Special Investigator, President, Illinois International Association of Special Investigations Units  
 Frank Scafidi, Director of Public Affairs, National Insurance Crime Bureau

4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Development of Council recommendation

4:30 p.m. Adjourn

