



**ACT**  
Government

# PROPERTY CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGY 2016-2020

## PROGRESS REPORT 2016-2017



## INTRODUCTION

While the ACT benefits from some of the lowest property crime rates in Australia, there is no room for complacency because property crime can affect any ACT resident at any time. Remaining vigilant is essential to keeping property crime rates down.

This Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-20 continues the ACT Government's long-standing commitment to a fair and safe community. It builds on the success of the ACT Property Crime Reduction Strategy 2012-15 that resulted in a significant decline in property crime, with a 41.5% decrease in burglary and 27.2% decrease in motor vehicle thefts from the 2010 baseline. Targets remain in place in this Strategy to continue the work of keeping burglary and motor vehicle theft rates down. In addition we have broadened the targets to include bicycle theft, other theft and property damage.

The aim of the *Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-2020* is to keep property crime down and our vision is for the ACT to have safe places, secure property and crime wise people. This Strategy focuses on preventing crime from occurring by reducing crime opportunities. This complements progressive justice reforms introduced by the Government and a range of existing initiatives that focus on early intervention, reducing recidivism and improving access to justice services.

The actions in the Strategy centre around: improving community connections; promoting personal responsibility for safeguarding property; improving data sharing and accessibility; responding collaboratively to changes in the property crime environment; supporting vulnerable people; and targeting recidivist offenders.

# OBJECTIVES

The Property Crime Prevention Strategy is driven by the following objectives:

## OBJECTIVE 1

Community and neighbourhood connections are strengthened.

## OBJECTIVE 2

The community is educated about personal responsibility for preventing property crime.

## OBJECTIVE 3

Useful data and information about property crime are available and more accessible to the community.

## OBJECTIVE 4

Collaborative responses are developed to address existing crime trends and changes in the crime environment.

## OBJECTIVE 5

Those who are more vulnerable to property crime are supported to safeguard their property.

## OBJECTIVE 6

The quality of data and intelligence to inform police driven crime prevention activities are improved.

To achieve these objectives, the strategy includes actions that centre on making places more difficult and less appealing for criminal activity, education, awareness and empowering individuals, businesses and communities to safeguard their property.

## 2016/17 RESULTS

The Strategy was launched in September 2016 and there has been good progress against all of the objectives in the first 10 months.

Positive highlights include:

- For the first time ACT Government partnered with Relationships Australia to boost promotion efforts around National Neighbour Day in the ACT.
- The Home Safety Program was expanded to include practical workshops and home safety assessments to educate vulnerable groups in our community about low cost options to make houses more secure.
- Public consultation has taken place on planning around better quality and more secure facilities in buildings for bicycles such as end of trip facilities that also support active travel and active living.
- The Safer Families Grants Program was initiated as a pilot program in February 2017 with grants for amounts of up to \$2000 to assist women and children escaping domestic and family violence to establish new rental accommodation.
- ACT Policing's Regional Property Task Force recovered over \$1.4 million worth of stolen vehicles and property, the majority of which has been returned to owners.

As a result of the cross-government effort to tackle property crime, we are tracking well against three of the five targets:

- ✓ The ACT is below the national victim rate for unlawful entry with intent
- ✓ Other theft is down
- ✓ Bicycle theft is down

Property damage increased 3% (155 offences) in 2016-17. This is something that will continue to be monitored and one of the areas the interagency forum (under Action 4.1) will focus on when it is established in 2017-18.

The main challenge the ACT is currently facing in relation to property crime is the increase in motor vehicle thefts. Nationally there has also been an increase, however the ACT is sitting above the national theft rate. The target under this Strategy is to be at or below the national rate for motor vehicle thefts and we are sitting 0.83 thefts per 1,000 registrations above the 2016-17 national rate.

Motor vehicle theft remains a challenge across Australia with all jurisdictions apart from WA experiencing an increase between 2015-16 and 2016-17. Jurisdictions across Australia, including the ACT, join together to financially support the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC). The NMVTRC builds stakeholder capacity and innovation with a range of technological, communications, public education and knowledge sharing projects with a focus on disrupting car parts and laundering markets and diverting young offenders.

Locally in 2017-18, preventing motor vehicle theft will be a key focus of community education campaigns (under Actions 2.1 and 2.2) and ACT Policing will continue to target property crime through its Regional Property Task Force.

## PROGRESS AGAINST THE ACTIONS

OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS	LEAD DIRECTORATE(S)	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTION 2016-2017
<b>Objective 1 – Community and neighbourhood connections are strengthened</b>		
1.1 Promote National Neighbour Day	JACS	<p>JACS provided financial support to Relationships Australia to promote National Neighbour Day in the ACT. Through this initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8000 ACT Government and Neighbour Day cobranded connection and neighbourly tips cards were distributed;</li> <li>• 5 community organisations were provided with financial support and resources for events to promote Neighbour Day reaching over 4330 people; and</li> <li>• Approximately 40,000 people were reached through social media with an average 17% engagement rate.</li> </ul>
1.2 Support existing events that promote neighbourhood connectedness	JACS	JACS is in the process of identifying existing events that promote neighbourhood connectedness to support in future years.
1.3 Promote a sense of shared responsibility to protect community facilities	EPSD, ED, JACS	EPSDD is collaborating with the Dickson centre traders and community in a placemaking partnership to promote community ownership over public places and facilities in the Dickson centre with a community-driven 7-day makeover of the courtyards planned for November 2017.
<b>Objective 2 – The community is educated about personal responsibility for preventing property crime</b>		
2.1 Promote personal responsibility for preventing property crime	ACTP, JACS	<p>ACT Policing Media, Neighbourhood Watch and Crimstoppers conduct campaigns on personal security and residential security.</p> <p>ACT Policing Senior Liaison Officers promote safety and security at nursing homes, residential villages and to individuals.</p> <p>ACT Policing regularly distributes media releases and conducts stand ups on property crime which includes prevention messaging.</p> <p>Through the Home Safety Program 989 information packs about home security were provided to victims of break and enter/burglary and 655 information flyers were delivered to home in identified crime hotspots.</p>



2.2 Provide practical workshops on how to secure property, including low cost and simple solutions	JACS	Through the Home Safety Program 17 practical workshops on how to make your home more secure were delivered to community groups.
<b>Objective 3 – Useful data and information about property crime are more accessible to the community</b>		
3.1 Identify gaps in property crime data and its accessibility	ACTP, JACS	<p>Property crime related data is available to the public via the ACT Criminal Justice Profile and the ACT Policing Website Statistics.</p> <p>A number of enhancements, including additional sub-crime categories, are currently being implemented within the ACT Policing Website Statistics.</p> <p>Work is underway to make improvements to the usability and accessibility of the data provided in the ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile.</p>
3.2 Develop mechanisms to improve information sharing around crime activity and data	ACTP, JACS	<p>A number of agencies provide data for the ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile.</p> <p>ACT Policing has been a sponsor of the Neighbourhood Watch ACT (NHW) program for the past four years, and is represented on the Board by the Station Sergeant of the Community Safety team. NHW attends various events hosted by ACT Policing. ACT Policing provides crime statistics to the NHW ACT Management team for inclusion in their flyers, which are distributed throughout the Canberra region.</p> <p>The interagency forum will be tasked with this action once it has been established.</p> <p>See information sharing outlined in 4.2.</p>
3.3 Consider the feasibility of evaluating how the <i>Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) General Code</i> has been applied	EPSD, JACS	This was not delivered in 2016-17 and will be considered in future years.
<b>Objective 4 – Collaborative responses are developed to address existing crime trends and changes in the crime environment</b>		
4.1 Establish an interagency forum consisting of government, police, crime prevention and community organisations	JACS	JACS has had preliminary discussion with agencies about establishing a forum in 2017-18.
4.2 Identify and respond to emerging property crime issues	All	In response to an increase in property offences in 2016, ACT Policing formed a Regional Priority Task Force to identify, apprehend and disrupt the group of offenders responsible for property crime in the ACT. The Task Force includes ACT Policing members from Response, Criminal Investigations and Intelligence and works collaboratively with AFP Forensic Intelligence, ACT Corrective Services Intelligence and NSW Police Force.

		<p>Operational results of the Task Force included 12 arrests with over 157 charges. More than 25 stolen motor vehicles were recovered, worth over \$400,000. The Task Force was sustained due to its success and the overall 2016-17 results are outlined under Action 6.2 below.</p> <p>In addition to the combined Regional Priority Task Force and Targeting Team, ACT Policing recently conducted a discreet operation targeting shoplifting across Canberra. As part of this operation, members from Woden and Tuggeranong Police Stations and Community Safety Teams have been working with loss prevention officers at Woden, Gungahlin and Belconnen shopping centres to identify and apprehend shoplifting offenders.</p>
4.3 Deliver initiatives to reduce bicycle theft	EPSD, ACTP, JACS	<p>A short-term action in the Minister for Planning's 2015 Statement of Planning Intent was to review the Bike Parking General Code of the Territory Plan to ensure it promotes best practice bike parking and end-of-trip facilities (EOTF) for bike riders.</p> <p>EPSDD has revised the Bike Parking Code and prepared Draft Variation to the Territory Plan 357 (DV357), which is proposed to replace the Bicycle Parking General Code with a new EOTF General Code.</p> <p>The EOTF General Code has been developed to implement the Government's vision for a healthy, active and vibrant city. Better quality and more secure facilities in buildings such as EOTF that support active travel and active living are integral to this vision.</p> <p>EPSDD released DV357 for statutory public consultation on 28 April 2017 until 13 June 2017. EPSDD is currently considering comments received in order to recommend a final version of DV357 to the Minister.</p> <p>Bicycle theft decreased by 28.7% (193 offences) in 2016-17.</p>
4.4 Identify and respond to enablers for property crime in apartment buildings	EPSD, JACS	<p>EPSDD and JACS will prepare a scope of work and engage a suitably qualified consultant to undertake this analysis in 2017-18.</p>

**Objective 5 – Those who are more vulnerable to property crime are supported to safeguard their property**

5.1 Enhance the Home Safety Program to include practical support	JACS	<p>The Home Safety Program has been enhanced to include home safety assessments for those who are vulnerable to crime. 91 home safety assessments were conducted in 2016-17.</p>
5.2 Implement findings on how to improve services and support provided to victims of property crime	CSD, JACS	<p>The Victim Support ACT final research report is not yet completed.</p> <p>The Community Services Directorate continues to support the rights</p>

		<p>of victims of crime committed by young people through the Youth Justice Victims Register. The register provides information to registered victims about a sentenced young offender and the administration of their sentence.</p>
<p>5.3 Explore links and opportunities to enhance existing government initiatives to reduce property crime risks for vulnerable groups</p>	<p>CSD, JACS</p>	<p><u>Older people</u></p> <p>The ACT Policing Community Safety team has a dedicated Seniors' Liaison Officer (SLO) who makes contact with older people who have been victims of burglary, scams or other offences and put them in contact with support agencies. ACT Policing entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Alzheimer's Australia (AA) last year, which enables services delivered by AA to be activated for people living with alzheimers.</p> <p>The Active Ageing Framework 2015-2018 has a Strategic Output which states 'Age-friendly physical environment that promotes independence and safety'</p> <p>The Office for Veterans and Seniors provides a regular newsletter to subscribers for both individuals and organizations. This newsletter provides an avenue to communicate any policy development, programs or events which may include matters relating to property crime and safety.</p> <p>The Participation (veterans and seniors) Grants will be opened in late August 2017 with one of the priority targets being Respect and Inclusion of Seniors. This priority targets the wellbeing and participation of seniors.</p> <p><u>Tenants</u></p> <p>Following the review of the <i>Residential Tenancies Act 1997</i>, minimum security standards for tenanted properties will be considered in future years as part of the second tranche of amendments to the legislation.</p> <p><u>Residents of high density Government housing</u></p> <p>ACT Policing conduct bi-annual community engagement events in the housing precincts. This is a multi-agency event attended by police, Housing ACT, Neighbourhood Watch, Domestic Violence Crisis Service and others.</p> <p>The High Density Housing Safety and Security Program, operating since 2008, is a collaborative effort between the JACS Directorate, ACT Housing, ACT Health, ACTP and ReLink Australia Inc to address crime and anti-social behaviour in six high-density housing complexes on</p>



	<p>Ainslie Avenue. The project, working to reduce contact with the criminal justice system, increase community safety and build community connectedness, is recognised as a practical example of justice reinvestment in action.</p> <p>In 2016-2017 the Australian Institute of Criminology finalised its evaluation of the program. The evaluation concluded that the High Density Housing Safety and Security Program met its objectives effectively demonstrating the benefits of implementing community development approaches and facilitating access to services that reduce or prevent crime in public housing areas. In particular the evaluation demonstrated the program's effectiveness to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce the occurrence of violent crime by 50 per cent through reduced numbers of recorded assault offences;</li> <li>• reduce the occurrence of property crime by 60 per cent through reduced numbers of recorded property offences;</li> <li>• reduce the occurrence of disturbance incidents by 49 per cent through reduced numbers of low level disorder incidents requiring police attendance; and</li> <li>• increase the level of social cohesion among residents at public housing sites across Ainslie Avenue.</li> </ul> <p><u>Victims of property crime as a result of domestic and family violence</u></p> <p>Housing ACT has a number of initiatives/programs in place to reduce the risk of property crime to vulnerable groups, especially those experiencing and escaping domestic and family violence.</p> <p>The Safer Families Grants Program was initiated as a pilot program in February 2017. Total funding of \$315,000 has been allocated to the program over a four year period with \$30,000 available in 2016-17. The grants are for amounts of up to \$2000 to assist women and children escaping domestic and family violence to establish new rental accommodation.</p> <p>Housing ACT undertakes modifications to public housing properties for tenants experiencing and escaping domestic and family violence. These may include installation of window and door locks, security screens doors, security screens to sliding doors, lighting and landscape modifications and any site specific alterations recommended by specialist domestic violence representatives.</p> <p>In 2016-17 almost all families escaping domestic violence who were referred to the Multi-Disciplinary Panel through a Women's refuge were assessed as meeting the priority criteria for social housing.</p>
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		<p>Where there were current and high levels of risk, transfers and allocations were facilitated in a responsive and timely manner.</p> <p>In 2016-17, 22% of applications received by the new <i>Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme</i> were victims of family and domestic violence. A total of 10 immediate needs payments were made to assist victims of all crimes with personal security measures and/or relocation.</p>
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**Objective 6 – The quality of data and intelligence to inform police driven crime prevention activities are improved**

<p>6.1 Continue to promote reporting of crime or suspicious behaviour</p>	<p>ACTP, JACS</p>	<p>ACT Policing regularly includes reference to reporting suspicious activity to Crime Stoppers in media releases, in interviews and social media posts. In 2016-2017 Crime Stoppers was mentioned in more than 180 media releases.</p> <p>ACT Policing supports Neighbourhood watch campaigns and information provided to Neighborhood Watch newsletters.</p> <p>Feedback is regularly provided to the community on incidents that are resolved as a result of reporting to Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers.</p>
<p>6.2 Continue to develop and implement strategies to target recidivist property crime offenders</p>	<p>ACTP</p>	<p>ACT Policing employs the following strategies to target recidivist property crime offenders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intelligence informed targeting of recidivist offenders, issues and locations;</li> <li>• High visibility targeting;</li> <li>• Covert targeting; and</li> <li>• Disruption activities for individuals and groups engaging in property crime.</li> </ul> <p>ACT Policing has implemented a proactive Regional Property Task Force to identify, apprehend and disrupt a group of suspected offenders. The Task Force comprised ACT Policing members from Response, Criminal Investigations and Intelligence areas, and worked collaboratively with AFP Forensic Intelligence, ACT Corrective Services' Intelligence and NSW Police Force.</p> <p>Operational results of the Task Force included 12 arrests with over 157 charges. In addition to this, the Task Force located and seized a significant amount of stolen property from a recovered stolen motor vehicle and a search warrant. More than 25 stolen motor vehicles were recovered, worth over \$400,000.</p> <p>In recognition of the effectiveness of this capability the Task Force has</p>

		<p>been sustained with a continued focus on recidivism and volume crime. Results as of 30 June 2017 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 individuals had been arrested, with 20 individuals remanded</li> <li>• 268 charges were laid by ACT Policing, with further charges likely pending as operational results and forensic information are received</li> <li>• nine search warrants were executed and</li> <li>• over \$1.4 million worth of stolen vehicles and property recovered, the majority of which has been returned to owners.</li> </ul>
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**JACS** - Justice and Community Safety Directorate, **EPSD** – Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, **ED** – Education Directorate, **ACTP** – ACT Policing, **CSD** – Community Services Directorate

## Progress against the targets

Target		2016-17 Progress	Data Source
<b>Target 1:</b> Victim rates for unlawful entry with intent (UEWI) remain below the national rate	✓	The ACT victim rates for UEWI in 2016 was 517.0 <sup>1</sup> per 100,000 people. This is 262.6 under the Australian rate of 779.6.	4510.0 – Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia 2016
<b>Target 2:</b> Number of motor vehicle thefts is at or below the national rate	—	There was 914 motor vehicle thefts in the ACT in 2015-16. This increased by 181 thefts to 1095 in 2016-17. The ACT theft rate per 1,000 registrations was 3.19 in 2015-16 and increased to 3.74 in 2016-17, this is 0.83 above the national motor vehicle theft rate.  The national motor vehicle theft rate also increased from 2.85 thefts per 1,000 registrations in 2015-16 to 2.91 per 1,000 registrations in 2016-17.	National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council - Motor Vehicle Theft Summary 2016/17, extracted on 31 July 2017.
<b>Target 3:</b> Stop the year on year increase in the rate of other thefts <sup>2</sup> reported by 2020	✓	There were 9,564 reported other theft offences in the 2016-17 financial year compared to 10,952 offences in 2015-16, a decrease of 12.7% (1,388 offences).	June 2017 ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile.
<b>Target 4:</b> Stop the year on year increase in the rate of bicycle thefts reported by 2020	✓	There were 479 reported bicycle thefts in the 2016-17 financial year, compared to 672 in 2015-16, a decrease of 28.7% (193 offences).	June 2017 ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile.
<b>Target 5:</b> Stop the year on year increase in the rate of property damage <sup>3</sup> reported by 2020	—	There were 5,271 reported property damage offences in the 2016-17 financial year compared to 5,116 in 2015-16, an increase of 3% (155 offences).	ACT Policing Annual Report 2016-17

<sup>1</sup> For UEWI, the victim is the place/premise which is defined as a single connected property that is owned, rented or occupied by the same person or group of people. Victimization rates are expressed as victims per 100,000 of the ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP) as at 30 June 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Other theft includes all theft excluding motor vehicle and bicycles theft.

<sup>3</sup> Property damage includes arson; damage at burglary – dwellings, shops, other; and other property damage including graffiti.

## Other data sources

ACT Policing plays a key role in keeping property crime rates low and reports on a number of property crime related performance measures in the policing Purchase Agreement. In 2016/17 ACT Policing performed well against all of these targets.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE OR INDICATOR OF EFFECTIVENESS	2016/17 RESULT
Number of offences against property reported or becoming known	Target was 8,300.0 offences per 100,000 population or less. The result was 5,145.0 per 100,000, exceeding the target by 38.0%.
Percentage of persons who are concerned about becoming a victim of housebreaking in the next 12 months	To be successful in this measure, the result must be less than the national average.  In 2016-17, the national average was 61.7%, and the ACT result was 53.0%. The target was achieved by 8.7%.
Percentage of persons who are concerned about becoming a victim of motor vehicle theft in the next 12 months	To be successful in this measure, the result must be less than the national average. In 2016-17, the national average was 50.1%, and the ACT result was 43.5%. The target was achieved by 6.6%.  The ABS's publication <i>4530.0 Crime Victimization</i> usually demonstrates that ACT residents report motor vehicle theft at higher rates than residents of other states or territories, which partially explains the higher actual rates of motor vehicle theft than the national average. In 2015-16 100% of ACT survey respondents indicated they had reported motor vehicle theft to police, compared to that national average of 92.9%.

### Results against ABS 4530.0 - Crime Victimization, Australia 2015-16

Survey results for household crime in 2015-16 shows the ACT was above the national average victimisation rate for motor vehicle theft, theft from a motor vehicle and property damage. However, the prevalence rates across all categories apart from motor vehicle theft were all lower in 2015-16 than in 2014-15. This data is treated with caution because some of the data has a 25-50% margin of error due to the small sample size used in this survey for the ACT. This is supplementary data to that used for the targets.

Victimisation Prevalence Rates 2014-15 and 2015-16 (%) for the ACT and Australia

Offence	2014-15		2015-16		2015/16 National average standing
	ACT (%)	National Average (%)	ACT (%)	National Average (%)	
Break-ins	2.8	2.7	1.6	2.5	↓ Below the national average
Attempted break-ins	2.9	2.0	1.9	2.1	↓ Below the national average
Motor vehicle theft	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.5	↑ Above the national average
Theft from motor vehicle	4.3	2.9	3.9	2.9	↑ Above the national average
Property damage	6.7	5.7	6.0	4.8	↑ Above the national average
Other theft	2.9	2.9	2.0	2.7	↓ Below the national average