

**2020**

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**PROPERTY CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGY 2016-2020  
FINAL PROGRESS REPORT 2020**

**TABLING STATEMENT**

**Presented by  
Shane Rattenbury MLA  
Attorney General**

Madam speaker

The Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-2020 includes a commitment to table progress reports in the ACT Legislative Assembly.

This is the final report for this Strategy and provides an update on progress against the targets in the Strategy and the Government's achievements against the actions.

I am pleased to inform the Assembly that overall, the number of property offences in the ACT has been decreasing over the four years since the Strategy was introduced. In 2019-20 there were 17,737 recorded property offences, which is 3,933 less than four years ago in 2015-16.

Within the property offence category, the Strategy aimed to keep crime rates low in the five target areas:

- Unlawful entry with intent
- Motor vehicle theft
- Bicycle theft
- Other theft; and
- Property damage

The good news is four of the five targets under this Strategy have been achieved:

- The ACT was below the national rate of 683 victims of unlawful entry with intent per 100,000 population, with an ACT rate of 613 in 2019.
- The year on year increase in the 'other' theft rate has been stopped. The ACT recorded 139 per 100,000 population in 2019-20, 82 less than in 2015-16.
- There were small increases in property damage in 2016-17 and 2018-19, however in 2019-20 the rate of property damage was 94 per 100,000 population, 31 less than 2015-16.
- The bicycle theft rate has remained steady at 17 thefts per 100,000 population.

The main challenge for the ACT in relation to property crime continues to be motor vehicle theft. The target to date has not been achieved, with the ACT remaining above the national rate.

To assist in addressing this challenge the 'Lock and hide to protect your ride' component of the Outsmart the Offender campaign was released in October 2019. This campaign will continue in 2021 and motor vehicle theft will remain a key focus for ACT Policing, and the Directorate of Justice and Community Safety.

The Outsmart the Offender campaign is a key initiative under the Strategy aimed at raising awareness of what individuals can do to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim to property crime.

The campaign includes these key messages targeting important areas of prevention:

- Lock and hide to protect your ride – targeting motor vehicle theft and theft from vehicles
- Keep out a break in – targeting home burglary
- Lock up, cover up – targeting theft from apartments
- Lock it or lose it – targeting bicycle theft
- Keep burglars out of your business – targeting theft from small businesses
- Make your tools tough to take – targeting tradie tool theft

The ACT Policing social media team leading the Outsmart the Offender campaign has had some great results in social media engagement on a topic where it can be difficult to engage people:

- Lock and hide to protect your ride – which had a reach of over 105,000 on Facebook with total engagement sitting around 3,500
- Keep out a break in – which reached over 120,000 people on Facebook and over 21,000 on Twitter, with engagement across the two platforms sitting around 7,800
- Engagement across the other areas for key messages was also high, sitting at between 70,000 and 100,000 people reached.

This campaign has been developed with longevity in mind, and will continue to be rolled out over the coming year.

While COVID 19 restrictions did stall some campaign activities - we look forward to being able to promote these messages further, as community events ramp up again as COVID 19 restrictions continue to ease.

Other key actions in 2019-20 that contributed to keeping Canberra a safe place to live and preventing property crime under the Strategy include:

- The SafeHome Program currently run by SupportLink, which provided 157 home safety assessments free of charge for

people vulnerable to property crime. Minor modifications were carried out on 87 properties to increase home security. An independent evaluation and cost benefit analysis on the program is currently underway to inform decision making around the future of this program.

- Enhancements to the ACT Policing website statistics and an independent review of the ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile are improving the accessibility of crime and justice data.
- ACT Policing's Community Policing Proactive Intervention and Disruption team commenced in October this year and are focusing on working with partners to solve problems and reduce the impact of repeat calls for service, including intervention and diversion strategies for property crime offences.
- Through ACT Crime Stoppers, police are able to receive vital information from the community that may be the missing link police need to help solve an investigation. In 2019, contact via ACT Crime Stoppers resulted in 3688 information reports being raised and passed on to police investigators in the ACT.
- ACT Policing provided funding assistance for a new website for ACT Crime Stoppers to improve mobile responsiveness and reporting speed.

- In 2019-20, all Suburban Land Agency design of public parks, playgrounds and streets actively considered and complied with the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. Place-making remained an important component of designing new developments, with a sense of place created by using themes and public art.
- Finally, the *Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2019* strengthened the ability for tenants to make modifications to their rental property which improve the security of the premises for the tenant or other people on the premises. These could include installing deadlocks or security cameras.

These are just a few examples of the great work carried out under this Strategy to prevent property crime.

Although Canberra is one of the safest places to live and we experience lower crime rates than other jurisdictions, we do face some challenges and need to ensure we do not become complacent.

The Government will continue to play a role in making places more difficult and less appealing for criminal activity. We will continue to work closely with ACT Policing to raise awareness and empower the community to safeguard their property.

Madam speaker, I table the Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-2020 Final Progress Report before the Assembly.

ENDS