



South Australia



Supporting
Better
Communities



CAR THEFT CASE STUDY

Situation

Car theft and theft of valuable items from vehicles is not just inconvenient for victims - it can be an extremely stressful experience. that can impact on local community confidence. In December 2020, SA Police approached Crime Stoppers South Australia after a spike in localised crime issues in the Bridgewater and Stirling areas in the Adelaide Hills. Thieves appeared to be most active during the Thursday - Sunday evening period and were taking advantage of unlocked vehicles parked in the street, driveways and in carports. The added concern was that community complacency was encouraging thieves to return to the area, to steal expensive items from unlocked vehicles, such as tools, wallets and purses, GPS units, money and more.

It was agreed that a targeted policing and integrated community engagement campaign would be developed between Crime Stoppers and SA Police in response.

Objective

The campaign's objective was to work in partnership with SA Police and the local community to reduce incidents of car theft and theft from vehicles in the Stirling and Bridgewater area through an integrated engagement campaign.

Elements

- On-the-ground policing measures by police were utilised, including overt and covert patrols.
- Local community engagement utilised geo-fenced social media to encourage people to remove valuable items and lock their cars.
- The community were also encouraged to immediately report any suspicious activity to enable a rapid police response, and share tips with Crime Stoppers via the hotline and website.
- Social media content was developed for Facebook - the most highly used social media platform in South Australia.
- Targeted people were aged between 16-45, male+female, social media users living in and around Bridgewater 5155 and Stirling, 5152. This age span captured vehicle owners in the local area. The 2016 Census flagged the population of Bridgewater as 3,558 and Stirling is 2,966, which was used to determine effectiveness of social media advertising reach into the community.
- Because many of the affected vehicles had been left unsecured, owners were encouraged to lock their vehicles and remove any items of value.
- A link to the Crime Stoppers SA website occurred, and a fact sheet on how to keep a vehicle safe was developed and downloadable from the website.
- A 2-week intense burst of geo-fenced social media advertising was utilised.

Results

- Strong alignment with local police - with the geo-fenced advertising approach sparking significant wider interest across SA Police.
- **Week One** of social media advertising achieved a reach of 11,093 people, 127 reactions, comments and shares. and 381 clicks to the car safety fact sheets.
- **Week Two** geo-fenced social media advertising reached an estimated 14,850 people, 172 likes, comments and shares and 980 clicks to the Crime Stoppers SA website.
- Prominent online presence through Crime Stoppers. SA webpage - with the car safety fact sheet downloaded more than 50 times.
- Positive feedback received from SA Police, with **no reported thefts** during the 2-week campaign period.
- This successful community engagement initiative has since been replicated across other local community areas, including the Far West Coast, as a result of requests by police.



In South Australia, an average of 25 crimes are solved every week, thanks to about 200 contacts every month from the community.