

PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL



NSW Police Force

Port Stephens Crime Prevention Plan 2017 - 2020

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFZ	Alcohol Free Zone
AG	Attorney General (NSW)
AGD	Attorney General Department
APA	Alcohol Prohibited Area
BOCSAR	NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research
CPO	Crime Prevention Officer
CPP	Crime Prevention Plan
CPTED	Crime Principles through Environmental Design
CSPC	Community Safety Precinct Committee
LAC	Local Area Command
LGA	Local Government Area
PSC	Port Stephens Council
PSLAC	Port Stephens Local Area Command
PSGAT	Port Stephens Graffiti Action Team Inc.
SFMV	Steal from Motor Vehicle

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Prepared by
Port Stephens Council
in partnership with
NSW Police Force - Port Stephens
Local Area Command

1.0 INTRODUCTION | 1.1 OVERVIEW

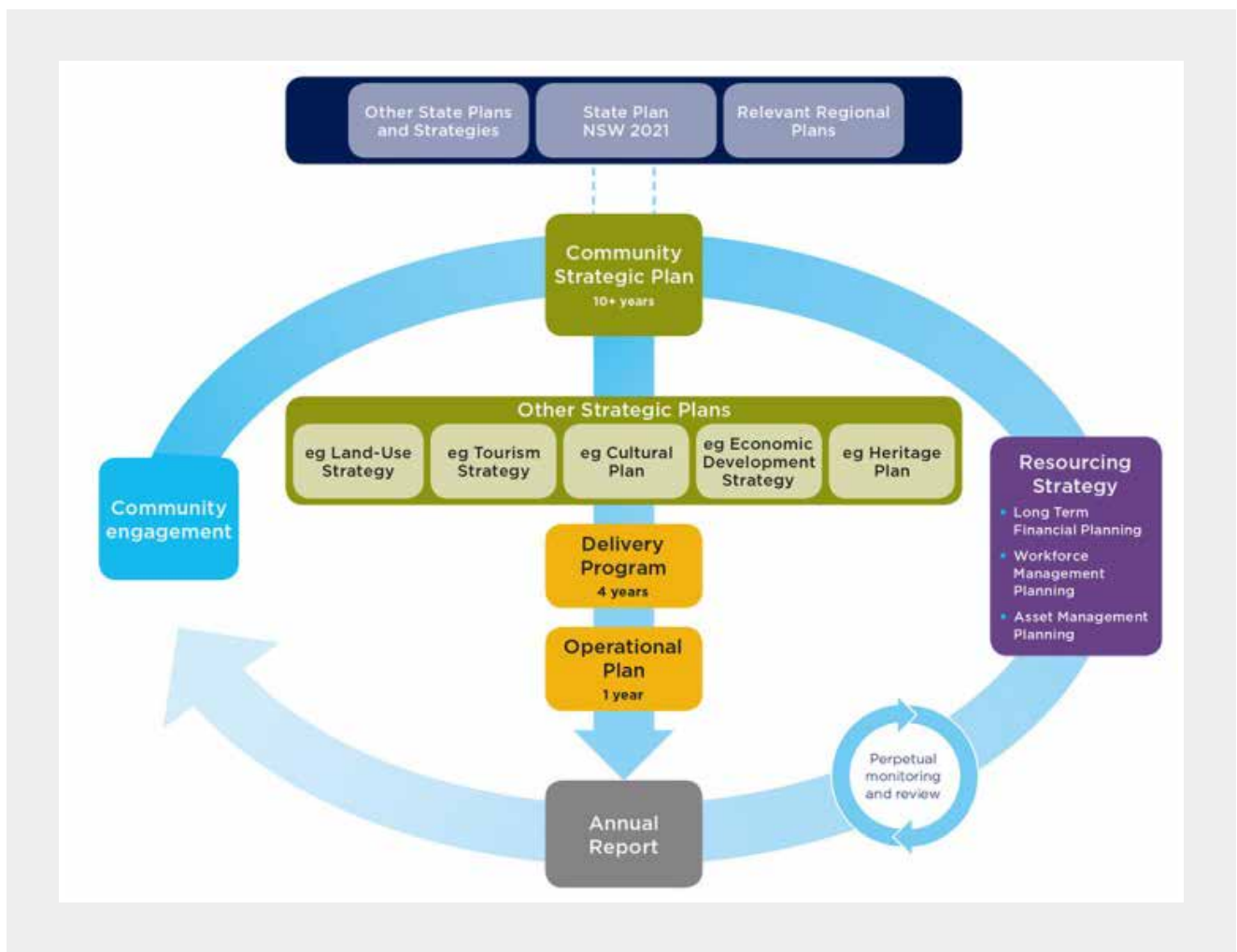
Port Stephens Council is committed to achieving goals to reduce rates of crime, reoffending and anti-social behaviour. It is recognised that Local Government is in the best position to collaboratively implement crime reduction strategies due to the localised nature of many of the crimes and antisocial behaviour. State and Federal government provides Council with guidance and funding to assist with Council's goals.

This Crime Prevention Plan (CPP) has been developed in accordance with the NSW Department of Police and Justice's 'Guidelines for developing a Crime Prevention Strategy' (Figure 2). These guidelines provide a template and information on developing a plan that focuses on the area's priority crimes. The CPP identifies the roles and responsibilities of Council and other key stakeholders and outlines an Action Plan to reduce these priority crimes.

Once the CPP is adopted by Port Stephens Council and endorsed by the Attorney Generals Department (AGD), Council will be eligible to apply for state government funding to implement strategies contained in this Action Plan. Council will also seek to develop formal support for the CPP from the various key stakeholders who will then implement the Plan.

The Port Stephens CPP focuses on actions that may reduce the incidents of malicious damage - graffiti, Steal from Motor Vehicle and Fraud occurring in the Port Stephens Local Government Area (LGA). The CPP is referred to within the Operational Plan as part of the strategic hierarchy of documents used by local governments across NSW. (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Plan linkage diagram



Source: Office of Local Government



COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL

In addition to addressing identified crimes within the Port Stephens LGA, other ongoing actions and initiatives being undertaken by Council are:

Statutory enforcement:

Council Rangers serve residents through two main functions:

- Enforcement of legislation (Acts, regulations, codes and policies); and
- Responsibility for effective animal control to ensure compliance with statutory and safety requirements.

Other Ranger responsibilities include:

- Investigations into the illegal dumping of rubbish;
- Footpath obstruction investigations;
- Illegal parking;
- Local area patrolling;
- Abandoned vehicle investigations;
- Straying stock;
- Animal (domestic) control; and
- Restrictions on public reserves and roads.

Strategic Planning:

- Participation in regional safety meetings;
- Incorporating safer by design – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies into planning processes;

- Supporting and promoting community safety initiatives;
- Maintaining and strengthening partnerships;
- Responding to community concerns regarding anti-social behaviour and malicious damage;
- Providing information and education about crime prevention;
- Implementing Alcohol Free Zones - AFZ (roads, footpaths and carparks) and Alcohol prohibited areas - APA (Parks, reserves and beaches);
- Police liaison; and
- Support to Port Stephens Liquor Accord as required.

Council initiatives:

- Council leads the Local Emergency Management Team to ensure a coordinated response in the unlikely event of an emergency;
- Graffiti - rapid removal;
- Local Consent Authority – Liquor License applications;
- Road closures; and
- CCTV within private buildings and developing a policy framework around the operations of CCTV in the public domain in locations such as Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace town centres.

Figure 2

Crime Prevention Plan development

Description of process	Stakeholders
Draft plan developed with assistance of key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Police Force • Port Stephens Community Safety Precinct Committee • Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee • Relevant Council staff
Internal review of plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council Staff
External review of plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port Stephens LAC • Graffiti Action Team • Port Stephens Community Safety Precinct Committee • Relevant Council staff
Report to Council for approval to place on public exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council staff • Councillors
Public exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council staff • Community
Review of plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council Staff
Plan sent to NSW Department Police and Justice to review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Department and Justice
Report to Council to adopt CPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council Staff • Councillors
Formal agreements from responsible agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council Staff and key stakeholders
Plan sent to NSW Department Police and Justice for endorsement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council staff
Apply to NSW Department Police and Justice for grants to implement strategies in CPP Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Council Staff

Figure 3

Crime Prevention Plan responsibilities

NSW Police Force/ Port Stephens Local Area Command	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and recorded crime statistics • Assistance in the development of the plan • Implementation and assistance with some of the crime reduction strategies in the Action Plan
Community Safety Precinct Committee/Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance in the development of the plan • Support with the implementation of part of the Action Plan
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the plan with the assistance of key stakeholders • Seek Council adoption of the Plan • Seek NSW Department Police and Justice endorsement of Plan • Seek funding for actions within the Plan from NSW Department Police and Justice • Implementation of the Action Plan with assistance from stakeholders • Monitoring and evaluation of the Plan
Chambers of Commerce – Nelson Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of CCTV in town centre

1.2 THE AIM

This CPP aims to implement strategies that assist in reducing the incidents of crime within Port Stephens. These strategies were selected through a review of relevant similar practices across Australia, careful consideration of the issues particular to the Port Stephens area and the resources available to implement the plan.

2.0 CRIME PROFILE

This section provides a brief analysis of crime in the Port Stephens Local Government Area.

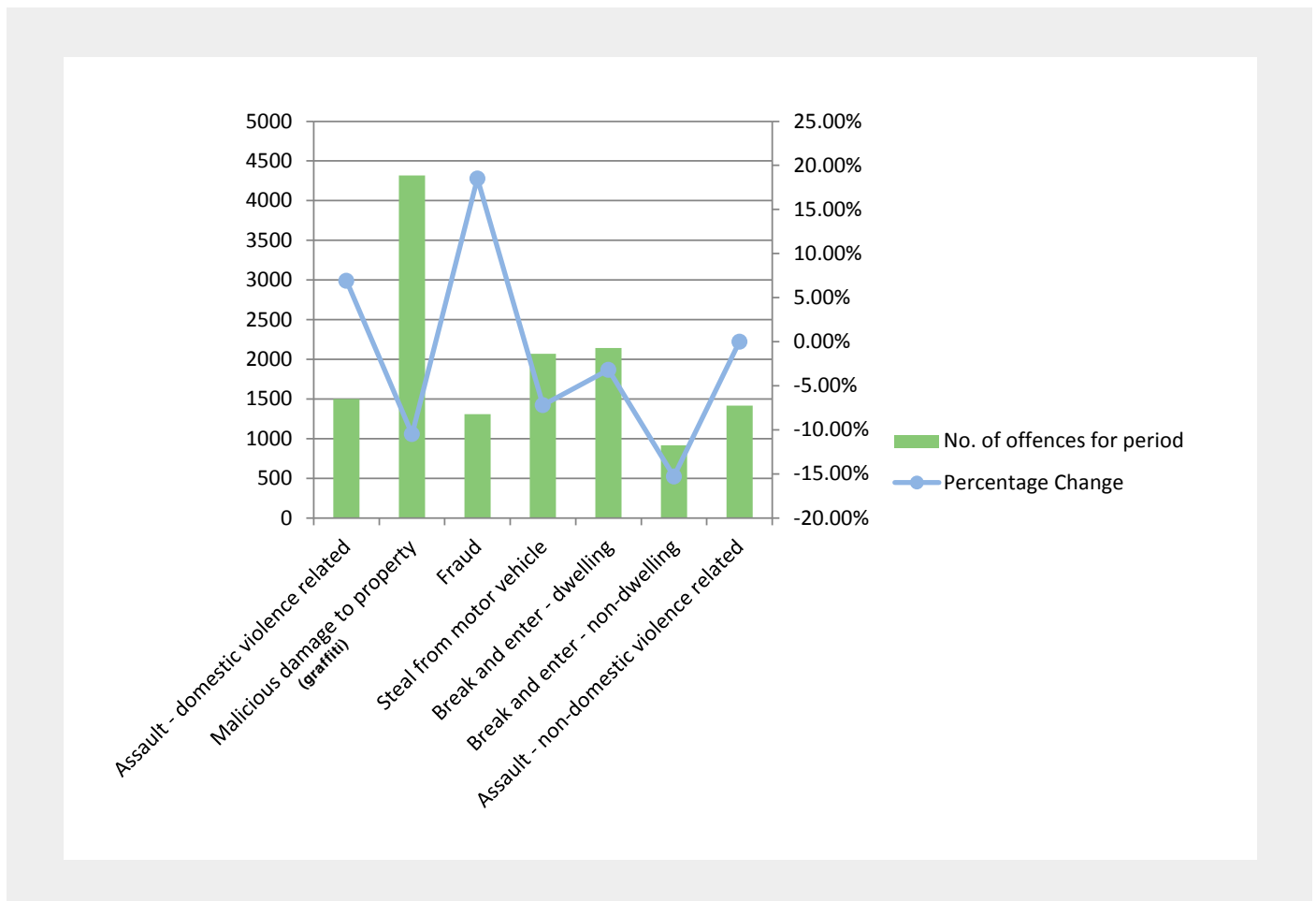
2.1 LOCAL CRIME PROFILE

The purpose of developing a crime profile is to determine the priorities for this CPP. In seeking information for this crime profile, Council sought advice from the NSW Police, local Crime Prevention Officer (CPO), Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee, community survey and recorded crime statistics were gathered from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR).

In determining the priorities of the plan an analysis of crime was conducted for the period July 2011 - April 2016, for each offence type.

Information provided below includes only recorded criminal incidents which are defined as by the NSW Bureau of crime statistics and research "any activity detected or reported to police".

Figure 4
Crime Offences and Trends reported from
July 2011 – June 2016



Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

Figure 4 information was sourced from NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) and indicates that “Assault -Domestic violence related” crime incidents in Port Stephens has had a 6.9% upward trend in the previous five year period.

There is an apparent discrepancy between the focus of Councils’ programs and initiatives and identified crime hierarchy. “Assault - domestic violence related” was viewed as Port Stephens highest reported crime. It is also noted that only a handful of councils have programs and initiatives that specifically focused on this individual crime.

However, while this may appear to be a discrepancy, it is more likely a reflection of the limitations in the ability of local councils to lead and be responsible for some specific crime prevention and actions. Crime prevention is primarily the responsibility of other specific agencies, in the offence type ‘Assault - domestic violence related’. NSW Police and/or state human services agencies are best placed to address this crime.

An alternative explanation is that local councils view their role in such issues as involving less ‘frontline’ prevention activity and more of supporting the work of justice and human service agencies while improving the wider set of protective factors within their local community. (Understanding the local government role in crime prevention - Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice, Peter Homel & Georgina Fuller - Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra July 2015)

As a result of the limited ability of councils to address ‘Assault – Domestic Violence related’, the CPP seeks to focus Council on the following crime activities:

1. Fraud;
2. Steal from Motor vehicle; and
3. Malicious damage – graffiti

2.2 CRIME PRIORITIES

2.2.1 FRAUD

The prevention and control of fraud are two of the great challenges for Australia now, and in the years to come. Success in dealing with fraud will enhance Australia’s business reputation, save resources in the public sector, and reduce the personal hardship that fraud causes to countless victims each year.

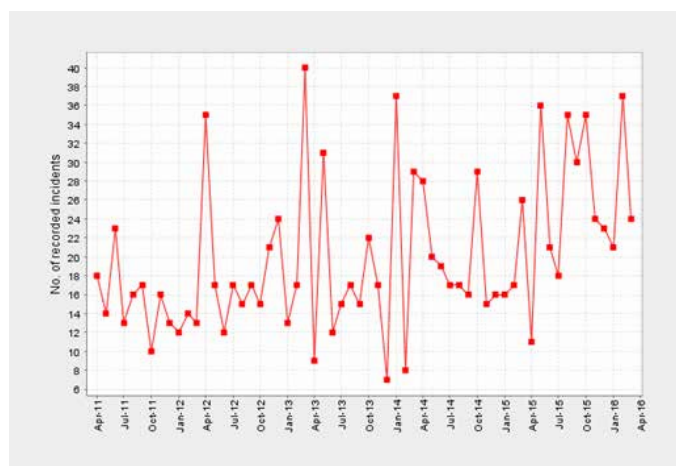
Fraud involves the use of dishonest or deceitful conduct in order to obtain some unjust advantage over someone else.

The circumstances in which fraud can exist are enormously diverse. Some of the types of fraud include: commercial fraud, fraud against governments, consumer fraud, migration fraud, securities fraud, superannuation fraud, intellectual property fraud, computer and telecommunications fraud, insurance fraud, plastic card fraud, charitable contribution fraud, identity-related fraud, advance fee fraud, art fraud, health care fraud and the list goes on where new opportunities for deceptive conduct arises all the time.

While crimes of deception are well-established in history, recent technological, social, demographic and economic developments have brought about changes in the form fraud takes and how it is perpetrated.

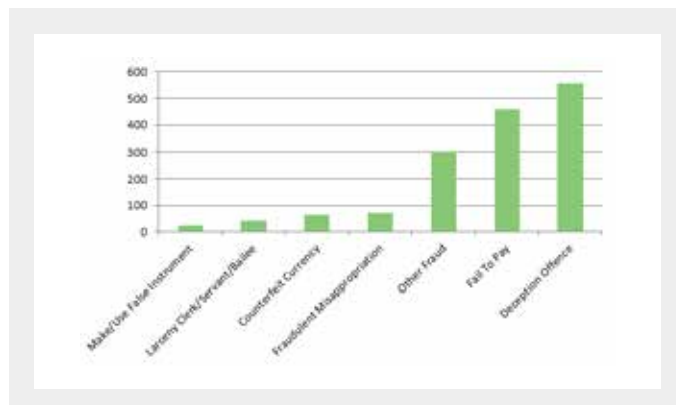
Scams and cons have been around as long as commerce itself, but now, many are facilitated by digital technology. Both individuals and organisations may be the victims of fraud. (Fraud Prevention and Control in Australia, Dr. Adam Graycar, Director, Australian Institute of Criminology 2000).

Figure 5
Fraud Offences reported April 2011 to June 2016
Port Stephens Local Government Area



Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research indicates that Fraud offences have had a statistically significant upward trend over a 60 month period from April 2011 till June 2016. The average annual percentage change was: 15.2%. This indicates a 60% increase in fraud offences since 2011

Figure 6
Local Port Stephens convictions for fraud



NSW Police PSLAC statistics show in figure 6 that the most common local fraud offences consist of the following fraud types: Deception, Fail to pay, Fraudulent misappropriation and Other fraud offences. It is noted that there is a rise in most fraud categories for the last year from 2015 to 2016

Fraud Types as reported in figure 6

Deception – 192B Crimes Act 1900

- (1) In this Part, “deception” means any deception, by words or other conduct, as to fact or as to law, including:
- (a) a deception as to the intentions of the person using the deception or any other person, or
 - (b) conduct by a person that causes a computer, a machine or any electronic device to make a response that the person is not authorised to cause it to make.
- (2) A person does not commit an offence under this Part by a deception unless the deception was intentional or reckless.

Counterfeit currency – Crimes (Currency) Act 1981

Making counterfeit money or counterfeit securities

A person shall not make, or begin to make, counterfeit money or a counterfeit prescribed security.

Penalty:

- (a) in the case of a person, not being a body corporate—imprisonment for 14 years; or
- (b) in the case of a person, being a body corporate—750 penalty units.

Larceny by Clerks or servants – 156 Crimes Act 1900

Whosoever, being a clerk, or servant, steals any property belonging to, or in the possession, or power of, his or her master, or employer, or any property into or for which it has been converted, or exchanged, shall be liable to imprisonment for ten years.

Larceny – Fail to pay – 117 Crimes Act 1900

Larceny, also known as ‘stealing’ includes the offence Fail to pay. The offence occurs when a person dishonestly takes property belonging to someone else without their permission, and without any intention of returning it. A stealing offence such as shop lifting and “drive offs” which are an ongoing concern of the Service Station Industry and the wider community. This offence can incur a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment.

Make/Use false statement – 307A False or misleading applications - Crimes Act 1900

- (1) A person is guilty of an offence if:
- (a) the person makes a statement (whether orally, in a document or in any other way), and
 - (b) the person does so knowing that, or reckless as to whether, the statement:
 - (i) is false or misleading, or
 - (ii) omits any matter or thing without which the statement is misleading, and
 - (c) the statement is made in connection with an application for an authority or benefit, and
 - (d) any of the following subparagraphs apply:
 - (i) the statement is made to a public authority,
 - (ii) the statement is made to a person who is exercising or performing any power, authority, duty or function under, or in connection with, a law of the State,
 - (iii) the statement is made in compliance or purported compliance with a law of the State.

Maximum penalty: Imprisonment for 2 years, or a fine of 200 penalty units, or both.

Fraudulent misappropriation

These category have been repealed (but still applicable for pre February 2010 offences)

Make or use false instrument — s 300 Crimes Act 1900 (repealed)

Fraudulently misappropriate money collected/received — s 178A Crimes Act 1900 (repealed)

Obtain money etc. by false or misleading statements — s 178BB Crimes Act 1900 (repealed)

Other frauds:

Other frauds could include, identity theft, scams, credit card and banking fraud, taxation, insurance and online monies or securities fraud are examples.

Sources: Crime Act 1900 & Port Stephens Local Area Command – NSW Police Force



Figure 7

Port Stephens Local Area Command map



PORT STEPHENS LOCAL AREA COMMAND

2.2.2 STEAL FROM MOTOR VEHICLE

Steal from motor vehicles is a category offence encompassing:

- Theft of items left in cars, for example GPS, iPods, laptops, money and sunglasses;
- Theft of interior car parts such as radios or batteries; and
- Theft of external car parts such as wheels, registration plates and hubcaps

The most common location for stealing from motor vehicle offences is residential locations, followed by public places.

Effective crime prevention interventions for implementation by local Government

Research has demonstrated the importance of considering parking provisions in housing developments, recommending that vehicles should be parked in garages or within the immediate vicinity of the property, that consideration should be given to ensuring adequate natural surveillance of parked vehicles and that there is a need to consider both vehicle safety and the convenience of residents.

Identifying risk factors for theft from car offences can inform the design and implementation of an appropriate and effective prevention. Insight into the steal from motor vehicle offences depends on the favoured methods of gaining entry into cars. This could be an unlocked vehicle, smashed window entry or using stolen keys. (Armitage 2011b)

Other contributing factors for opportunistic entry into vehicles are:

- The lack of natural surveillance;
- Victim carelessness; and
- Local places that are considered a greater risk (hotspots).

The majority of theft from car offences can be prevented by car owners adopting common sense precautions, such as:

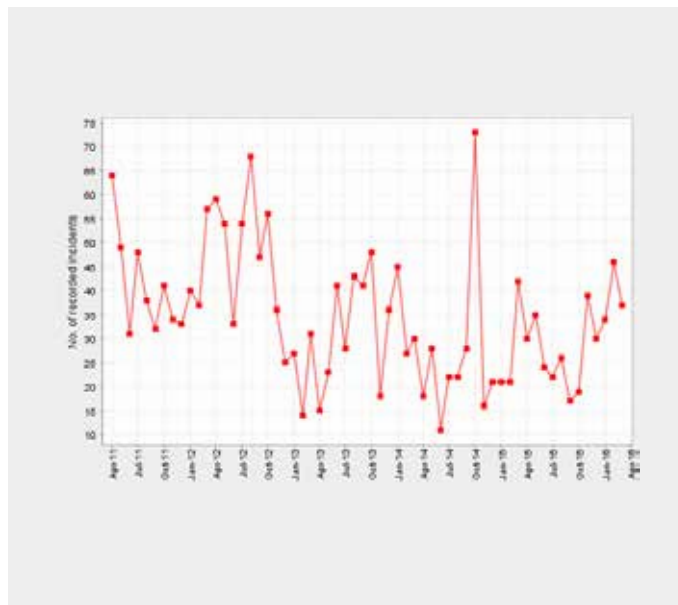
- Making sure that the car is locked;
- Parking the car where they (or others) can see it;
- Not leaving valuables in the car; and
- Where possessions are left in the car, hiding them from sight

This crime is one of the least reported as most victims' motor vehicle insurance does not cover their personal belongings. The most commonly stolen items in rank order:

- Registration plates - removal with a screwdriver;
- GPS devices - smashed window;
- Cash, wallets and other valuables - smashed window or forced lock; and
- Laptop computer, mobile phone, tablets and other small items - smashed window or used Bluetooth to detect presence. (BOCSAR 2012)



Figure 8
Steal from motor vehicle
Port Stephens LGA April 2011 – April 2016



Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research graph as outlined above in figure 8, indicates the downward decrease in reported steal from motor vehicle incidents from 2011 to 2016. It is noted that since 2015 to 2016 reported incidents have increased and decreased sporadically, this could be due to Port Stephens being a high tourist holiday destinations and school holiday periods.

NSW Police-PSLAC statistics indicate that Steal from Motor Vehicle reported incidents between 2011 and 2016 were reported as occurring mostly in public places (1185), residential (562) and carparks (402).

Most reported stolen items were cash (610), communications equipment (236) and credit cards (245).

The five top suburbs reporting theft of items were Raymond Terrace (674), Nelson Bay (212), Medowvie (188), Williamtown (139) and Anna Bay (121).

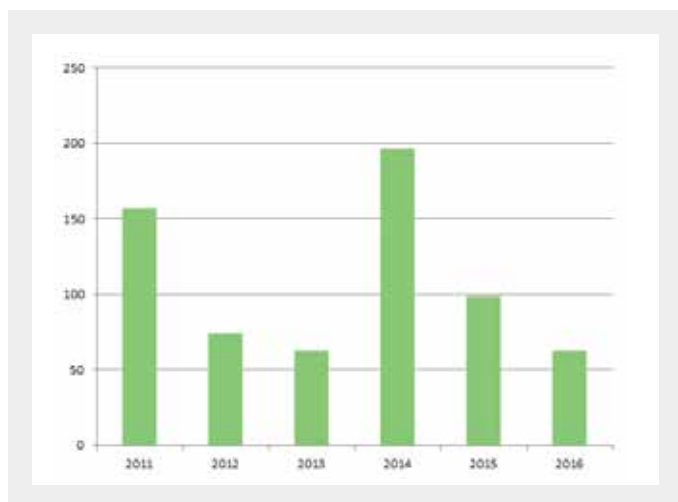
2.2.3 Malicious Damage – Graffiti

Definition: (BOCSAR) - Malicious damage is defined as the wilful and unlawful destruction, damage or defacement of public or private property or the pollution of property or a definable entity held in common by the community. Malicious damage includes the police incident categories of graffiti.

Graffiti is a community wide issue and can cause people to feel unsafe and creates a perception that nobody cares about the area, if left unattended it may attract more vandalism, and even promote other more serious crime.

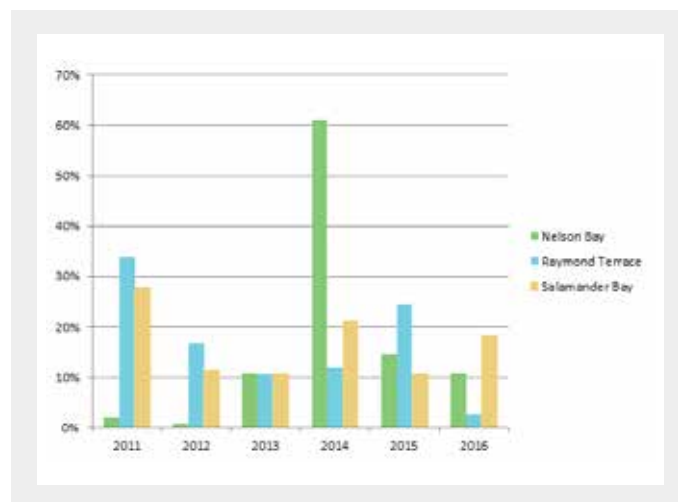
Graffiti is the act of marking property with writing, symbols or graphics and is illegal when committed without the property owners consent.

Figure 9
Reported incidents of graffiti
Port Stephens LGA – 2011-2016



Source: Port Stephens Local Area Command – NSW Police force

Figure 10
Port Stephens Suburbs with highest number of reported incidents of graffiti



Source: Port Stephens Local Area Command – NSW Police force

Graffiti in Port Stephens consisted of 653 reported incidents from June 2011 – April 2016. Locally reported graffiti statistics show that Raymond Terrace (192), Nelson Bay (149) and Salamander Bay (104) have the highest recorded incidents of graffiti within the Port Stephens LGA. It is also noted that the incidents should be treated very cautiously as Port Stephens has a high number of visitors relative to the residential population. This is because the calculations are based on estimated residential population and no adjustment has been made for the number of people visiting each LGA per year.

It was noted that 66 convictions for graffiti were of adult age and 13 were juvenile offenders. There are no current gender statistics available. As noted the offences were primarily committed by adults and the perception that

graffiti is a youth related crime is not apparent in most of the graffiti convictions within Port Stephens.

The analysis of the data indicates that there are inconsistencies in the reporting of graffiti incidents between government and other private agencies. It is considered likely that some incidents are reported twice (e.g. graffiti on Council assets reported to Crime Stoppers are reported to Council and included in Council's database counting the incident twice). It is also likely, that due to public uncertainty of ownership of assets, there is confusion about where or how to report the crime and some people may be reluctant to report the crime at all.



3.0 REVIEW OF PORT STEPHENS GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT PLAN (2009)

Council has recently reviewed the Port Stephens Council Graffiti Management Plan (2009) in conjunction with the new cpp.

The objective of that plan was to provide a clear and consistent framework for the management of graffiti in the Port Stephens LGA. The objectives of the plan:

- Reduce the social, environmental and economic impact of graffiti throughout Port Stephens;
- Provide information and support to other groups and individuals who are reporting and removing graffiti;
- Seek commitment from owners of private property to rapidly remove graffiti vandalism and implement preventative measures where possible;
- Introduce and promote a centralised system to coordinate the removal of graffiti within Council;
- Provide lawful creative outlets for potential graffiti vandals; and
- Identify locations and processes for the placement of legal graffiti in public places

The plan presents an integrated approach to graffiti management applying nine principles which are intended to work together as an integrated response. No one principle can be successful without other principles occurring.

Council identifies that graffiti is not only a Council responsibility but a whole of community issue including state agencies and community.

Port Stephens Council has effective graffiti initiatives including:

- Prompt removal of graffiti on Council owned assets;
- Support to a local volunteer graffiti removal team – Port Stephens Graffiti Action Team Inc. (PSGAT);
- Graffiti Wipe kits available for purchase for removal of graffiti on private land for residents; and
- Support and promotion of National Graffiti Day annually

It is envisaged that Council will draft a Graffiti Management Policy once the CPP has been adopted by Council and endorsed by the Attorney General as a Safer Community Compact.



4.0 ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

This section outlines how the Port Stephens Council and community propose to achieve the plans objectives. These actions arise from community and NSW Police discussions and are viewed as the best way forward in combating the crimes, steal from motor vehicle, graffiti damage and fraud incidents in our community.

Key owner			
SP	Social Planning	PS LGA Schools	Port Stephens Local Government Area Schools
PSLAC	Port Stephens Local Area Command	FS	Facilities & Services
COM	Council communications	PS	Property Services
CD&E	Community Development & Engagement	VIP	Volunteers in Policing
CS	Council Customer Service	RS	Rates Section
PSGAT	PS Graffiti Action Team Inc	RES	Residents
VIC	Volunteers in Policing	HW	Hunter Water

TARGET 1: GRAFFITI

No.	Action	Timing	Owner
1.	Develop a graffiti media campaign	June 17	SP, PSLAC
2.	Youth/school education program (new program rollout)	June 17	PSLAC, PSLGA, Schools
3.	Supply Graffiti Wipe kits for purchase to residence	Ongoing	CS, FS
4.	Continue the successful rapid graffiti removal program	Ongoing	FS, PSGAT
5.	Promotion of annual "Graffiti Removal Day" activity	Oct 17	RES, SP, NSW Govt. PSLAC
6.	Monitor and respond to graffiti complaints received by Council	Ongoing	CS, FS, PSLAC
7.	Investigate funding streams for a mobile CCTV camera for use in identification of graffiti vandals	Ongoing	SP, PSLAC
8.	Graffiti facts flyer or media	June 17	SP, PSLAC ,FS
9.	Actively pursue CPTED initiatives through the DA planning process	Ongoing	SP, PSLAC
10.	Draft an updated Graffiti Management Policy for Council	May 17	SP, PSLAC, FS
11.	Support the use of community murals/street art in highly targeted Council and non-Council assets and utilities (as per Councils Public Art Policy)	Ongoing	CD&E, PS, HW
12.	Investigate possible use of juvenile offenders in the removal of graffiti through liaison with young offenders program	April 17	PSLAC, PSC

TARGET 2: STEAL FROM MOTOR VEHICLE (SFMV)

No.	Action	Timing	Owner
1.	Develop a promotional campaign to encourage crime prevention activities, including highlighting the dangers of leaving valuables in cars	Annually	SP, PSLAC
2.	Commence Steal from Motor Vehicle campaign	Annually	SP, PSLAC
3.	Distribution of educational material to raise community awareness in relation to steal from motor vehicle, including Rego Plate Lock events	Jan 18	PSLAC, VIP
4.	Source funding for the purchase of surf lock type devices for residents and for tourist purchase	Ongoing	SP, CS
5.	Develop a promotional campaign to encourage reporting of Steal from Motor Vehicle crime and to provide instruction on how all community members can prevent Steal from Motor Vehicle crime	June 18	PSLAC, SP

TARGET 3: FRAUD

No.	Action	Timing	Owner
1.	Port Stephens Examiner editorial outlining fraud activity in Port Stephens	June 17	SP, PSLAC
2.	Provide Little Black book outlining fraud activities Seniors week	March 18	SP, CS, PSLAC
3.	Education opportunities to reduce incidence of identity fraud	Annually	PSLAC, SP, COM
4.	Prepare a mail theft factsheet to be distributed to community	Annually	SP, RS, PSLAC, VIP

5.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Two types of evaluation are common in crime prevention—process and outcome evaluation. The actions in the plan will be evaluated annually and as required by NSW Justice. The progress report will monitor and evaluate each action outcome. The report will evaluate and monitor whether the goals and objectives have been achieved and assessing program effectiveness in terms of end results. The CPP actions will be monitored and evaluated utilising the following:

- an understanding of program features that did/did not work;
- measurement of program success in meeting stated goals and objectives;
- evidence base to justify program continuation and/or expansion;
- accountability;
- how is the project progressing;
- is the project making a difference;
- are there any unintended project effects;
- should this program be re-funded;
- what were the main benefits of the program;
- what were the main drawbacks of the program;
- were the goals realistic and achievable;
- was the crime prevention strategy successful in reducing the incidence of the targeted crime? If yes, by how much and over what period;
- how long did it take for the strategy to start having an effect and has the effect been continuing;
- has there been an increase in the reporting of these crime incidents;
- has the intervention impacted on the level of the target crime in surrounding areas; and
- how do the program outcomes measure up against the program performance indicators.

REFERENCE LIST

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