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Alarming rise in Queensland car thefts

Queensland's largest car insurer, RACQ, is warning motorists not to be complacent about vehicle security following a 20% increase in car theft insurance claims across the State.

RACQ spokesperson Ashleigh Paterson said RACQ received 1,827 claims for stolen vehicles across Queensland last financial year.

"It's really concerning that car theft is a growing problem and causing issues for thousands of motorists," Ms Paterson said.

"We've seen a 20% increase in car theft claims between FY21 and FY22, and that upward trend has continued in recent months with rates now above pre-Covid levels.

"Our data shows Toowoomba and Cairns have experienced the biggest jump in car theft claims, up by almost 90% and the Wide Bay region has seen a significant rise of 67%.

"Concerningly, our data also reinforced those areas with larger populations or elevated crime rates tend to continuously experience a high number of vehicles being stolen each year, rather than large spikes."

Ms Paterson said there are some simple things drivers can do to secure their vehicle, and it starts with treating car keys like cash.

"As vehicle security improves, the easiest way to steal a car is to use the keys, so drivers need to be extra mindful about where they store their keys," she said.

"Don't leave your keys laying around in an easily accessible locations such as a table near the door or a key hook, and don't tag your keys with identifiers like your name or address.

"Wherever possible, try to park in a garage or gated driveway, or when you're not at home in a secure car park. If that's not available, choose somewhere well-lit and well-populated to reduce the temptation for opportunistic thieves.

"Make sure, whenever you leave your vehicle, your windows are up, doors are locked and don't leave valuables visible in the car.

"We recognise the emotional and financial toll a stolen car can have on our members.

"Members who do find themselves in the unfortunate situation of having their car stolen, should contact their local police and insurer to lodge a claim if their vehicle is covered under either Motor Comprehensive or Fire Theft and Third-Party Insurance."

Media enquiries: RACQ Spokesperson Ashleigh Paterson 0401 051 761.

RACQ is Queensland's largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State's first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of more than 1.7 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, banking, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.

RACQ Insurance claims data:

Location	Car thefts FY2020/21	Car thefts FY2021/22	Change (%)
Cairns	80	150	+ 87.5%
Townsville	142	148	+ 4.2%
Mackay	37	36	-2.7%
Central Qld (Fitzroy)	63	75	+ 19%
Wide Bay	40	67	+ 67.5%
Sunshine Coast	63	65	+ 3.2%
Toowoomba	65	123	+ 89.2%
Moreton Bay - North	65	68	+4.6%
Moreton Bay - South	40	46	+15%
Gold Coast	224	249	+11.2%
Brisbane – South	155	166	+7.1%
Brisbane – Inner City	118	155	+31.4%
Brisbane – North	71	68	-4.2%
Brisbane – West	43	43	0%
Logan - Beaudesert	124	153	+23.4%
Maranoa / Darling Downs	22	32	+45.5%
Ipswich	96	111	+15.6%

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