



# TEXAS AUTOMOBILE BURGLARY AND THEFT PREVENTION AUTHORITY

## AT-A-GLANCE

### ABTPA SUMMARY

The Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA) was established by the Texas Legislature in 1991 to create a statewide effort to reduce auto theft.

The 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature amended the ATPA mission to include emphasis on vehicle burglary in addition to theft. The resulting agency, known as the Texas Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA), is charged with assessing the vehicle burglary, vehicle theft, and economic vehicle theft problems in Texas.

In 2009, the 81st Legislature placed the Automobile Burglary & Theft Prevention Authority in the newly created Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) which became effective November 1, 2009.

- The ABTPA is funded by a legislatively mandated annual assessment fee paid by individual policyholders and collected by the Comptroller of Public Accounts.
- Since its inception, ABTPA has funded and managed 570 grants totaling \$239 million.
- In FY 2011, ABTPA funded 28 grants to local law enforcement agencies totaling \$13,390,000.
- Since ABTPA's inception twenty years ago, vehicle theft rates in Texas have been reduced by 70%. This translates into lower automobile insurance rates for all Texas drivers.

### IMPACT OF ELIMINATING THE ABTPA

The vehicle theft issue impacts law enforcement officials, residents of both sides of the Texas Border, and in excess of 20 million tax-paying consumers statewide. The impact of eliminating the ABTPA would:

- Have a severe impact, in many cases causing an extensive loss of personnel, and potential for new programs.
- Weaken law enforcement at the local level.
- Adversely affect consumer automobile insurance rates by contributing to increases in automobile insurance premiums.

The following are **possible effects** of eliminating the ABTPA program:

- Higher automobile insurance rates.
- Continued cost for Comptrollers to collect and process the assessment fees.
- Funding for Help End Auto Theft (H.E.A.T.) vehicle registration program located within TxDPS.
- Foreign vehicle inspections not available for County Tax Offices.
- No assistance for MVD investigators on inspection of car dealerships.
- No enforcement of salvage laws.
- Auto thefts, auto burglaries and insurance fraud will increase.
- Border security decreases, making the border crossings very accessible to criminal activity.

Finally, to abolish ABTPA is to abolish much needed law enforcement and crime prevention programs in local Texas communities, the Department of Public Safety and a regional planning body. Current activities by the Task Forces will then fall back onto the shoulders of local agencies who are already strapped with budget issues and personnel issues.



# ABTPA FUNCTIONS

## ABTPA BOARD FUNCTIONS

The Governor appoints six individuals to serve as the ABTPA Board. The Board members include two law enforcement representatives, two consumer representatives, two insurance representatives, and the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, who serves as ex-officio. Board members serve staggered six-year terms.

ABTPA staff concentrates on the administrative aspects of carrying out the mission of ABTPA while the ABTPA Board provides:

- Oversight of programs operated by the authority
- Approval of funding for projects, subject to continuation of funding through state appropriations and availability of funds
- Oversight of the roles, rules and functions of the authority
- Oversight of the current budget for the authority
- Power to refund insurance fees

ABTPA APPROPRIATIONS			
Fiscal Year	Appropriated Amount	Grant Awards	% of Appro.
2010	\$15,214,355	\$14,150,000	93.00%
2009	\$13,783,835	\$12,750,000	92.50%
2008	\$13,774,920	\$12,800,000	92.92%
2007	\$12,525,567	\$11,800,000	94.20%
2006	\$12,953,701	\$12,100,000	93.41%

## ABTPA COMMITTEES

### Grantee Advisory Committee

considers matters of concern to both grantees and ABTPA and leverages the experience, knowledge, and insight of law enforcement professionals with regard to the motor vehicles crimes.

### Border Solutions Committee

a bi-national committee established by the Texas ABTPA in 1992, fosters communication with Mexico to reduce the number of stolen vehicles on both sides of the border.

### Insurance Fraud Committee

comprises representatives from insurance companies, Office of the Attorney General, Texas Department of Insurance, and law enforcement agencies who address the growing problem of insurance fraud. The Committee identifies goals for addressing issues relating to vehicle theft “give-ups or walk-a-ways,” VIN switches, arson, and insurance fraud.

## ABTPA Grantee/Task Force Functions

- Recover stolen vehicles and property
- Apprehend car thieves and vehicle burglars
- Conduct proactive investigations
- Carjacking investigations
- Vehicle arson investigations
- Conduct public awareness and education events for the public
- Provide assistance to other law enforcement agencies
- Conduct salvage inspections
- Conduct auto insurance fraud investigations
- Assist with Homeland Security in protecting our borders.

*“Several U.S. states and British Columbia, Canada have used the Texas ABTPA as a model for their programs.*

*The U.S. Department of Justice has used the Texas ABTPA as a model for a national program. “*

# AUTO BURGLARY & THEFT PROBLEM

## AUTO THEFT PROBLEM

- Every 5 minutes a vehicle is stolen in Texas. The 2009 Texas Uniform Crime Report reported that 76,617 vehicles were stolen, reflects a 10% decrease in vehicle theft volume since 2008. The corresponding monetary loss of over \$765 million continues to be a significant loss for the state of Texas.
- The economic loss of stolen vehicles in Texas was over \$765 million dollars with an average loss of \$9,985 per motor vehicle.
- The economic impact of auto theft translates into a loss of approximately 2.1 million dollars per day for Texas residents.

## AUTO INSURANCE FRAUD

- 30% of all missing vehicle claims are fraudulent and account for ten cents of every premium dollar consumers pay for insurance.
- 22% of insurance referrals reported to the Texas Department of Insurance Fraud Unit deal with motor vehicle insurance.
- Insurance Fraud have been recognized as a serious crime, and efforts have been made to punish and prevent this practice across the U.S.

## BORDER ISSUES

- ABTPA is a part of the DPS Homeland Security initiative.
- Stolen vehicles continue to cross the Texas borders at an alarming rate.
- Cartel and gang violence has increased along the borders.
- Law enforcement statistical analyses in some Texas border communities estimate the export of stolen vehicles as high as 90% (El Paso).
- The National Insurance Crime Bureau estimates the overall U.S. export rate at 25%.
- Provides assistance to U.S. Border Patrol, U.S Customs and local agencies with border and port checks.

*“Vehicle thefts are gateway crimes to other violent crimes.” “When we go after car thieves, we catch other criminals, through busts for money, drug and weapon seizures. A car stolen from Houston once was even used as a terrorist car bomb.”*

## BORDER PARTNERS

- A program to assist U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agencies in the recovery of stolen vehicles in the El Paso-Juarez area.
- Authorities on both sides of the border access the same database of stolen vehicles and jointly investigate and prosecute auto thieves.

### **BORDER GRANT COVERAGE**

City of Brownsville, City of Del Rio, City of Eagle Pass, City of El Paso, City of Laredo, and Border Auto Theft Information Center (B.A.T.I.C.)

Fiscal Year	Amount Awarded	Personnel Funded	Sq. Mileage Covered
2010	\$3,774,962	47	177.702
2009	\$2,843,900	41	177.702
2008	\$2,787,427	40	177.702
2007	\$3,115,386	48	177.702
2006	\$2,645,071	48	177.702

## BORDER AUTO THEFT INFORMATION CENTER (BATIC)

- Established in 1994 to assist in the recovery of stolen vehicles from Mexico and the U.S. BATIC provides information to Mexican and U.S. law enforcement personnel via a 1-800 toll free number on inquiries regarding stolen vehicles.
- Providing timely information to first line officers on stolen vehicles from U.S. and Mexico.

\* Fiscal Year (September 1—August 31)

# ABTPA STATISTICAL INFORMATION

## MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT STATISTICS

Calendar Year	# of Stolen Vehicles	Economic Loss from Stolen Vehicles	# of Registered Vehicles
2009	76,617	\$738,487,759	21,446,721
2008	85,411	\$747,107,771	21,185,173
2007	94,026	\$859,745,598	20,864,318
2006	95,750	\$900,302,072	20,059,065
2005	93,471	\$782,702,473	19,144,792

\*\* Registered Vehicles Source: FIN reports, ISD reports, IRP reports and VTR reports

## BURGLARY OF MOTOR VEHICLE STATISTICS

Calendar Year	# of Burglary of Motor Vehicles (Theft from MV and MV parts)	Economic Loss from Burglary of Motor Vehicles (Theft from MV and MV parts)	# of Registered Vehicles
2009	285,501	\$220,315,208	21,446,721
2008	259,705	\$184,558,668	21,185,173
2007	262,502	\$192,619,151	20,864,318
2006	255,114	\$214,099,543	20,059,065
2005	266,900	\$207,188,805	19,144,792

## GRANTEE PERSONNEL / # OF ARRESTS

Fiscal Year	Grantee Personnel Funded by ABTPA	Total # of Arrests	
		Auto Theft	Auto Burglary
2010	207	2,614	1,888
2009	207	2,781	1,653
2008	211	3,352	246
2007	201	3,485	NA
2006	211	2,860	NA

*“Our success is due to interagency cooperation between law enforcement agencies and other ABTPA grantees across Texas and the support of the industry, community partners, and the criminal justice field.”*

2010 Top 5 Texas Counties for Motor Vehicle Theft		
#	COUNTY	TOTAL
1	Harris	22,565
2	Dallas	17,835
3	Bexar	8,790
4	Tarrant	5,781
5	El Paso	3,105

\*\* Auto Burglary was not an ABTPA initiative until 2008.

## RATIO OF GRANTEE PERSONNEL & RECOVERED VEHICLES

Fiscal Year	# of Recovered Vehicles	Grantee Personnel Funded by ABTPA	\$ of Recovered Vehicles	Value of Recovered Vehicles per Officer
2010	13,545	207	\$122,565,079	\$592,102
2009	15,179	207	\$99,026,199	\$478,387
2008	16,082	211	\$205,971,867	\$976,170
2007	17,022	201	\$192,974,690	\$960,073
2006	15,176	211	\$165,148,777	\$782,696

## 68-A INSPECTIONS BY GRANTEEES

Fiscal Year	68-A Inspections by ABTPA Grantees
2010	8,560
2009	5,077
2008	5,063
2007	4,035
2006	4,384

\* Based on UCR Report information from the Texas Department of Public Safety and ABTPA Task Force year end data.

\* Fiscal Year (September 1—August 31)/Calendar Year (January 1—December 31)

## GATEWAY CRIMES

- Between 1993-2002, there were 34,000 carjackings each year in the United States. This averages out to 1.7 victimizations per 10,000 people annually. Serious injuries, such as gunshot or knife wounds, broken bones, or internal injuries occur in about 9% of the incidents.
- The costs of motor vehicle theft continue to rise, especially as motor vehicle thefts have become part of larger organized criminal operations. The trafficking of drugs and humans, terrorism, and robbery are crimes that are either financed or aided in some way through the theft of motor vehicles.

Fiscal Year	Violent Crimes	Gang Related	Drug Related	Robbery	Domestic	Terrorism	Auto Insurance Fraud Cases
2010	90	666	570	154	347	1	40
2009	112	443	666	175	344	11	222
2008	7	32	195	82	36	70	43
2007	137	296	968	188	469	20	284
2006	114	131	778	151	238	0	257

*“Simply put, where you go, criminals go. When you leave your purse, laptop—or worse, your keys—in plain sight, you are just inviting car thieves to help themselves to your vehicle, identity and safety.”*

## ABTPA PUBLIC AWARENESS

### ABTPA SUCCESSES IN PUBLIC AWARENESS

- ABTPA has won multiple awards for its public education efforts, including two 2010 Bronze Telly Awards and the AAMVA PACE Competition Region II Award for “The Shadow” public awareness initiative which focuses on the idea that where Texans go, car thieves are there to burglarize and/or steal their vehicles and belongings.
- The ABTPA’s award winning “Watch Your Car” campaign has increased public awareness in the state and has provided grantees with a comprehensive theme, operational plan and materials for theft reduction information and education. Our hotline, 1 800 CAR WATCH provides citizens throughout the state with tips to reduce vehicle theft.
- ABTPA funds the Help End Auto Theft Program (H.E.A.T.), a statewide vehicle registration program that helps law enforcement officers identify stolen vehicles between the hours of 1 am - 5 am.
- The ABTPA was awarded the registered service marks for the “Watch Your Car” mark and design and for the “You Hold the Key” mark as of January 5, 2010 by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

Fiscal Year	# of ABTPA & Grantee Public Awareness Events	Audience Reached Through Public Awareness Events (impressions)	# of Media Coverage by ABTPA and Grantees	Audience Reached Through Media Coverage (impressions)
2010	2,164	14,762,105	5,384	73,769,209
2009	1,858	12,630,714	8,592	95,859,962
2008	2,072	10,980,043	9,502	85,720,124
2007	2,075	8,652,924	4,669	134,376,851
2006	2,077	8,606,926	5,470	36,909,218

**Public Awareness Events:** presentations, exhibits, displays, trainings, events, and brochure placements



**YOU HOLD THE KEY**

## BARRIERS FOR AUTO THEFT

- VIN switching and cloning are relatively simple procedures for the educated thief, and as the knowledge spreads within the criminal community, more perpetrators are on the streets.
- In addition, as the value of vehicles and parts increases, there is more money to be had through both techniques.
- The biggest barriers facing prosecutors in Texas is decreased penalties for vehicle crimes as well as lack of ability to dedicate prosecutors to vehicle crimes.
- The Texas penalty for theft of \$1,500 to \$20,000 was reduced in the late 90's from a third degree felony to a state jail felony, with a reduced internment maximum of two years and lesser fines. In addition, maximum penalties are not imposed until the third conviction. This has been a major hindrance to prosecution.

## ABTPA OUTLOOK

### The Future:

Sustained funding for the Texas ABTPA presents a consistent challenge. As day-to-day task force operating costs increase and vehicle criminals become more determined, ABTPA's allocated funding continues to be stressed.

The need to secure additional funds has become pertinent, and ABTPA is exploring a variety of possibilities, including increased insurance assessments. ABTPA is optimistic that solutions can be found and intends to work cooperatively with Texas government to meet future funding and vehicle crimes challenges.

Today the ABTPA task forces has been asked to do more with less. The success of the ABTPA in reducing auto theft, makes Texas the leading state in reducing the theft numbers and keeping auto insurance rates at lower.

### Significance

Texas ranks second in the nation for vehicle thefts. In 2009, 76,617 vehicles were stolen in the state, equating to over \$738 million in financial losses. It is estimated that 30% - 50% of stolen vehicles in 2009 had the owners' keys inside.

In 2009, 272,791 cases of vehicle burglary were reported, totaling over \$220 million in losses. Vehicle crimes account for the largest financial loss among all property crimes in Texas. In addition, vehicle theft and burglary often serve as gateways to the commission of more heinous crimes, including armed robbery, drug trafficking, human smuggling, buying/selling illegal weapons, and terrorism.

Therefore, law enforcement resources that can specifically address vehicle crimes are necessary, and the need is consistent.

## TOP LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- Increase vehicle crime penalties or increase funding for law enforcement auto theft divisions and task forces
- Reestablish dedicated funding status (taken away in 1997 by HB 1387)
- Change the calculation method for assessing insurance policy fees

## GRANT LISTING AND LOCATIONS

Grantee	City
City of Austin	Austin, Tx.
City of Beaumont	Beaumont, Tx.
City of Brownsville	Brownsville, Tx.
City of Corpus Christi	Corpus Christi, Tx.
Coryell County	Waco, Tx.
City of Dallas	Dallas, Tx.
Dallas County	Dallas, Tx.
City of Del Rio	Del Rio, Tx.
City of Eagle Pass	Eagle Pass, Tx.
City of El Paso	El Paso, Tx.
El Paso Tax Assessor	El Paso, Tx.
Galveston County	Galveston, Tx.
Harris County	Humble, Tx.
City of Houston	Houston, Tx.
Jones County	Abilene, Tx.
City of Laredo	Laredo, Tx.
Lubbock County	Lubbock, Tx.
Montgomery County	Conroe, Tx.
North Texas University	Dallas, Tx.
City of Paris	Paris, Tx.
City of Pasadena	Pasadena, Tx.
City of San Antonio	San Antonio, Tx.
Smith County	Tyler, Tx.
Tarrant County	Ft. Worth, Tx.
TxDPS-BATIC	El Paso, Tx.
Texas DPS, Training	Austin, Tx.
Travis County	Manor, Tx.
City of Victoria	Victoria, Tx.



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