



Dale Last MP
Member for Burdekin

Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Shadow Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Affairs

Burdekin Electorate Office

Shop 30 Centrepoin Arcade

AYR QLD 4807

Tel: 07 4767 0500

Freecall: 1800 817 594

Email: burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au

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Media Release – Recidivists dominate car thefts

Queensland Police Service data shows 55% of all cars stolen in Queensland last year were taken by recidivist offenders but Shadow Minister for Police & Corrective Services, Dale Last MP, believes the figure could be even higher.

The data, provided to the Parliamentary Committee inquiring into the use of remote engine immobilisers to reduce car thefts, also shows that over 3,700 vehicle thefts remain unsolved and Mr Last believes it's highly likely that recidivist offenders would be responsible for a large number of those offences.

"In 2020, less than 2,000 recidivist offenders were responsible for at least 8,284 offences of stealing vehicles," he said. "That's more than 4 offences per offender and, with nearly a quarter of the offences unsolved, I'd say the repeat offenders have got away with quite a few more thefts - for now at least."

"It's important to note that a recidivist offender, by definition, has been convicted of multiple offences and it's highly likely they committed crimes that they did not receive a conviction for, especially if they are young offenders."

Mr Last said the figures highlighted the effect that recidivist offenders were having statewide.

"If you assumed an average value of \$20,000 per car, then recidivist offenders have stolen more than \$165M worth of cars in Queensland in 2020 alone," he said. "If they are responsible for half of the unsolved thefts then that figure climbs above \$200M and, I would say, that's a conservative value."

"Recidivist offenders make up just over 13% of the total people charged for vehicle theft but, even based purely on the thefts they've been charged with, the extent of the damage they cause financially is massive. Then, of course, you have to take into account the damage they cause to people's sense of safety and their mental health."

"Regardless of their age, we need to get these offenders off the streets for the benefit of everyone."

ENDS – Media Contact: David Cooper (07) 4767 0500 or 0427 834 844

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