

## Vehicle Rebirthing Information

### Vehicle rebirthing FAQs

#### What is vehicle rebirthing?

Vehicle rebirthing is the name given when a stolen vehicle is given a new identity, usually by changing its identification numbers and serial numbers. As the identity of a stolen car is a problem for thieves when trying to resell a vehicle, they replace the car's identity with that of a wrecked vehicle. By doing this, it can be claimed that the vehicle was repaired to a roadworthy condition.

Vehicle rebirthing can also include vehicles that are being imported for reassembly or using the identities of imported vehicles.

#### Is vehicle theft and rebirthing a major problem?

Vehicle theft, including theft for rebirthing, costs the Australian community approximately \$500 million each year.

#### Isn't vehicle rebirthing a relatively 'victimless' crime with only insurance companies suffering?

Direct victims of rebirthing include the original owner of the stolen vehicle and the person buying the rebirthed vehicle. An increase in theft of motor vehicles also leads to increases in insurance premiums for all motorists.

Vehicle rebirthing is usually conducted by organised crime syndicates. These same syndicates are often involved in other criminal activities which impact on the community, including money laundering, firearms and drug trafficking and violence.



#### What are the most popular vehicles stolen for rebirthing?

Holden Commodores, Ford Falcons and Hyundai Excels. Larger vehicles, including Toyota Landcruisers, are also a common choice because they are lucrative for thieves.

**How can I protect myself from buying a rebirthed vehicle, and what steps can I take to reduce the risk?**

While a licensed vehicle dealer must guarantee clear title, no such protection is available when buying a car privately. Some tips to avoid purchasing a rebirthed car include:

- Beware if the purchase price seems too good to be true, particularly in relation to a vehicle's age, kilometres travelled and condition.
- Make sure the seller of the vehicle is its owner. Check personal identification against the registration papers.
- Be wary if the seller meets you outside a house and doesn't go in, or wants to meet somewhere other than a private residence.
- Check if the vehicle has been recently re-registered, and if so, check the reasons why.
- Check that the service history and logbook of the vehicle is consistent with the amount of kilometres it has travelled.
- Look for signs of tampering, welding or repainting around the vehicle's identification numbers.