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Test - Arizona Automobile Theft Authority - January 2025 Newsletter

1 message

Arizona Automobile Theft Authority <aata@difi.az.gov>

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**January 2025****Arizona Vehicle Thefts Decrease by 15% in 2024**

The AATA reports that vehicle thefts in Arizona fell by 15% in 2024, marking a second straight year of decline. Data compiled by the Auto Crime Tracking (ACT) database shows that Arizona had 17,010 vehicles reported stolen in 2024. This number represents 2,996 fewer stolen vehicles than the 20,006 reported stolen in the ACT database in 2023.

Arizona currently has the ability to draw vehicle theft numbers from two separate systems: the AATA's ACT database and the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). These two separate systems will show slightly different results, with each having its own advantages. The ACT database provides near real-time data, so totals are highly accurate and readily available. NICB's national reporting provides a consistent, national picture of thefts and allows Arizona's theft picture to be compared to other states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. NICB has yet to release its national stolen vehicle report for 2024, and the AATA expects those totals to show an even greater decline in Arizona thefts.

The systems used by the AATA and NICB are dynamic and theft totals will fluctuate slightly as law enforcement agencies add and remove data from the Arizona Crime Information Center (ACIC) computer system. Data pulled from these systems can change daily as ACIC is updated. As data ages, it stabilizes and variations in the numbers become less frequent.

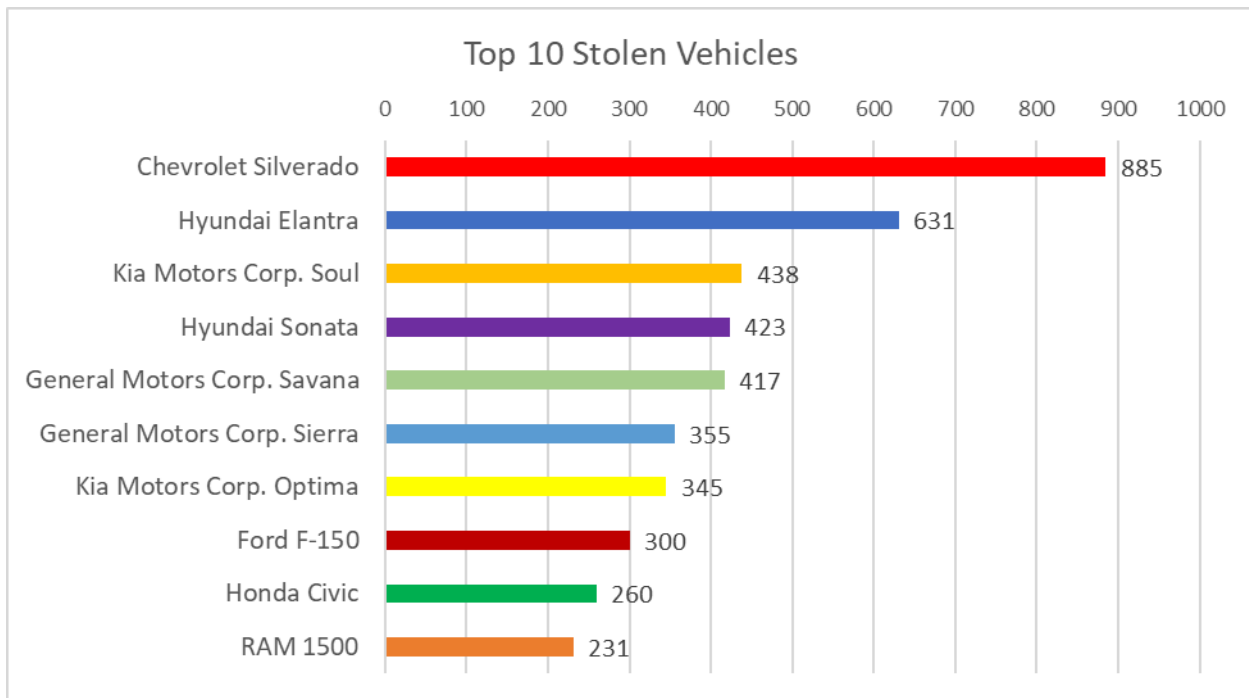
Recoveries of Stolen Vehicles

Recoveries of vehicles stolen in Arizona decreased by approximately 2% in calendar year 2024. Initial 2024 numbers show that 69% of vehicles stolen in 2024 were

recovered in the same year. In 2023, 71% of vehicles stolen in Arizona were recovered in the same year. More of these 2024 stolen vehicles will be recovered in the coming weeks and months so this recovery number and percentage will continue to climb. Reasons a stolen vehicle may remain unrecovered include being dismantled (chopped) for black market parts resale, being transported to Mexico or other locations out of state, or simply escaping the view of law enforcement.

Arizona’s Top 10 Stolen Vehicles

The most popular vehicles stolen in Arizona have remained very consistent over the past two years with Chevrolet Silverados holding the #1 spot. Kias and Hyundais are once again over-represented on the list due to the manufacturer's security vulnerability being exploited by thieves. Not surprisingly, pick-ups remain very popular theft targets with four models making the top 10. Here’s a complete listing of Arizona’s Top 10 most stolen vehicles:



Arizona’s Top 10 Cities for Vehicle Theft

Arizona’s top 10 cities for vehicle theft follow a logical path to the most densely populated areas in the state. While the numbers below show the total number of thefts for these cities, they do not reflect the rate of theft (number of stolen vehicles per 100,000 residents). The rate of theft numbers are not readily available but may tell a different story about how likely one

is to have their vehicle stolen in a particular city. Here's a list of Arizona's top 10 cities for total vehicle thefts:

ARIZONA'S TOP 10 CITIES FOR AUTO THEFT		
#1	PHOENIX	6,129
#2	TUCSON	2,973
#3	MESA	1,020
#4	GLENDALE	1,014
#5	TEMPE	607
#6	SCOTTSDALE	470
#7	PEORIA	296
#8	CHANDLER	295
#9	YUMA	272
#10	AVONDALE	240

The AATA released its [2024 Annual Report](#) in December highlighting the AATA's activities and accomplishments. The report contains current state and national vehicle theft trends, statistics, and highlights for FY24. The data included in the report includes statistics from calendar year 2023, as vehicle theft numbers are regularly reported by sources nationally using a calendar year reporting period. Statistics presented in this way allow for the use of National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) data to identify national trends in vehicle theft and compare Arizona with other states. NICB data revealed the following:

Calendar Year	2023	2022	Percentage Change
Vehicles Stolen in United States	1,020,729	1,001,967	1.9%
Vehicles Stolen in Arizona	19,722	21,892	-9.9%
Rate per 100,000 Population	267.76	294.8	-9.2%

Kia/Hyundai Class action Info

Attention Kia/Hyundai Vehicle Owners/Lessees -

If you purchased or leased a qualifying Kia or Hyundai vehicle and it was not equipped with an engine immobilizer (a feature that prevents the engine from starting unless the key is present), you may benefit from a class action settlement. **The deadline to submit a claim is April 28, 2025.** Follow this [link](#) to see qualifying vehicles and other important information.

AATA Welcomes Newly Appointed Board Members

In recent months, the Governor's Office has made appointments for two AATA public member positions and one insurance industry representative. We welcome these three members and appreciate their service to the Board.



Bree Boehlke

Bree Boehlke is a public engagement professional with over a decade of experience in the transportation industry. She is the Community Relations Manager with Ardurra in their Phoenix office. She is currently working on several Transit Oriented Communities projects with Ardurra in the City of Phoenix.

Previously, she spent six years in community outreach for Valley Metro RPTA, working directly with stakeholders affected by streetcar/light rail and utility relocation construction.

She has spent most of her career in public administration, including serving as Deputy Director of Constituent Services for Governor Napolitano and even a few years on the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority team. She is an active member of

the Women's Transportation Seminar Metro Phoenix chapter and is a docent volunteer with the Arizona Humane Society, helping with Arizona's longest-running local TV program Pets On Parade on 3TV.

Brad Conley

Brad Conley has 30 years of experience in law enforcement and insurance. Currently, Brad is an SIU Claims Legal Analyst at Colman Perkins Law Group. Before joining Colman Perkins Law Group, Brad was a Lead Major Case Investigator at GEICO Insurance Company where he handled high-exposure fraud ring investigations. He also specialized in auto theft investigations and glass fraud investigations, assisting with filing civil RICO lawsuits for recovery of fraudulent funds and restitution for the insurance company.



Before GEICO Insurance, Brad was a Private Investigator focusing on cases involving liability of all types, arson and high dollar property theft, heavy equipment, and vehicle theft, hijacking and cargo theft, severe injury, and disability investigations for various insurance carriers. Previously, Brad worked for Scottsdale Police Department as a detective with the department's Repeat Offender Program Unit acting in an undercover capacity. Brad was responsible for locating, tracking, and arresting the state's most prolific criminals and violent offenders.

William K. Johnson



William “Bill” Johnson is assigned as a Specialty Field Investigator within the Special Investigation Group of Travelers Insurance. His role involves handling complex investigations of business and commercial claims of high-value property. Bill has worked in the insurance field as a field investigator since 2019. Before entering the insurance investigation field, he was an Arizona-certified Peace Officer working for two Arizona police agencies between 1999 and 2019. Bill's law enforcement roles included service in patrol, traffic, as a D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) officer, and accident reconstructionist.

He retired from the Chandler Police Department as a Detective with the Vehicular Crimes Unit. Between 1993 and 1999, he served with the US Army Military Police Corps and was honorably discharged in 1999 with the rank of Sergeant.

Thank you to outgoing AATA Board members

The AATA Board and Staff wish to express our gratitude for the service and contributions of the following longtime AATA Board members:

Kent Volkmer, Pinal County Attorney and public members Joe Brosius and Robert E.M. Smith.



Kent Volkmer



Robert E.M. Smith



Joe Brosius

Yuma and San Luis Police Departments Host Vehicle Theft Prevention Events in December and January

Over the last two months, the Arizona Vehicle Theft Task Force (VTTF), Yuma and San Luis Police Departments, AATA, and Hyundai hosted vehicle theft prevention events in communities, promoting theft prevention tips and distributing free steering wheel locks, an effective theft deterrent to secure parked vehicles.



Arizona Vehicle Theft Task Force In The News

The VTTF announced the successful takedown of an organized auto theft ring responsible for stealing high-end vehicles across Arizona and transporting them into Mexico. The operation recovered 22 stolen vehicles valued at \$1.4 million; four suspects face felony charges.



VTTF detectives report the group targeted high-end trucks and cars – stealing mostly Chevrolets, including a Corvette, Traverse, two Camaros, and three Silverados. The group would put on fake plates, drive the vehicles to Mexico, and sell them for cash; detectives believe suspects profited with at least \$100,000. All four suspects are facing felony charges and are being held in the Maricopa County jail on a \$100,000 cash bond.

Arizona Vehicle Theft Task Force Recovers Four Stolen Vehicles, Seizes Nine More in Tucson



In early October 2024, VTTF detectives located three stolen vehicles in an alley behind a home in northwest Tucson. The stolen vehicles included a 2012 Nissan 370z, a 2015 Dodge Challenger, and a 2019 Dodge Charger Scat Pack.

VTTF detectives initiated surveillance, and further investigation revealed the three stolen cars – along with other vehicles located at the residence – were associated

with a car club involved in illegal street takeovers in Tucson. Detectives also identified several suspects associated with the stolen vehicles and street takeovers.

On October 19th, detectives recovered the stolen Dodge Charger at a residence in Marana as it was being chopped and parted out. Two suspects – Jiovanly Arellano, 21, and Cesar Duran, 31 – fled from the property on foot when detectives arrived.



The following Monday, October 21st, detectives served a residential search warrant at the residence in Tucson where the three stolen vehicles were originally located. Detectives recovered both the Nissan 370z and Dodge Challenger, and located a stolen 2006 Cadillac CTS in the yard.

In total, detectives arrested five suspects, recovered four stolen vehicles, and seized an additional nine vehicles as evidence

Arizona Vehicle Theft Task Force Uncovers Million-Dollar Ferrari Fraud Scheme

In a significant breakthrough, the VTTF successfully recovered nearly \$1 million worth of stolen Ferrari vehicles as part of an extensive investigation into an interstate luxury car fraud scheme. On April 1, 2024, VTTF detectives located two iconic Ferraris – a 1973 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 and a 1981 Ferrari 512BB – that were about to be fraudulently sold to unsuspecting buyers.



The investigation uncovered that these vehicles were part of a broader criminal operation spanning multiple states. The Arizona investigation soon connected with an ongoing case led by California's Taskforce for Regional Auto Theft Prevention (TRAP), looking into the same suspect: Donnie Callaway. Callaway, once a prominent figure in the historic Ferrari restoration community, had built a reputation as a renowned expert in the field. He



appeared on popular platforms, including The Jay Leno Show, and was featured in several prestigious automotive magazines.



However, beneath this polished exterior lay a complex fraud scheme. Authorities discovered that Callaway had been using his fraudulent operations to fund a lavish lifestyle, including luxury vacations and purchasing a private plane.

The VTTF collaborated with their California counterparts to bring Callaway to justice. After luring him into Arizona, detectives swiftly arrested him. Utilizing information from the VTTF investigation, California's TRAP unit executed a search warrant at a regional airport where Callaway was storing several high-end, historic vehicles. Nine stolen vehicles were recovered in this operation, and several leads emerged, indicating that more victims – some from as far as Belgium – had been defrauded.

Given the magnitude of the fraud and the substantial financial losses, Callaway remains in custody and is awaiting trial. His elaborate scam, which targeted car enthusiasts and collectors worldwide, underscores the critical importance of multi-state collaboration in combating vehicle theft and fraud. As the investigation progresses, authorities continue to uncover more layers to this case, and additional victims are being identified.

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