



TEXAS AUTO BURGLARY & THEFT PREVENTION AUTHORITY 2009 FACT SHEET

The Texas Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA) was established by the 72nd Texas Legislature in 1991 to create a statewide effort to reduce auto theft. The 80th Legislature amended the ATPA mission through H.B. 1887 to include emphasis on vehicle burglary in addition to theft. The resulting agency, known as the Texas Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA), is charged with assessing the automobile burglary, automobile theft, and economic automobile theft (burglary or theft committed for financial gain) problems in Texas and analyzing methods and providing financial support to combat those problems.

The ABTPA is funded by a legislatively mandated annual assessment fee paid by individual policyholders and collected by the Comptroller of Public Accounts. ABTPA functions as the lead organization in a statewide network of law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, insurance industry representatives, local tax assessor-collectors, community organizations, and concerned citizen groups. In addition to providing guidance and oversight, the ABTPA awards grant funds to agencies, organizations, and concerned parties in an effort to raise public awareness of vehicle theft and burglary and implement education and prevention initiatives.

ABTPA Successes

- Since ABTPA's inception, vehicle theft rates in Texas have been reduced by 61%. This translates into lower automobile insurance rates for all Texas drivers.
- 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.

ABTPA Organization

- ABTPA is funded by a legislatively mandated assessment consisting of a \$1 annual fee for each vehicle per insurance policy. The fee is paid by individual policyholders and collected by the insurance companies.
- The ABTPA consists of seven Board members appointed by the Governor who represent law enforcement, consumers, and the insurance industry. Board members are committed both professionally and personally to the program's continued success. Through the guidance of the board of Directors that ABTPA has been able to continually reduce the incident of auto thefts.
- While 94% of ABTPA appropriations are expended on grant related activity, only 6% are earmarked for administrative costs which include:
 - ATPA staff, located in TxDOT
 - An attorney located in the OAG to provide legal counsel to the ABTPA Policy Board
 - Staff for the Help End Auto Theft (H.E.A.T.) vehicle registration program located within DPS.

ABTPA Funding

- Since its inception, ABTPA has funded and managed 542 grants totaling \$225,022,111.
- In FY 2010 ABTPA funded 28 grants to local law enforcement agencies totaling \$14,150,000 million. These grants fund the efforts of 215 individuals working in law enforcement, prosecution and vehicle theft prevention across the state.
- Funded programs are currently located in counties which account for 95% of the state's theft problem.

ABTPA Committees

- **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 walkaways," VIN switches, arson, and insurance fraud.
- **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 auto theft problem.
- **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.

Border Initiatives

- **Border Auto Theft Information Center (BATIC)** was 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. Since its inception, BATIC has received 1,886,361 inquiries and recovered 31,865 stolen vehicles. The estimated total of these recovered vehicles is \$395,713,814.
- **Border Partners** an initiative of the Border Solutions Committee, is 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.

Additional Facts

(Source: Texas Department of Public Safety, Uniform Crime Reporting, 2008)

- 85,411 vehicles were stolen in Texas, accounting for an economic loss totaling \$747,107,771.
- 259,705 thefts from motor vehicles including motor vehicle parts offenses occurred in Texas, accounting for an economic loss totaling \$184,558,668.
- The top five stolen vehicles in Texas are: Ford Pickup, Chevy Pickup, Dodge Pickup, Honda Civic, and the Honda Accord.

For more information please visit www.txwatchyourcar.com or call (800) CAR-WATCH.