

# Crime Trend Series

DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, CRIME PREVENTION AND JUSTICE ASSISTANCE DIVISION

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## MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT IN HAWAII, 1980 – 1995

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Motor vehicle theft is one of the original seven Index Crimes<sup>1</sup> identified by the International Association of Chiefs of Police as a particularly serious crime in the United States. Since 1960, the motor vehicle theft rate has more than tripled. Given this dramatic change, it is somewhat surprising how little research has been conducted to explain the rate increase, or to analyze the characteristics of car thieves.

Motor vehicle theft occurs because it is a relatively easy crime to commit. Congress has attempted to prod the automobile manufacturers to introduce anti-theft devices, but has never specified or mandated the effectiveness of these devices. It has been suggested that making cars difficult to break into and drive away, even at minimal additional cost, is not in the economic interest of either the automobile manufacturing or automobile insurance industry (Brill 1982, Karmen 1981).

In addition to presenting information from the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and juvenile and criminal history records, this report divulges the makes of automobiles, trucks, and motorcycles most frequently stolen on Oahu in 1995. Also included are the results of interviews with the police, auto dealers, and insurers regarding their views on auto theft, with recent trends to help explain current conditions. The final sections summarize Hawaii and federal laws which define and affect the crime of motor vehicle theft, review currently available, anticipated, and proposed anti-theft devices, describe a small federal grant to pay overtime to a unit of Honolulu Police detectives to maintain surveillance of businesses which deal with used cars and parts, and present recommendations, summarizing information, and conclusions.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Motor vehicle thefts in the City and County of Honolulu have increased steadily since 1991 and have more than doubled in the three years since 1992.

- Although Hawaii's motor vehicle theft rate was half of the national rate in 1991, by 1995 its rate exceeded the national rate. Hawaii's motor vehicle theft rate ranked 36th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia in 1991, 18th in 1994, and eighth in 1995.
- Hawaii's total arrest rate for motor vehicle theft in 1995, 163 per 100,000 inhabitants, was more than twice as high as the comparable national rate of 76 per 100,000.
- Statewide arrests for motor vehicle theft essentially kept pace with the increase in motor vehicle theft offenses over the nine years from 1985 through 1994, with growths of 113 and 114 percent, respectively. In 1995 however, motor vehicle theft arrests grew by a substantial 11 percent, only to be overwhelmed by the 28% increase in offenses.
- Arrests of both males and females for motor vehicle theft peak in the 15-19 years age group that includes both juveniles and adults. Twenty-seven percent of all motor vehicle theft arrestees in 1995 belonged to this age group. The female percentage of total motor vehicle theft arrestees increased from 13% in 1985 to 23% in 1995.
- The Hawaii crime victimization survey and the National Crime Victimization Survey are consistent in showing that 75% or more of all motor vehicle thefts are reported to the police. According to surveys of this type, motor vehicle theft is the crime with the highest percentage of occurrences reported to police.
- As motor vehicle theft in Honolulu soared since 1991, the percent of these offenses cleared sunk by eight percentage points, from 17.1% to 9.1% in 1995. The only county to show an increased clearance rate over this period was Maui, up 7.5 percentage points, while Kauai and Hawaii counties posted decreases of 3.9

<sup>1</sup>Index Crimes include murder, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft and arson. Arson was added to the original seven Index Crimes in 1980.

and 2.9 percentage points, respectively.

- The most stolen automobile and truck make on Oahu in 1995 was Honda, followed very closely by Toyota. These makes were, respectively, third and first in total registrations on the island. Ford was second in registrations, but only tied Daihatsu as the 25th most stolen make.
- Vehicle thefts could be expected to decrease if many members of the concerned public were to install anti-theft devices or if the auto manufacturers could be persuaded to make fundamental changes in vehicle security. More realistically, the clear identification of several major types of motor vehicle theft could suggest more focused efforts to address the causes of this crime. An example of one such type is theft for reidentification and sale, which might be addressed by a commercial auto theft unit of police detectives to locate chop shops (Napier 1996).

**THE OFFENSE OF MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT**

Motor vehicle thefts are reported by the police in most U.S. localities to the FBI for inclusion in their annual report, *Crime in the United States*. Motor vehicle theft is defined by the FBI as the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is “a self-propelled vehicle that runs on land surface and not on rails.”

In Hawaii in 1995, reported motor vehicle thefts accounted for 9.6% of the total Index Crimes and 10.0% of the property crimes. The respective national proportions were 10.6% and 12.2%.

The motor vehicle theft rate per 100,000 residents for each of Hawaii’s counties and for each of the two U.S. groupings of comparably-sized jurisdictions, 1980-1995, are plotted in Chart 1. Perhaps the most striking observation is that even after recording an 82% rate increase from 1991 to 1994, the 1994 rate in Honolulu reached a level which was just 55% of the 1994 national rate for cities of comparable size.

Chart 1 Motor Vehicle Theft Rates per 100,000 Inhabitants by County, State of Hawaii, and for Comparable Population Groups in the United States, 1980-1995

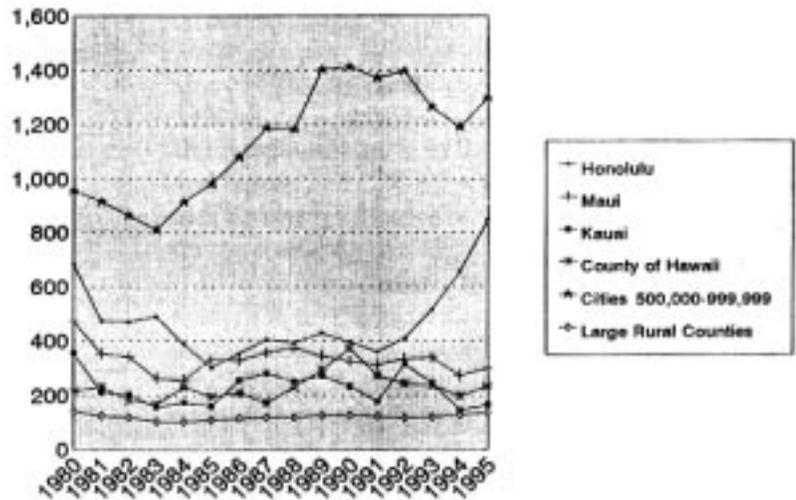
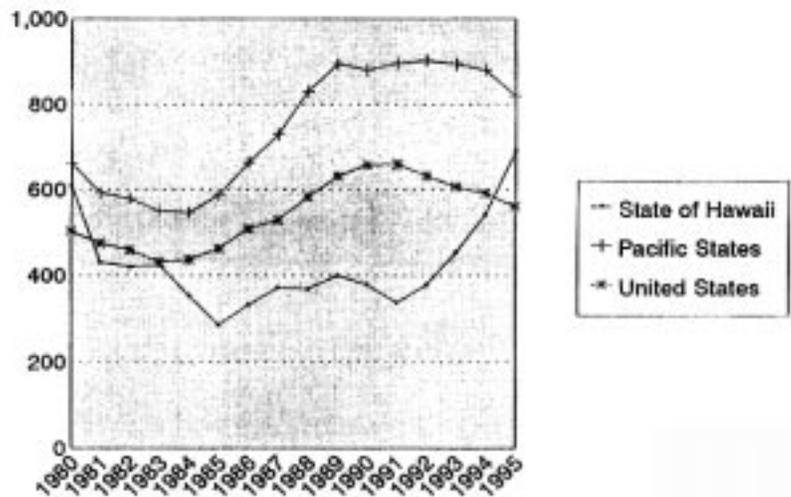


Chart 2 Motor Vehicle Theft Rates per 100,000 Inhabitants, State of Hawaii, Pacific States, and United States, 1980-1995



In 1995, the Honolulu rate moved up an additional 29% to a level which is 65% as high as the 1995 national rate.

Neighbor island increases in motor vehicle theft rates in 1995 ranged from Maui’s 10% to Hawaii’s 18 percent. Maui’s rate was more than twice the national rate for rural counties, while Hawaii County’s rate was about 70% greater than the U.S. rural rate, and Kauai’s rate was just 20% greater than the U.S. rural rate. However, the neighbor is-

Table 1  
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts by Subcategory and County,  
State of Hawaii, 1980-1995

Year	State Total			City & County of Honolulu			Maui County		
	Auto-mobiles	Trucks and Busses	Other Vehicles	Auto-mobiles	Trucks and Busses	Other Vehicles	Auto-mobiles	Trucks and Busses	Other Vehicles
1995	4,064	1,741	1,794	4,289	1,537	1,614	186	106	54
1994	3,970	1,135	1,278	3,608	971	1,148	171	73	64
1993	3,256	799	1,228	2,794	605	1,061	237	86	51
1992	2,924	474	953	2,447	265	795	209	100	51
1991	2,941	176	697	2,399	64	587	289	21	17
1990	3,155	360	702	2,564	182	571	267	42	20
1989	3,246	383	738	2,706	245	607	286	28	19
1988	3,218	439	321	2,674	338	233	312	24	16
1987	3,167	550	247	2,679	452	185	275	26	22
1986	2,782	434	270	2,327	338	193	245	24	17
1985	2,360	365	255	1,946	285	190	244	20	18
1984	2,892	471	262	2,533	368	198	166	26	20
1983	3,321	635	341	3,032	548	273	151	20	38
1982	3,223	576	382	2,872	493	287	173	32	58
1981	3,265	440	506	2,873	359	413	190	22	49
1980	4,632	672	599	4,181	565	479	231	35	73

Year	Kauai County			Hawaii County (except Hilo)			South Hilo District (City of Hilo)		
	Auto-mobiles	Trucks and Busses	Other Vehicles	Auto-mobiles	Trucks and Busses	Other Vehicles	Auto-mobiles	Trucks and Busses	Other Vehicles
1995	56	24	13	80	46	102	53	28	11
1994	50	20	11	95	47	49	46	24	6
1993	84	37	14	81	44	95	60	27	7
1992	121	28	21	77	47	71	70	34	15
1991	65	11	18	100	44	59	28	36	16
1990	74	27	19	135	65	74	115	44	18
1989	87	32	16	103	46	81	63	32	15
1988	78	18	26	89	31	37	65	28	9
1987	87	29	16	66	20	14	60	23	10
1986	76	26	14	75	19	34	59	27	12
1985	42	10	19	68	30	19	60	20	9
1984	57	11	8	65	33	30	71	33	6
1983	40	16	11	44	32	10	54	19	9
1982	64	12	9	53	24	16	61	15	12
1981	58	13	14	80	32	18	64	14	12
1980	90	16	34	62	30	8	68	26	5

vehicle (mostly motorcycles, but including golf carts and dunebuggies). Mopeds are classified as bicycles instead of motor vehicles. Bicycle theft is a subcategory of the offense of larceny-theft.

Of the total number of reported motor vehicle thefts from 1980-1995 (Table 1), 72% were thefts of automobiles, 13% trucks and busses, and 14% other vehicles. However, the distribution in 1995 was 57% automobiles, 21% trucks and busses, and 22% other motor vehicles. These variations may be largely reflective of the changing mix of vehicle types on the road.

Of note is the decrease in the automobile theft percentage from 81% in 1988 to 57% in 1995, while the national proportion consistently hovered around 78% during the same time period. Nationally in 1995, truck and bus thefts accounted for about 16% of motor vehicle thefts, and other vehicle thefts for about six percent. In Hawaii in 1994 and 1995, these smaller subcategories each accounted for about 20% of total motor vehicle thefts.

The increase in truck and bus thefts from 1992-1995 was led by the City and County of Honolulu, where the 4-year growth was in excess of 2,300%. The recent surge in the theft of automobiles in the state did not begin in earnest until 1994 (Chart 3) and is limited to 43% in 1994 and 1995. The increase in total motor vehicle thefts in 1994 and 1995 (Chart 4) was 55%. Charts 3 and 4 are plotted from 1979, the peak year for total motor vehicle thefts in the state prior to 1995.

During the 16 years from 1980 through 1995, 85.2% of statewide Motor Vehicle Thefts were reported in Honolulu, 5.8% in Hawaii County, 6.7% in Maui County, and 2.4% in

lands 1995 average rate was just 29% of the Honolulu rate.

In state-to-national comparisons (see Chart 2), Hawaii had higher rates in the late 1970's, but experienced lower rates from 1981 through 1994. By 1994, however, Hawaii's motor vehicle theft rate was just 8.4% below the comparable U.S. rate, while the 1995 statewide rate rose to a level 23.2% above the 1995 U.S. rate.

In 1980, Hawaii ranked ninth for motor vehicle theft rate among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. By 1985, the state's rank had fallen to 27th, while in 1990, Hawaii placed 30th. In the best year of 1991, Hawaii's rank was down to 36th, before moving back up to 29th in 1992, advancing to 22nd in 1993, continuing to 18th in 1994, and leaping to 8th in 1995.

Motor Vehicle Theft is reported in three subcategories by the type of vehicle stolen: 1) automobile, 2) truck or bus, and 3) other motor

Chart 3 Thefts of Automobiles by County and in the State of Hawaii, 1979-1995

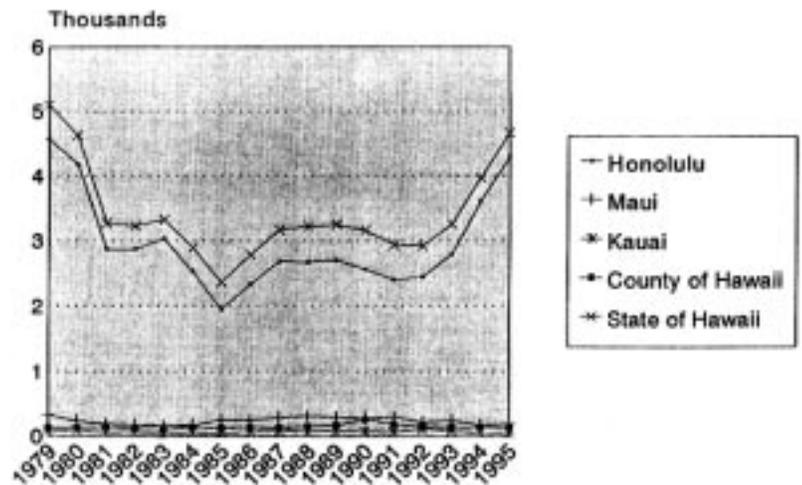
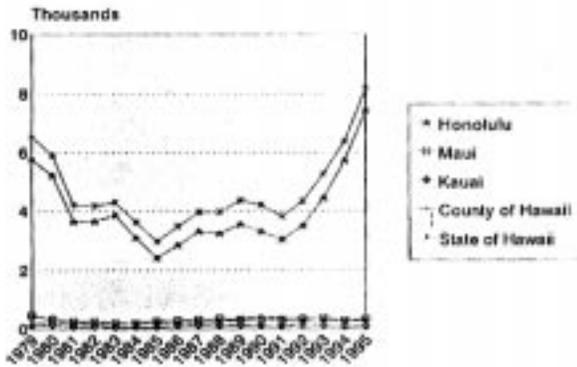


Chart 4 Total Motor Vehicle Theft Offenses by County and in the State of Hawaii, 1980-1995



Kauai County. The distribution in 1995 alone was 90.7% in Honolulu, 3.9% in Hawaii County, 4.2% in Maui County, and 1.1% in Kauai County. By contrast, the 1995 resident population was distributed 73.9% to Honolulu, 11.6% to Hawaii County, 9.8% to Maui County, and 4.7% to Kauai County.

The average monetary loss per offense, calculated by dividing the total monetary loss by the number of offenses in each county, is shown in Chart 5. According to UCR report preparers in the City and County of Honolulu and Hawaii County, the average losses were underestimated because stolen values gradually stopped being reported and ultimately reached a point when the majority of police reports was affected. Honolulu Police are considering requiring that a blue book value, a fixed amount for each model and year, be entered for each theft reported without a pre-existing estimated loss. In contrast, Maui County's average loss may be somewhat overestimated because, when the stolen value is missing from a police report, the records clerk enters the average of the wholesale and retail blue book values. It can be expected that stolen vehicles do not often meet the blue book assumption of being in optimum condition, and the wholesale value is included in the calculation to reduce the effect of the higher-than-actual values assigned by the blue book. Kauai County's average loss is probably the most accurate because rarely are reports received with a blank stolen value (i.e., the subject vehicles are counted as having no value). In addition to querying vehicle owners, officers on Kauai often check with dealers to obtain values for vehicles which are only a few months old.

From 1978 to 1995, the average monetary loss per vehicle theft increased in Maui and Kauai counties at a rate faster than the national average, but decreased in Honolulu and Hawaii counties. From a 1978 average loss

of about \$2,000 per offense, the 1995 average loss reached almost \$6,900 in Maui County and over \$5,200 in Kauai County, while showing slower growth and then declining to approximately \$1,500 in the City and County of Honolulu

Table 2 Automobile and Truck Registrations as of February 1, 1996 and First Registered or Renewed in 1995 or 1996; Vehicles Stolen, 1995; and Percent of Registered Vehicles Stolen: Top 46 Registered Makes And Seven Smaller Makes with Theft, City and County of Honolulu

Make	Number Registered	Number Stolen	Percent Stolen	Make	Number Registered	Number Stolen	Percent Stolen
Toyota	36,704	1,635	1.87	Geo	3,939	38	0.96
Ford	67,605	594	0.88	Lincoln	3,185	24	0.75
Honda	58,144	1,434	2.59	Lease	2,433	6	0.25
Chevrolet	54,667	440	0.80	International	2,062	10	0.48
Nissan	41,253	473	1.15	Dodge	1,833	30	2.72
Mercedes	27,047	485	1.79	Hyundai	1,764	28	1.59
Dodge	24,714	290	1.17	Jaguar	1,633	8	0.49
Daimler	16,455	78	0.47	Eagle	1,407	6	0.43
Oldsmobile	13,133	55	0.42	Porsche	1,389	17	1.22
Volkswagen	10,996	130	1.18	Sub	870	3	0.34
Flynn	10,412	134	1.29	Infiniti	806	0	0.00
Pontiac	10,310	98	0.95	Audi	703	3	0.43
Acura	8,610	192	2.23	Kennedy	570	1	0.18
Datsun	8,193	202	2.47	Petrol	453	1	0.22
GMC Truck	8,187	52	0.64	MG	392	7	1.79
Mercury	7,723	43	0.56	Alfa Romeo	206	2	0.97
Jeep	6,978	90	1.29	Land Rover	183	0	0.00
BMW	6,902	45	0.65	MCI	161	0	0.00
Cadillac	6,552	42	0.64	Rolls Royce	159	0	0.00
Mercedes Benz	6,147	27	0.44	Triumph	150	1	0.67
Vaux	4,970	14	0.28	Fiat	122	1	0.82
American	4,877	25	0.51	Ducato	113	1	0.88
Isuzu	4,830	63	1.30	Jevo	106	1	0.94
Sabre	4,427	29	0.66	Wilys	83	1	1.20
Mitsubishi	4,198	47	1.12	Lotus	51	1	1.96
Chrysler	4,163	49	1.18	Ford	38	1	2.63
Sabre	4,135	9	0.22				
				<b>Totals</b>	<b>525,165</b>	<b>6,808</b>	
				<b>Total Registrations, All Makes/Total Percent Stolen</b>	<b>527,209</b>		<b>1.29</b>

Table 3 Motorcycle Registrations as of February 1, 1996 and First Registered or Renewed in 1995 or 1996; Vehicles Stolen, 1995; and Percent of Registered Vehicles Stolen: Top 10 Registered Makes, City and County of Honolulu

Make	Number Registered	Number Stolen	Percent Stolen
Honda	3,593	251	6.99
Harley Davidson	2,396	26	1.09
Kawasaki	1,381	115	8.33
Yamaha	1,219	101	8.29
Suzuki	1,197	83	6.93
BMW	194	0	0.00
Triumph	36	0	0.00
Ducati	26	0	0.00
Vespa	13	0	0.00
Norton	10	0	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10,065</b>	<b>576</b>	
<b>Total Registrations, All Makes/Total Percent Stolen</b>	<b>10,140</b>		<b>5.68</b>

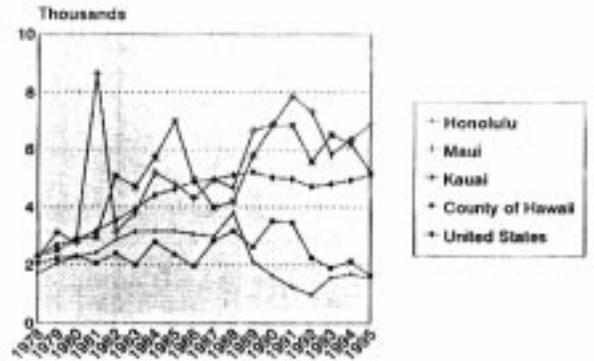
and \$1,600 in Hawaii County. Meanwhile, the national average loss increased to over \$5,100. These figures do not include deductions for the values of recovered vehicles.

Motor vehicle theft is the only Index Crime in which the

Table 4  
Thefts from Largest Make/Model/Year Combinations of Automobiles, Trucks, and Motorcycles Registered in the City and County of Honolulu, 1995

Vehicle Type	Make	Model	Year Range (Number of Included Years)	Total Stolen in Included Year	Average Stolen Per Included Year	Peak Year	Number Stolen in Peak Year	Included Year(s) with Minimum Theft	Number Stolen in Each of Minimum Year	
Automobile	Toyota	Camry	1986-1988(3)	85	21	1986	24	1987, 1988	20	
		Corolla	1982(1)	19	19					
		not specified	1980-1988(9)	210	23	1984	41	1981	15	
	Ford	Mustang	1992(1)	24	24					
		not specified	1992(1)	16	16					
	Honda	Accord	1994(12)	629	52	1990	109	1983	17	
		Civic CRX	1986-1992(7)	353	35	1990	69	1992	15	
		Prelude	1986, 1988, 1991(3)	53	18	1988	21	1986, 1991	16	
		not specified	1987-1991(5)	139	23	1990	36	1988, 1991	19	
	Honda	Sentra	1983, 1987-1988(3)	79	26	1988	34	1983	17	
Mini	Ford	626	1984-1985(2)	96	24	1985	39	1984, 1986-1987	19	
		not specified	1985-1986(2)	35	18	1985	20	1986	15	
	Dodge	not specified	1992(1)	20	20					
	Acura	Integra	1992(4)	75	19	1990	24	1992	16	
Datsun	not specified	1984(1)	25	25						
Truck	Toyota	not specified	1980-1989, 1993-1994(12)	585	49	1984	142	1982, 1994	8	
			1984-1985, 1987-1992(11)	197	18	1992	43	1990		
Truck	Chevrolet	*	1978, 1984-1990, 1992, 1993(10)	103	10	1989	15	1984, 1985	8	
			1985-1991, 1992(8)	101	13	1987	22	1992	8	
	Honda	*	1986, 1987, 1989-1991(5)	76	15	1986	29	1990-1991	9	
	Dodge	*	1983, 1987, 1989, 1991-1992(5)	117	15	1993	27	1985, 1989	8	
	Plymouth	*	1993-1993(3)	35	12	1993	17	1993-1994	9	
	Datsun	*	1980, 1983(2)	22	11	1980	14	1983	8	
	Isuzu	*	1986(1)	10	10					
	Isuzu	*	1989, 1993, 1993(3)	34	11	1993	18	1989, 1993	8	
	Motorcycle	Honda	*	1981, 1983-1992(14)	246	18	1987	41	1981	1
				1978, 1984, 1991, 1993-1993(12)	25	2	1994-1995	4	1978, 1984-1987	1
Kawasaki		*	1983, 1991(2)	109	8	1992	21	1986	1	
Yamaha		*	1980, 1982-1992(14)	99	7	1993	18	1980, 1984	1	
Suzuki		*	1986, 1992(10)	77	8	1993	21	1987	1	

Chart 5 Average Loss Per Motor Vehicle Theft by County, State of Hawaii, and in the United States, 1980-1995



majority of the total value stolen is eventually recovered by police. However, the value of a recovered vehicle is often less than the value of the vehicle when stolen primarily due to damage caused by the thieves in stealing or using the vehicle. Chart 6 shows the proportion of the value of stolen vehicles recovered in the neighbor island counties from 1980-1995.

The percentage of stolen value recovered in Honolulu may have been overreported for many of the more recent years because stolen vehicle values were seldom reported. All reported recovery values are being accepted by the police computer system, so with the 1995 total loss estimated at \$40 million (Napier 1996) and the 1995 total value of recovered vehicles reported at \$9 million, the proportion of stolen value recovered could be considerably lower than the 69% averaged for the 1980-1983 period, when the majority of values stolen and recovered were still being reported. In cases where a vehicle is recovered but an estimated value had not been included in the theft report, effective July 1996 police data entry personnel are required to retroactively enter a stolen value equal to the recovered value. While this is clearly problematic in cases where badly damaged vehicles are recovered, it is hoped that it will provide an interim solution until a more precise method can be incorporated into the data entry procedure.

Hawaii County requires a value stolen to be reported before a value recovered will be accepted, so its percent of stolen value recovered has not been overreported. In the neighbor island counties, the percentage of loss recovered is rarely less than 60% and sometimes exceeds 80%, especially in Maui County.

Recovery rate as measured by the number of vehicles reported recovered divided by the number reported stolen places Maui County at 76% recovered for the 16 years 1980-1995, Hawaii County at 73%, and Kauai County at 68%. A discontinuity appears in Honolulu's data at

Table 5  
 Top 5 Police Beats for Motor Vehicle Theft,  
 Top 5 Makes of Automobiles and Top 5 Makes of Trucks Stolen, and all Makes of Motorcycles with Thefts,  
 with Number of Thefts by Make, City and County of Honolulu, 1995

Beat 329  
 Waipio, Crestview, Seaview,  
 Waipio Point, East Waipahu

Type	Make	Number Stolen
Automobile	Toyota	55
	Honda	47
	Mazda	31
	Nissan	29
	Chevrolet	11
Truck	Toyota	37
	Chevrolet	13
	Ford	13
	Nissan	10
	Mazda	7
Motorcycle	Honda	6
	Suzuki	5
	Kawasaki	4
	Yamaha	4

Beat 328  
 Village Park, West Waipahu

Type	Make	Number Stolen
Automobile	Toyota	34
	Honda	22
	Chevrolet	18
	Mazda	13
	Datsun	12
Truck	Toyota	40
	Ford	12
	Datsun	9
	Chevrolet	8
	Isuzu	6
Motorcycle	Kawasaki	3
	Yamaha	2
	Honda	1

Beat 331  
 Royal Summit, Newtown,  
 East Pearl City, Waianai

Type	Make	Number Stolen
Automobile	Honda	43
	Toyota	38
	Nissan	15
	Mazda	10
	Chevrolet	8
Truck	Toyota	35
	Nissan	7
	Ford	5
	Mazda	5
	Chevrolet	3
Motorcycle	Kawasaki	5
	Honda	4
	Yamaha	3
	Harley Davidson	1
	Suzuki	1

Beat 21  
 Salt Lake, Moanaha High School,  
 Radford Terrace and Halsey Terrace  
 Naval Housings, Aliamama Military Housing

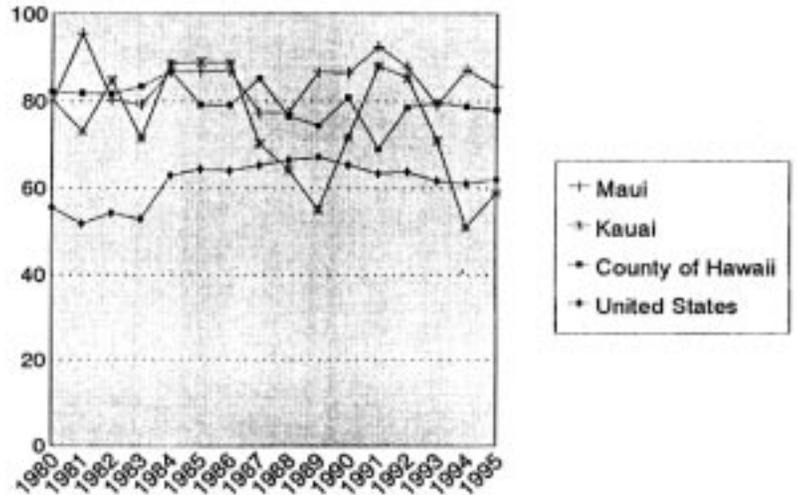
Type	Make	Number Stolen
Automobile	Honda	55
	Toyota	28
	Nissan	14
	Mazda	10
	Ford	9
Truck	Toyota	21
	Dodge	5
	Mazda	5
	Nissan	5
	Chevrolet	4
Motorcycle	Honda	8
	Kawasaki	5
	Yamaha	4
	Suzuki	2

1989, the year the police computer system was upgraded. Honolulu’s recovery rate by number recovered 1980-1988 was calculated at 95%. However, during the 1989-1995 period, Honolulu reported recovering just 58% of the total number of vehicles reported stolen. The 1995 percents recovered were: Maui, 74%; Hawaii, 73%; Kauai, 68%; and Honolulu, 57%.

**TYPES OF MOTOR VEHICLES STOLEN, CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU, 1995**

Table 2 presents the number of automobiles and trucks stolen by make, while Table 3 presents this information for motorcycles. Theft statistics were provided by the Honolulu Police Department, and registration statistics by the City Department of Data Systems. The highest theft rate for automobiles and trucks was posted by Suzuki at 2.72%. However, Honda posted a similar 2.59% with more than 30 times the number of registered Suzukis. Other makes with over 2% stolen were Datsun and Acura. The average theft rate for all registrations was 1.29%. Makes with significant registrations which placed more than 1 percentage point below the average theft rate were Volvo, Saturn, Lexus, Saab, and Infinity.

Chart 6 Percent of Value of Stolen Motor Vehicles Recovered in Neighbor Island Counties and in the United States, 1980-1995



(Table 5, Continued)

Beat 333  
Aiea Heights, McGrew Point,  
Pearlridge Center

Type	Make	Number Stolen
Automobile	Honda	33
	Toyota	27
	Mazda	15
	Nissan	9
	Ford	8
Truck	Toyota	33
	Ford	6
	Chevrolet	4
	Dodge	3
	Suzuki	3
Motorcycle	Honda	5
	Kawasaki	3
	Yamaha	3
	Suzuki	2
	Harley Davidson	1

Separate lists of automobiles and trucks stolen by make were available from Honolulu Police. This Department uses the UCR definition of truck to include all pickups and vans, while registration classifies these vehicles according to whether they are used for passengers only or commercially. Therefore, to calculate theft rates by make, police automobile and truck categories and registration passenger and commercial categories had to be combined.

Five makes of motorcycles accounted for 96.5% of the registrations and all of the thefts. Kawasakis and Yamahas were each stolen at about an 8.3% rate, while the theft rate for Hondas and Suzukis was about 7%. Harley-Davidsons fared much better, with a loss rate of just over 1%.

To provide more detailed theft statistics, the Honolulu Police research staff was asked to identify the approximately 60 make/model/year combinations of automobiles, trucks, and motorcycles which accounted for the most thefts in 1995, together with the number of vehicles stolen in each combination. All sixty-plus of the respective make/model/year combinations were occupied by 8 makes of automobiles, 10 makes of trucks, and 5 makes of motorcycles.

While make and year data were available for all stolen vehicles, some combinations for automobiles did not have a model specified and no models were specified for trucks and motorcycles. The total of 125 reported combinations of automobiles and trucks accounted for 46% of the thefts of these types of vehicles in the City and County in 1995, while the 63 identified combinations of motorcycles accounted for 97% of the reported motorcycle thefts. The data are summarized in Table 4.

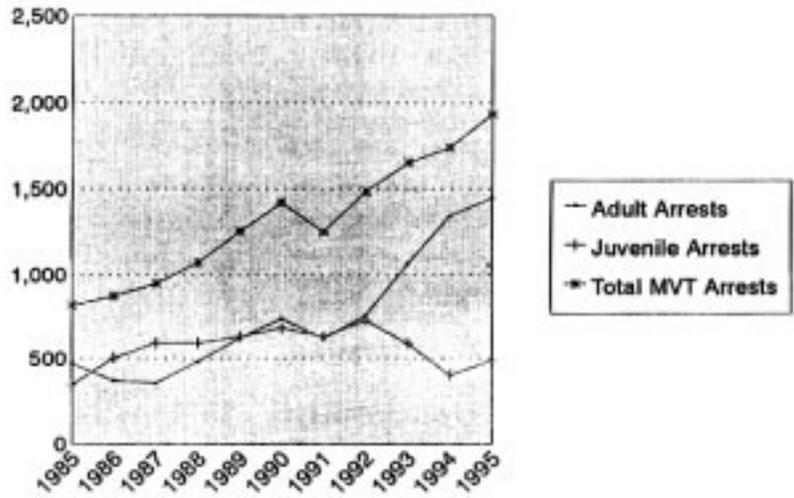
The City and County of Honolulu is divided into 120 police beats. To provide an indication of the areas at highest risk for motor vehicle theft, the police research staff first identified the ten beats with the highest total motor vehicle thefts in 1995 and then identified within each beat approximately ten makes of automobiles and trucks with the highest numbers of thefts, all makes of motorcycles with any thefts, and the numbers of these thefts by beat and make. The makes enumerated in the ten beats accounted for 26% of the automobile and truck thefts in the City and County in 1995 and 24% of the motorcycle thefts. Six of the ten beats are in Leeward Oahu, including Makakilo, Waipahu, Pearl City, much of their surrounding area, and Aiea Heights west of Aiea Heights Drive. Also included are Salt Lake and environs, Ala Moana, and Ala Wai districts in Honolulu, and east Kailua.

A portion of the data is presented in Table 5, in which the number of thefts within each of the top five beats for total vehicle thefts are enumerated by the top five makes of automobiles, of trucks, and of motorcycles. About 13% of the islandwide thefts of automobiles and trucks and 13% of the motorcycle thefts are listed in the table. The second five beats for total vehicle thefts in 1995 were as follows:

6. #58 -Ala Moana Shopping Center, site of new Convention Center
7. #325 -Barbers Point, Barbers Point Naval Air Station, Makakilo, Ko Olina Resort, Campbell Industrial Park
8. #424 -Keolu Hills, Kailua Heights, Enchanted Lake
9. #77 -Ala Wai Golf Course, Iolani School, Puck's Alley, Kaimuki High School
10. #330 -Waimano Training School and Hospital, Pacific Palisades, West Pearl City, Peninsula Point

Honda was the make with the highest number of automobile thefts in eight of the ten top beats for total thefts, and Toyota was the automotive make of choice in the remaining two beats. Toyota was also the truck make of choice in eight of the ten top beats for total motor vehicle thefts, while Ford and Dodge led in the other two beats. Honda led the list of motorcycle thefts in five of the top ten beats for total vehicle thefts, while Kawasaki led in the remaining four beats which had motorcycle thefts. Although some of these beats include military areas, Honolulu Police do not ordinarily have jurisdiction in military areas patrolled by military/Department of

Chart 7 Adult and Juvenile Arrests for Motor Vehicle Theft, State of Hawaii, 1985-1995



Defense Police.

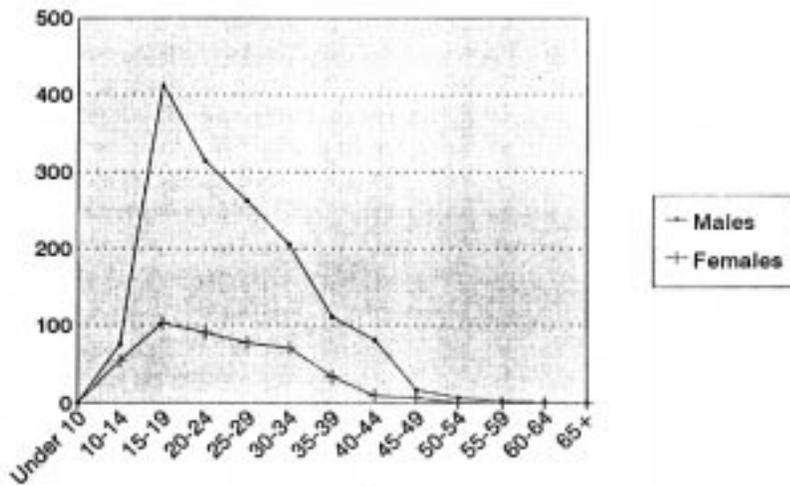
Information from the interview with the Honolulu Police Auto Theft Detail and data provided by the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) both show that since 1990 there has been a trend toward theft of vehicles of later model years. Data from the seven Hawaii-based insurance companies which are members of NICB (out of the total of 11 insurance companies which are incorporated in Hawaii) show that these seven companies insured vehicles which contributed 15% of the reported thefts in 1990, but 24% of the reported thefts in 1995. Police say the newer automobiles are in demand for parts and for use in committing other crimes.

**THEFTS FROM DEALERS AND RENTAL AGENCIES**

In addition to individuals and businesses with vehicle fleets, two types of business are particularly vulnerable to vehicle thefts: dealers and rental agencies. Eleven Oahu and two Big Island dealers were surveyed in January 1996 out of a total of 240 such dealerships in the state. Only five felt that auto theft was a problem for them, although the number which had thefts in the previous two years, 1994-1995, was up to seven from five in the prior two years, 1992-1993. Also, total thefts were up to 41 in the more recent period from 22 in the prior two-year period.

While seven of the dealers thought that theft from vehicles (parts, components) was as serious a problem for them as theft of their vehicles, the five vehicle rental agencies we surveyed agreed that theft from cars (renters' property, as well as parts) was more prevalent than auto theft. In 1995 alone, however, the three general auto rental companies in the sur-

Chart 8 Arrests for Motor Vehicle Theft by Sex and Five-Year Age Groups, State of Hawaii, 1995



vey responded that they had experienced a total of about 160 car thefts, including theft from renters and off the lot. There were also a few failures to return a vehicle when due. If the vehicle is in the possession of the renter when recovered, police often treat these cases as a civil problem with the contract, instead of as criminal theft. Eighty to 90% of the stolen vehicles were recovered with not more than \$1,000 damage, mostly to the locks and ignition.

### CRIME VICTIMIZATION SURVEYS

Victimization surveys are conducted primarily to get an estimate of the number and types of crimes which are not reported to the police. In early 1996, with the release of its data for 1993, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) completed its twentieth year of reporting. While the NVCS data show that nationally 75.4% of 1993 motor vehicle thefts were reported to the police, respondents from the 1995 Hawaii victimization survey indicated that 88.7% of motor vehicle thefts were reported.

Official numbers of reported motor vehicle thefts are much more accurate than those for other types of theft. There are several reasons for this high rate of reporting: 1) motor vehicle theft usually represents a loss of thousands of dollars; 2) reporting is required to make an insurance claim, and; 3) police are likely to recover the vehicle.

### CLEARANCES

The police report Index Crimes to the FBI as cleared when at least one suspect in the crime incident has been arrested or when the police know the exact location of a suspect but are prevented from arresting him/her due to a circumstance beyond their control, such as death of the suspect

or refusal of another jurisdiction to extradite (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1984).

A clearance rate is the percent of reported offenses for the year or other period represented by the clearances for that offense posted within the same period. From 1980 through 1994, the clearance rate for motor vehicle theft in Honolulu averaged 13.2%. This average exceeded the national average for cities of comparable size, which was 12.5%. Honolulu's clearance rates during most of these years exceeded the comparable national rates. During the same period, Kauai County's clearance rate, averaging 34.1%, was more often than not above the national rate for rural counties, which averaged 32.7%. Maui County's rate, averaging 25.1%, never quite reached the national rural rate, and Hawaii County's rate, averaging 30.1%, was more often than not below the national rural rate.

In 1995, however, Honolulu's clearance rate for motor vehicle theft was down 9.1%, while the Maui rate decreased to 24.6%. The other neighbor island rates slightly exceeded their respective average during the previous 15 years, with Kauai posting 35.5%, and Hawaii, 30.9%. The 1995 national clearance rate for cities of similar size to Honolulu was 11.3%, while in rural counties the national rate was 32.0%.

### ARRESTS

Chart 7 shows Hawaii juvenile and adult arrests, together with total arrests, for motor vehicle theft from 1985-1995. From 1985 to 1994, total motor vehicle theft arrests essentially kept pace with offenses, with arrests increasing 113% and offenses moving up 114%. In the three years from 1991 to 1994, however, as motor vehicle thefts were increasing by 67%, statewide arrests for the offense increased only 40%. The 1995 increase in arrests, 11%, was not enough to keep up with a 28% increase in offenses.

In Hawaii from 1985 to 1995, arrests for motor vehicle theft grew faster than arrests for Index Crimes and total arrests reportable to UCR (which include many offenses considered less serious than Index Offenses, but do not include traffic offenses). While total motor vehicle theft arrests were up 137%, from 816 to 1,934 over the ten years, arrests for Index Offenses were up just 17%, and total UCR arrests were up 38%.

In contrast to total motor vehicle theft arrests, juvenile arrests have fluctuated over the past ten years, increasing 96% from 1985 to 1990, but then declining 28% from 1990 to 1995, for an overall increase of 40%. Adult arrests were up a total of 209% from 1985 to 1995; the increase was 57% in

the first five years, and 96% in the 1990-1995 period. In 1995, juvenile arrests were up 21% and adult arrests were up 8%.

Nationally, in jurisdictions reporting complete arrest statistics over the ten-year period 1986-1995, juvenile arrests for motor vehicle theft increased 28%, while adult arrests increased 12%. In the five-year period 1991-1995, however, juvenile arrests decreased 17%, and adult arrests decreased 10%. Juvenile arrests for the offense were down 9% in 1995, while adult arrests were down 3%. Total motor vehicle thefts in the nation were up 20% from 1986-1995, but down 11% from 1991-1995 and down 4% in 1995.

Hawaii's total arrest rate for motor vehicle theft in 1995 was more than twice as high as the comparable national rate. Hawaii's arrest rate for the offense was 163 per 100,000 inhabitants, while the comparable rate for the localities containing 75% of the U.S. population which completed arrest reports for 1995 was 76 per 100,000.

When Hawaii motor vehicle theft arrests by sex are considered, 82% of the adult and 78% of the juvenile arrestees in 1985-1995 were males. However, there has been a fairly consistent annual increase in the percentage of females arrested for motor vehicle theft. The proportion increased in seven of the ten year-to-next-year comparisons from 1985-1995, and rose from 13% in 1985 to 23% in 1995.

Although adult females had fewer arrests than juvenile females in 1985, by 1995 the growth in arrests of adult females far exceeded the growth in arrests of juvenile females. From 1985 to 1995, adult female arrests increased 630%, from a base of 43 in 1985 to a total of 314 in 1995. The corresponding increase for juvenile females was 120%, up from a base of 60 to a total of 132.

When 1995 arrests are plotted by five-year age groups for each sex (Chart 8), it is observed that peak arrests for both sexes occur at ages 15-19 (413, or 28%, of the male arrests and 103, or 23%, of the female arrests for the year are in that group). Both male and female arrests fall steadily after age 19, with male arrests decreasing by about 21% in each of the next three age groups that collectively span the ages of 20-34, and female arrests declining by about 12% per age group in the same range. In the 35-39 year-old age group, arrests of both males and females are at about half the levels observed in the respective 30-34 year-old groups, and are down about 75% from the peak for males and about 65% from the peak for females.

The distribution of 1995 juvenile arrests for motor vehicle theft by race shows Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians with 46% (224 arrests), Filipinos with 16% (80 arrests), and Caucasians with 13% (62 arrests). Each of the other specified groups accounts for less than ten percent of the juvenile arrests. Among adult arrests for motor vehicle theft in the

same year, 31% were Hawaiian (445 arrests), 23% were Caucasian (334 arrests), and 15% were Filipino (217 arrests), with each of the other specified groups contributing less than ten percent of the total.

## ADULT CRIMINAL HISTORIES

The head of the Honolulu Police Department, Criminal Investigation Division, Auto Theft Detail, was interviewed and stated that some automobile thieves are students who may need money or are persons who are planning to leave the island or the state. Although the police believe that most car thieves are involved in the use or sale of drugs, a sample of criminal histories showed that only 40% of the 153 adult arrestees for Unauthorized Control of a Propelled Vehicle (UCPV) in June 1995 had previously been arrested for a drug offense. This is a smaller portion than had been arrested for violent crimes, traffic offenses, contempt of court, or property offenses. A similar finding was reported for the offense of larceny-theft in the 1995 issue of *Crime Trend Series*.

The situation is more pronounced when conviction, as compared to arrest, histories are considered. Only eight percent of the sample or 20% of those previously arrested for a drug offense had a conviction for a drug offense. Comparable comparisons of individuals convicted to previously arrested are 40% for violent offenses and 50% for all property offenses. For traffic offenses and contempt of court, the ratios exceed one-half.

Fifty-two percent of the sample had a previous arrest for UCPV, where the number of previous UCPV arrests ranged from one to 13, with a median of two. Seventeen percent had from one to four convictions for UCPV prior to the June 1995 arrest. Over 75% of the sample had a prior felony arrest and over 31% had a felony conviction.

## JUVENILE ARREST AND ADJUDICATION HISTORIES

Of the 35 juveniles reported by police as arrested and charged with UCPV in June 1995, by the spring or summer of 1996 the Family Courts had records on 28, but only 14 showed any arrests for UCPV and just nine (or 32%) showed the June 1995 UCPV arrest. The remaining arrestees with court records had been received by the court for a different prior offense. The reasons given by court personnel for the lower numbers of records and charges were that the prosecutor may have dropped a case for insufficient evidence or that the prosecutor was still developing the case.

The 28 motor vehicle theft arrestees with court records were 79% male and 21% female. Their ages ranged from 13 to 17, and 14 and 15-year olds each accounted for 32% of the total. Another 25% were 17 years old, whereas only 4%, representing a single arrestee, were 16 years old.

The 50% of the arrestees who had any UCPV arrest recorded by the court had between one and five such arrests, but 36% of the sample showed just one UCPV arrest. In contrast, only 18% of the sample had an arrest for UCPV prior to the June 1995 triggering arrest, and 7% (two individuals) had been adjudicated guilty of UCPV. These two juveniles were found guilty on four of the 15, or 27% of the prior charges of UCPV, while those charged with other felonies were found guilty on 15 of the 32, or 47% of the other felony charges.

Fifty-four percent of the overall juvenile sample had been charged with another type of theft (i.e., either a burglary or a larceny), 39% with a violent offense, and just 7% with a drug dealing or drug possession offense. Forty-six percent of the sample had been found guilty of another type of theft, while 32% had been found guilty of a violent offense. One of the two juveniles arrested on a drug charge had been adjudicated guilty of that charge. Fifty-four percent of the sample had a previous felony arrest, and 36% had been found guilty of a felony.

Turning to status offenses, 25% of the sample had a total of 10 arrests for curfew, 50% of the sample had been arrested 39 times for truancy, and 54% had been arrested 75 times for running away. Family Courts had found 11% of the sample guilty of a total of three curfew violations, 29% guilty of 22 truanancies, and 21% guilty of 25 runaways.

## HAWAII LAW

The soaring motor vehicle theft rate in Honolulu led the 1996 Legislature to pass two bills which were signed into law by the Governor in June 1996. These laws limit the defendant's ability to assert the owner's consent as a defense, add motor vehicle theft to the list of repeat class C felony offenses which require a mandatory minimum sentence, and create a new class C felony of unauthorized entry into motor vehicle with intent to commit a crime. These are the first substantive changes since 1974 to the statute which includes motor vehicle theft, Unauthorized Control of Propelled Vehicle.

Prior to 1996, section 708-836, Hawaii Revised Statutes stated that, "a person commits the offense of unauthorized control of a propelled vehicle if the person intentionally exerts unauthorized control over another's propelled vehicle by operating the vehicle without the owner's consent or by changing the identity of the vehicle without the owner's consent." This definition does not cover persons receiving for resale or personal use a vehicle which was previously taken in a UCPV offense. Due to the soaring numbers of motor vehicle thefts on Oahu since 1991, the 1996 Legislature decided to close this loophole with the passage of Act 195, signed by the Governor and made effective June 17, 1996.

The previous statute did not define "owner." Act 195 states that, " 'owner' means the registered owner of the propelled vehicle or the unrecorded owner of the vehicle pending transfer of ownership." The Act changes the affirmative defense to prosecution under this section from, "the defendant reasonably believed that the owner would have authorized the use had the owner known of it," to, "the defendant: (a) Received authorization to use the vehicle from an agent of the owner where the agent had actual or apparent authority to authorize such use; or (b) Is a lien holder or legal owner of the propelled vehicle, or an authorized agent of the lien holder or legal owner, engaged in the lawful repossession of the propelled vehicle."

Unauthorized control of a propelled vehicle is a class C felony. If the first conviction for any felony is for a class C felony, the defendant may receive a 5-year indeterminate sentence. Judges may decide to sentence first time convicted defendants under UCPV to probation. Minimum sentences are set by the Hawaii Paroling Authority within six months of judicial sentencing to imprisonment.

While repeat convictions under the UCPV statute would not have previously subjected anyone to a mandatory minimum sentence, Act 87, signed by the Governor and made effective June 6, 1996, adds Unauthorized Control of a Propelled Vehicle to a list of class C felonies which, together with all of the more severe felonies, require mandatory minimum sentences to be imposed upon the next conviction for a felony in the same group. Generally, the mandatory minimum sentence is cumulatively longer for the third and fourth convictions for listed felonies which occur within a set period after a prior conviction for an offense in this group.

Prior to the approval of Act 87, Honolulu Police were deeply frustrated by the lack of mandatory imprisonment for repeat offenders, as they believed that many of these offenders either did not get prosecuted, received a sentence of probation, or pled guilty and were soon released by the Paroling Authority. The shortage of prison space to back up mandatory minimum sentences for motor vehicle theft remains problematic.

## FEDERAL LAW

The Anti-Car Theft Act of 1992 was a large scale attempt to prevent stolen passenger motor vehicles and parts from being legally transferred. The Act continued to refine earlier requirements for manufacturers to mark car parts with identification numbers. The law also required the Attorney General to establish the National Stolen Auto Part Information System within the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) to contain the identification numbers of stolen passenger motor vehicles and stolen parts of such vehicles.

Salvage and junk yards and insurance carriers may obtain a determination from the System as to whether a part is listed as stolen. These businesses must then provide certificates to subsequent buyers attesting to the fact that the parts or vehicles are not known to have been stolen. The aim of this part of the law is to reduce the operation of “chop shops,” where stolen motor vehicles are disassembled and reassembled with switched identification numbers, often taken from junks and wrecks.

While a number of attempts have been made to legislate requirements for manufacturers to include anti-theft devices, there are no current federal or Hawaii statutes mandating that any devices of this type be installed as standard or special-order equipment. The Motor Vehicle Theft Law Enforcement Act of 1984 (MVTLEA) revised prior statutes which already required that Vehicle Identification Numbers (VINs) be stamped on the engine, transmission, and frame of all motor vehicles during manufacture. The MVTLEA added a requirement for similar marking of eight major sheet metal parts likely to suffer damage in collisions of models designated as “high theft lines.” In accordance with the Anti-Car Theft Act of 1992, these additional VIN markings were to be required in up to half of the non-high theft lines beginning with model year 1996 and in all of the remaining lines beginning with model year 1999. The law provides for the exemption of a limited number of passenger models in which an anti-theft device has been installed as standard equipment. However, “anti-theft devices” are not defined. The law simply states that the manufacturer must believe they will be effective in reducing or deterring theft of motor vehicles.

The Attorney General is due to make a final determination by December 1999 on the effectiveness of parts marking in curbing chop shop operations. A separate determination by the Attorney General on the effectiveness of anti-theft devices as a substitute for parts marking, in the lines which were exempted from parts marking, is also due by December 1999.

The Anti-Car Theft Act attempted to get states to increase registration fees or require an insurance surcharge of at least \$1 per vehicle to increase funding for law enforcement and prosecutors to work on prevention and cases of motor vehicle theft.

Yet another section of the law was to have established the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System to which states were to make available their ownership files. They were to use this system to check out-of-state title to vehicles of applicants for certificates of ownership. The law also established the Motor Vehicle Titling, Registration, and Salvage Advisory Committee, which issued its Final Report in February 1994. The primary recommendation of the Committee was to require states to adopt a uniform definition

of “salvage vehicle,” a vehicle which has lost most of its value due to severe damage. The purpose of this uniform definition, together with requirements for perpetual, conspicuous marking of the certificate of ownership and the vehicle to designate a restored or rebuilt salvage vehicle, was to curb the unscrupulous practice of title washing.

### **FEDERAL GRANTS TO COMBAT MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT**

The 1992 Anti-Car Theft Act also authorized partial federal start-up grants totaling \$10 million per year, or about \$45,000 for Hawaii, to be appropriated in fiscal years 1993-1995 to help fund the budgets of Anti-Car Theft Committees. These Committees were to be new agencies of state or local governments which would administer grants to law enforcement for investigation and prevention of motor vehicle thefts, and to prosecutors to enhance their efforts in cases of this type. The majority of the funding was required to have come from a registration or insurance surcharge of at least \$1 per vehicle. However, the first funds were not actually appropriated until 1995. In that year, \$200,000 was equally shared by committees in Sacramento and Boston. Even if fully appropriated, the federal funding would total only about 6% of the funding required by the law for the Anti-Car Theft Committees in their first three years of operation.

Because neither the Legislature nor the City Council acted to provide for a registration or insurance surcharge in 1995, Honolulu Police submitted an application for a grant from the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (a provision of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act), administered in Hawaii by the Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division of the Department of the Attorney General, to pay overtime to experienced investigators in the Auto Theft Detail. The overtime will give the investigators the opportunity to begin to search for chop shops, which, according to our interview at the Honolulu Police Auto Theft Detail, are often suspected to be ordinarily legitimate repair shops which operate as chop shops for perhaps only a few days per year upon demand from mainland or foreign suppliers. Napier (1996) says the backyards of private homes are also being used as chop shops. The application was approved for \$100,000 over a one-year period expected to begin in early 1997.

Another concern addressed by the Anti-Car Theft Act is, “the extent to which the absence of uniformity and integration of state laws regulating vehicle titling and registration and salvage of used vehicles allows enterprising criminals to find the weakest link to ‘wash’ the stolen character of the vehicles.” The law addressed this issue with the establishment of a broad-based advisory committee to report on state motor vehicle titling programs and by the establishment of the

National Motor Vehicle Title Information System. States are to be reimbursed, at most, 25% of their costs to implement this System.

A related section of the law requires insurers who obtain and transfer salvage or junk vehicles to verify that each of these vehicles is not reported as stolen, or that it has been reported as recovered and that such carrier has proper legal title. This verification is to be provided to the buyer. A similar requirement applies to salvagers, dismantlers, and repairers who sell major parts marked with identification numbers. Operators of salvage and junk yards, and insurance carriers must also prepare monthly lists of their inventory, its source, and disposition.

In fiscal year 1995, \$300,000 was appropriated to help establish the National Stolen Auto Part Information System. This and the \$200,000 for the two Anti-Car Theft Committees are the only funds yet appropriated under the Anti-Car Theft Act.

### FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

In its final report, the Advisory Committee listed anti-theft measures which, in its opinion, will require national uniformity to achieve significant reductions in motor vehicle theft. Foremost among these measures were the adoption of a standard definition of "salvage vehicle" as any vehicle with damage exceeding 75% of its pre-accident retail value, requirements that a Salvage Title be applied for within 30 days of the accident and before repairs are begun, and that the title be conspicuously and perpetually labeled "Rebuilt Salvage-Inspections Passed" for former salvage vehicles which were restored to highway operation. Rebuilt salvage vehicles would also be "branded" with the installation of a decal indicating this history in the driver's door jamb such that removal of the label would leave an obvious change in the door jamb.

Also recommended were strict rules for the issuance of duplicate titles, including over-the-counter service given only to proven owners, mailing duplicates issued to nonowner applicants to street addresses only, and mailing a copy of the application to the owner of record. In addition, duplicate titles must be conspicuously marked as such, and uniform anti-theft and safety inspections for rebuilt salvage vehicles were similarly called for. To enforce these proposals, the Committee recommended that a portion of federal highway funding be withheld from any state that does not comply with federal implementing legislation within three years of enactment. In March 1994, a bill to implement the proposals was introduced in the House of Representatives. It later died in the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

### DISCUSSION

Prevention strategies for most crimes focus on changing the behavior of potential victims to reduce the opportunity of being victimized or increasing the risk/price of getting caught to potential offenders. Reducing the opportunity to be victimized generally means reducing people's willingness to leave their cars in particular places at particular times. Increasing penalties to offenders was done with the approvals of Acts 87 and 195 of 1996. However, it is doubtful that these acts will make much difference without an increase in prison bed space.

A third strategy, target hardening, could make a substantial difference in motor vehicle theft. Although it could clearly increase their profit on each car, the auto manufacturers, except GM for a short period in the 1970's, have refused to install effective anti-theft devices. The number of new car sales that result from auto theft is estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands (Brill 1982). With sales of about 11 million vehicles per year, it can be argued that as much as four to five percent of new car sales are due to auto theft (Karman 1981).

The police say that consumer-installed anti-theft devices are often easily defeated by professional thieves (Napier 1996). Most automobiles can be stolen in less than one minute, almost all within two (Whittier 1978). However, accessory manufacturers are continuing to introduce new anti-theft devices to the after-purchase market, and some of these devices promise at least a period of immunity before thieves can discover how to defeat them. One such system could be a voice recognition device to unlock doors (available soon), working alone or in tandem with harder-to-disable locks. (Perhaps keyholes, often the point of entry for damage-causing tools which force locks to open, might become obsolete.) Also coming shortly is a steering wheel shield of case hardened steel, which has been designed to fit most steering wheels and is to be used together with The Club. A high security, heavy duty ignition lock cylinder which Consumer's Union said made cars virtually theftproof was standard equipment in GM makes prior to 1977 and 1978 downsizing and weight reduction programs. A similar column collar will soon be available for the aftermarket.

Brill says consumer-installed anti-theft devices would be effective if widely used, and that the auto insurers should promote these installations with premium incentives. Although some companies now offer discounts of 5–15% from the comprehensive premium, two of the larger national companies which do business in Hawaii do not offer such discounts here.

In the early 1980's, Brill found that insurance companies generally did not offer these discounts. He reasoned that although offering an effective incentive for installation of

anti-theft devices would reduce claim costs, the resulting higher profit rate could be expected to come with the expense of a smaller auto insurance industry with somewhat lower net earnings. Loss or slower growth of business can be expected with slowing demand for new vehicles to replace those stolen and not recovered. The auto insurance industry's business strategy is basically to put as much money as possible into higher paying investments, so this approach is not attractive to them. The more cars are stolen, the higher the insurers may raise their rates.

The easy-to-steal car doubly benefits the automobile financiers. Sales of new cars due to nonrecovery of vehicles stolen also increase their profits, while more loans are made due to the unusually low rates which are charged for auto loans. Lower loan rates can be offered for autos because the collateral, the stealable car, is easier to repossess than other consumer items which are usually kept in homes (Brill 1982).

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It appears from the directions taken by the Anti-Car Theft Act of 1992 that Congress has given up on prodding the auto manufacturers to take a more proactive approach to theft prevention. Instead Congress has passed a very extensive, potentially expensive, and, as yet, largely unimplemented law. In 1994, another federal law was enacted to encourage a sticker program, in which police are authorized to stop sticker-identified vehicles being operated at hours when the owner usually does not drive. While this action is helpful, its impact will be limited in comparison to the results that could be expected from the widespread installation of effective anti-theft devices.

While adult arrestees for UCPV are also being charged with less drug possession than with violent and other criminal acts, this does not mean that they are mostly not under the influence of drugs when committing other crimes. Stolen cars are preferred for use in subsequent drug crimes because of the asset forfeiture laws. A spate of unusually reckless behavior among those associated with stolen cars on Oahu in the first half of 1996 suggests that violence associated with drug use and stolen cars could become a more frequent occurrence.

The overtime granted to the Honolulu Police Auto Theft Detail to work on commercial auto theft may be sufficient to determine the size of the local chop shop problem. If evidence emerges that chop shop operations are substantial, it may be beneficial to establish a commercial auto theft unit to address this problem. These efforts could be part of a larger initiative in which the research community could attempt to develop a typology of motor vehicle theft, with which policymakers could then devise methods to deal with each of the major types of theft identified.

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