Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority
Plan of Operation

Prepared for the
Texas Legislature
for
Fiscal Years 2022-2023

December 1, 2020

Texas Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority Board

Lieutenant Tommy Hansen – Presiding Officer
Law Enforcement Representative

Ms. Ashley Hunter
Insurance Representative

Mr. Armin Mizani
Insurance Consumer Representative

Assistant Chief Mike Rodriguez
Law Enforcement Representative

Mr. Steven C. McCraw
Ex-Officio, Department of Public Safety
Designee: Major Sharon Jones

Mr. Shay Gause
Insurance Representative

Ms. Kit Whitehill
Insurance Consumer Representative

MVCPA Director
Bryan Wilson
512-465-4012
Bryan.Wilson@txdmv.gov

Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority
Fiscal Years 2022-2023 Plan of Operation

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

For nearly 30 years the Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority (**MVCPA**) has been serving Texas as an essential part of law enforcement. The vision of the MVCPA is to empower local law enforcement agencies and communities to combat and prevent statewide motor vehicle crime so that all Texans will be free from harm and loss caused by these types of crime. Motor vehicle crime has real debilitating effects on peoples' lives. The losses of about $1.5 Billion each year is staggering. To combat these losses, MVCPA funds 24 law enforcement taskforces throughout the state employing 236 highly trained law enforcement investigators. This Fiscal Year (**FY**) 2022-2023 Plan of Operation informs the Texas Legislature of the status of the MVCPA and of the efforts of the statewide network to reduce motor vehicle theft, burglary of a motor vehicle, and fraud-related motor vehicle crimes. The statutorily required plan (see Transportation Code §1006.102) provides an assessment of the scope of the problems of motor vehicle burglary and theft and fraud-related motor vehicle crimes, an analysis of methods of combating these crimes, a plan to provide financial support for programs, including the collection of funds from insurers, and an estimate of the funds required to implement this Plan of Operation.

The MVCPA is led by a governor-appointed board and the Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety (**TxDPS**) serves as an ex-officio member. The program is administratively attached to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (**TxDMV**) and staffed as a division of TxDMV. The MVCPA, in concert with TxDMV, continues to be fiscally responsible by keeping administrative costs much lower than the maximum allowed in statute. This Plan of Operation is submitted by TxDMV on behalf of the MVCPA.

Assessment of the Scope of the Problem

Texans suffer losses of almost $1.5 billion every year due to motor vehicle burglary and theft crimes.

Type of Crime	Number	Value of Loss	Average Loss
Burglary from a Motor Vehicle and Theft of Parts	194,558	$215,406,556	$1,107
Motor Vehicle Theft	76,687	$1,280,352,206	$16,696
CY 2019 Total Loss			**$1,495,758,762**

Source: The Crime in Texas Report for 2019, Texas Department of Public Safety, **CY= calendar year**

Victims of these crimes suffer additional losses well beyond economic damage. These include lost time, lost wages, lost business revenue, inconvenience of unplanned expenses, and the loss of community safety. Many additional losses to Texans (damage to cars during the break-in, the losses from fraudulent use of stolen credit cards, etc.) associated with these specific motor vehicle crimes get reported in official records in other categories.

Crime Reporting and Motor Vehicle Crime

MVCPA is charged with combating Motor Vehicle Theft (**MVT**), Motor Vehicle Burglary (referred to as **BMV**), and Fraud-related Motor Vehicle Crime (**FRMVC**). The data from the reported incidents (or the presence of crime) come from local law enforcement agencies. All Texas law enforcement agencies voluntarily report all crime data to **TxDPS**. Calendar year (CY) 2019 is the last full year of crime data reporting. Texas criminal records submission processes were changed from the Uniform Crime Reporting (**UCR**) process to the National Incident Based Reporting System (**NIBRS**) in 2019. Not all Texas law enforcement agencies were able to make the change in 2019. More information about Texas crime reporting is found at https://www.dps.texas.gov/ucr/index.htm. This change and corresponding decisions about how crime is categorized and collected have altered MVCPA's ability to report in the same manner as in the past for incidents and financial losses on MVT, BMV, and FRMVC.

The new NIBRS methodology of crime reporting continues to track MVT as a major index crime. Larceny from a motor vehicle and larceny of motor vehicle parts were the two crimes that constituted BMV but are no longer listed as distinct categories under NIBRS. NIBRS includes the two larceny crimes generally under "Larceny/Theft." Some agencies continue to collect this data locally because they are high impact in the local community. FRMVC is not identified as a single category under NIBRS (and was not previously under UCR). Title and registration fraud, crimes by licensed vehicle dealers, or crimes by government employees could fall under a broad array of public administration and fraud-related crime categories. Some specific crimes that MVCPA is charged to combat may be more difficult to identify across the full range of reported incidents. The MVCPA activity reporting will continue to show arrests, recovery of property, and cases cleared through the grant programs.

> Nobody Wants Wasted Time
>
> – "If you Like it – Lock it"

Based on Texas 2019 crime reports, on average:

- A motor vehicle theft occurred **every 6.9 minutes**

And

- A burglary of a motor vehicle occurred **every 2.7 minutes**

Motor Vehicle Theft

Motor vehicle theft (**MVT**) is tracked at the national and state level as a major index crime. The Texas Department of Public Safety annual report "Crime in Texas", defines, *"Motor Vehicle Theft, .. is the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is defined as a self-propelled vehicle that travels on the surface but not on rails..."* Beginning in 2019, NIBRS allowed multiple crimes in one incident to be reported together. Under the previous UCR hierarchical system only the more serious crime (e.g., murder, kidnapping, etc....) was reported when it occurred simultaneously with a motor vehicle theft. Because of this change, reported incidents of MVT and losses greatly increased in 2019. TxDPS also reports that the average dollar loss per MVT was $16,696, up from $12,051 in 2018. Another disturbing trend is that the number of stolen vehicles recovered has been trending downward for several years. About one-third of stolen vehicles were recovered in 2018, but less than 20% were in 2019. The change may be caused by reporting issues in the new method but lines up with anecdotal information of fewer recoveries from communities.
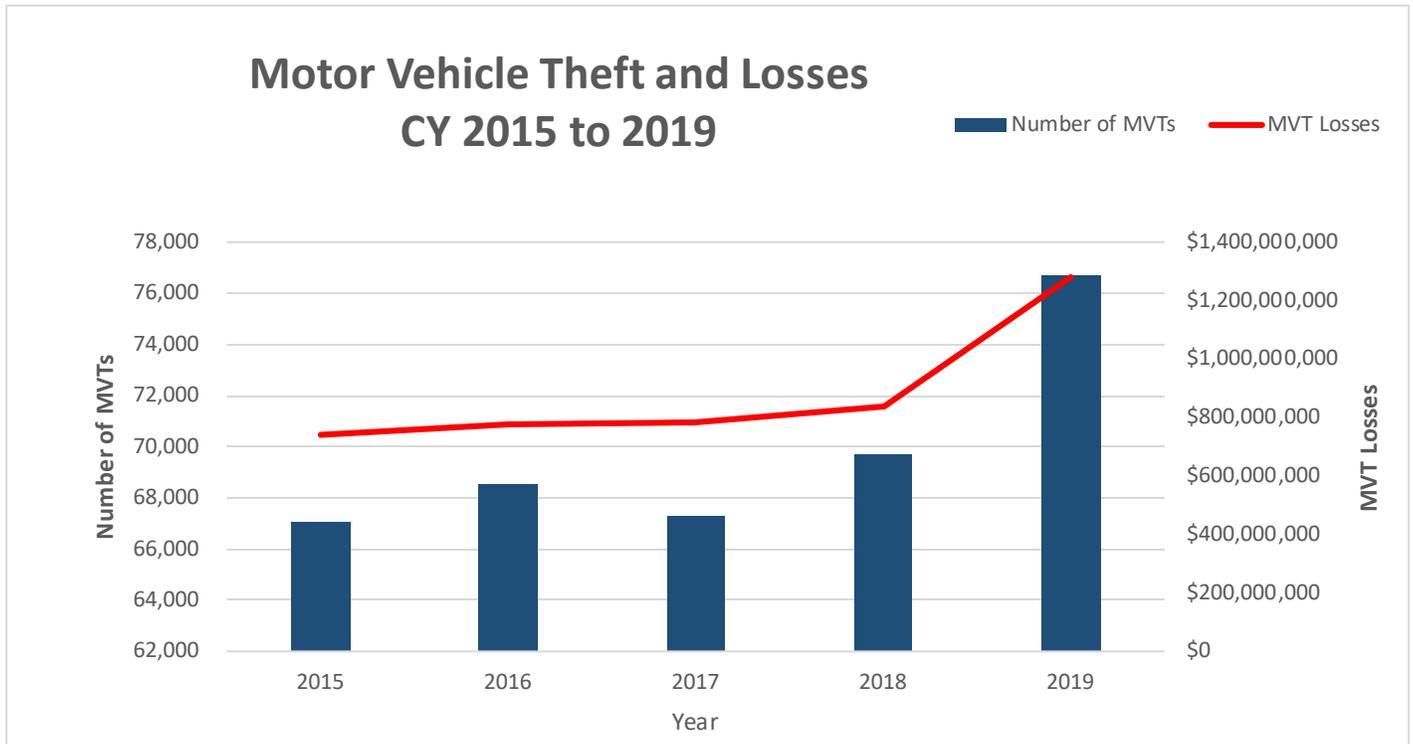
Compiled from data published by the Texas Department of Public Safety

MVT occurs throughout Texas but is highly concentrated in urban areas. The twenty counties that reported the highest number of motor vehicle thefts are closely aligned to the highest in population. These 20 counties represent almost 90% of all MVT incidents in Texas. In the chart below, the top five population centers in Texas remain consistent in the highest incidents of reported MVT over the years. The following 15 counties may move up or down slightly but remain consistent year over year within the top twenty rankings.

Top 20 Counties - Motor Vehicle Theft
2018 -2019

	Agency Name	CY 2018	Agency Name	CY 2019
1	Harris County	19,568	Harris County	20,796
2	Dallas County	14,526	Dallas County	15,889
3	Bexar County	6,857	Bexar County	8,623
4	Tarrant County	5,542	Tarrant County	5,953
5	Travis County	2,912	Travis County	3,547
6	Lubbock County	1,248	Lubbock County	1,313
7	Nueces County	984	El Paso County	1,018
8	Potter County	936	Potter County	1,017
9	El Paso County	923	Nueces County	945
10	Collin County	849	Collin County	896
11	Montgomery County	707	Ector County	866
12	Galveston County	694	Montgomery County	779
13	Hidalgo County	688	Hidalgo County	757
14	Denton County	663	Galveston County	754
15	Jefferson County	656	Denton County	733
16	Ector County	633	Bell County	617
17	Bell County	543	Jefferson County	590
18	McLennan County	491	Fort Bend County	570
19	Fort Bend County	482	McLennan County	558
20	Brazoria County	390	Brazoria County	472

Compiled from data published by the Texas Department of Public Safety

Taskforce Reported - Significant MVT trends

MVCPA taskforce commanders complete operational and progress reports as a part of the grant administration process. Each year, they provide an additional year-end summary to help identify trends about MVT. The consistent pattern for well over a decade reported by taskforces is that owners leaving their keys inside of or near the vehicle makes it extremely susceptible to theft. Many taskforces report that owners leaving their vehicle running at home or stores is also a major contributor to theft. About two-thirds of the taskforces report that fraud is an element associated with the crimes they investigate. Tied closely with this is the reliance on social media by criminals to sell the stolen vehicles. Over 40% of the taskforces identify the use of social media by criminals as playing a significant role in MVT. Over half of taskforces report that stolen vehicles are used in the commission of other crimes. This is consistent with the International Chief of Police Association - Motor Vehicle Crime Committee findings that many crimes start with a stolen vehicle. In Texas, human trafficking continues to be a major use of stolen vehicles.
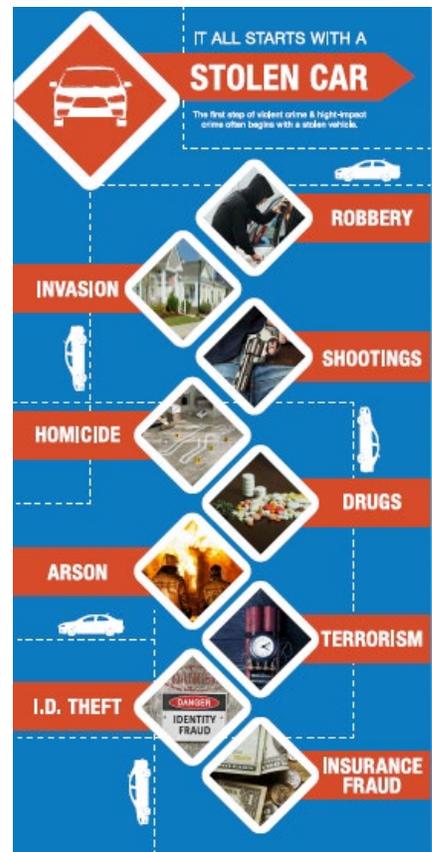

Source International Chief of Police Association Motor Vehicle Crime Committee

A prevalent element of MVT is the use of various technologies to defeat secure ignition systems. MVCPA taskforces report in most larger jurisdictions the use of modified vehicle components to allow entry and to start and steal vehicles. These illegally modified components allow criminals to bypass the manufacturers' security programs and systems, especially in newer vehicles. Some criminals have developed methods to clone keys or the key signal. About 40% of taskforces report the increase of technology to defeat manufacturer technology as a trend. Almost all large urban areas have seen the use of this technology to steal vehicles. Recovery rates of vehicles stolen in this manner are increasingly low. When these new cars are recovered, they are often dismantled. There is evidence developed with taskforces that the use of these technologies is tied to gangs and organized crime. Almost one-third of taskforces report gang and organized crime playing significant roles in MVT in Texas. About one-third of taskforces report heavy concentration of vehicles being stolen from vehicle dealerships using distraction techniques to swap the key fobs, insider employee jobs, and fraudulent purchases. Fraudulent purchases are discussed under FRMVC.

Burglary of a Motor Vehicle

Burglary of a motor vehicle (**BMV)** is a prevalent and costly crime in most communities. Many incidents go undetected, unreported, or classified as other crimes (e.g. victim discovers smashed window and report is taken as criminal mischief not BMV). BMV is comprised of incidents and losses reported to TxDPS by local agencies under the categories of larceny from a motor vehicle and larceny of motor vehicle parts. As discussed above changes in NIBRS will impact future analysis and reporting of this criminal activity.

Calendar year 2019 data show that there were 194,558 incidents statewide of BMV. This is an increase of over 9,000 reported incidents statewide from the prior year. The financial losses associated with BMV crimes was $215 million. This is an $18 million increase in losses reported in CY18.
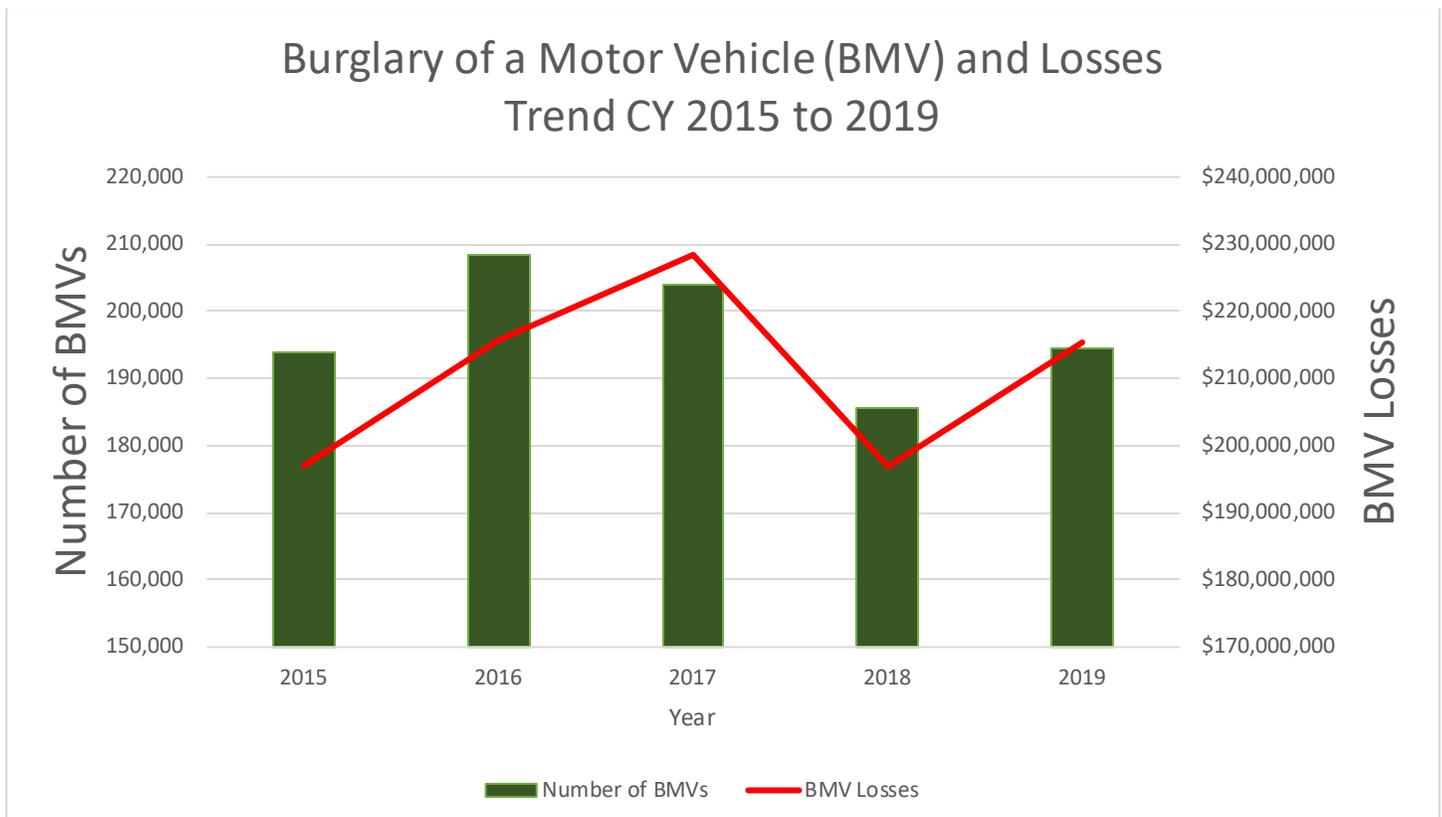
Compiled from data published by the Texas Department of Public Safety

Reported incidents of BMV and the losses tend to vary over time indicating that this crime may be tied more closely to other factors. These factors can include community choices of prosecution, implementation of curfews, or community economic levels. BMV tends to be pervasive in some jurisdictions such as large cities and cities along the US border with

Mexico. In other communities and outlying subdivisions, BMV is often haphazard and episodic with dozens or hundreds of cases at once. For instance, Northeast Texas Taskforce (Paris PD) reported dozens of BMVs tied to a single gang from Florida that moved into the tri-state area. Travis County Sheriff's Combined Auto Theft Taskforce reported one gang training its members to focus on weapons theft.

Ten agencies reported the most BMV incidents in their communities for 2019. These top ten communities made up 63% of all the incidents reported in the state and over 71% of the reported losses for BMV.

2019 Top 10 Burglary Motor Vehicle (BMV) Agencies Incidents and Losses

	Total Reported Incidents	Total Reported Losses
HOUSTON PD	38,822	$59,252,490
SAN ANTONIO PD	20,743	$21,366,560
HARRIS CO SO	15,819	$21,160,284
AUSTIN PD	13,297	$10,340,334
DALLAS PD	15,640	$25,873,271
FORT WORTH PD	7,258	$6,250,042
LUBBOCK PD	3,619	$3,241,372
ARLINGTON PD	3,242	$2,496,536
AMARILLO PD	2,607	$2,007,583
GARLAND PD	1,601	$1,386,534
Total	122,648	$153,375,006

Compiled from data published by the Texas Department of Public Safety

Taskforce Reported - Significant BMV Trends

MVCPA taskforce commanders complete operational and progress reports as a part of the grant administration process. Each year, they provide an additional year-end summary to help identify trends about BMV.

Doors left unlocked or belongings laying in clear view inside the vehicle tend to be the biggest causal motivator in BMV. Eighty percent of taskforces report that owners leave their vehicle unlocked in most cases of BMV. Forty percent of taskforces report that people left belongings in plain view. Over 50% of the taskforces indicate that car hopping/car flipping is the most prevalent method used by criminal actors. Perpetrators seek lots of cars together (e.g. parking lots or crowded residential streets) and quickly "flip" as many door-handles as possible (check handles for unlocked cars) and then enter and steal contents from the cars left unlocked.

Once thieves get inside a vehicle, weapons are often stolen. This was identified by two-thirds of the taskforces as the most prevalent trend in their communities. The car flipping method mentioned earlier is used throughout the state to steal guns, but many jurisdictions (about 25%) in southeast Texas are also seeing a new predatory theft method used to pursue victims. "Gun jugging" occurs when perpetrators monitor activity at gun ranges, gun shows, or spot vehicles looking like they are returning from hunting excursions. The unsuspecting victims showing signs of guns in the vehicle are followed to other stops and even home. At stops, the thieves quickly break into the parked vehicle. In some cases, the victims have been robbed. Since BMV is only a misdemeanor, taskforces believe that the reward to risk ratio is driving the increase of these occurrences.

Additional factors identified by the taskforce commanders in their operation to combat BMV: 1) over one-third identify drugs involved in their cases; 2) over one-third identify organized crime and gang involvement; 3) over one-third identify

credit cards and checks being sought by thieves; 4) about one-third report a high juvenile and youthful offender involvement in these crimes; and 5) the thieves rely on social media to coordinate the crime or sell the items stolen.

In the last two years there have been almost 60,000 reported incidents of stolen vehicle parts in Texas totaling well over $70 million. The two major items stolen as reported by taskforces are tailgates and catalytic converters. Both parts are difficult to trace once removed from the vehicle. MVCPA has seen significant increases in catalytic converters stolen from school buses and RV storage facilities as the cost of precious metals used in these parts have skyrocketed.

Fraud Related Motor Vehicle Crime (FRMVC)

Various crimes constitute the FRMVC offenses. These crimes are not reported under a specific crime category like motor vehicle theft. FRMVC are powerful tools that criminals and organized criminal enterprises use to convert stolen property into funds or illegally export vehicle out of Texas. Combating fraud related motor vehicle crime was added to the responsibilities of MVCPA by the 86th Legislature (see Senate Bill 604). In the first year with this expanded responsibility, taskforces reported over $3 million in losses from these crimes. Taskforces often pursued these crimes in the past along with co-occurring motor vehicle theft since MVCPA was not authorized to fund programs for these purposes until FY20. No additional funds were provided with the expansion of responsibilities. While the taskforces priority remains motor vehicle theft, MVCPA taskforces are pursuing more fraud-related crimes.

While these crimes take place throughout the state, the largest impact on Texans occurs in the larger metropolitan cities. Urban areas have higher concentration of vehicles, transactions and people that make it easier to hide the illegal activity in plain sight. Emission inspections are limited to urban counties thus raising these fraudulent transactions only in those areas.

The training and expertise that the MVCPA funded law enforcement investigators (and those trained by the MVCPA) contribute are invaluable to identifying these crimes. Only motor vehicle theft investigators are authorized to have unqualified access to the proprietary and confidential databases owned by vehicle manufacturers and managed by the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). Taskforce investigators often work closely with TxDMV to solve these crimes and protect Texas and Texans.

Types of motor vehicle fraud are:

Title Fraud – Criminals provide fictitious paperwork for stolen vehicles. Non-English-speaking communities are the most vulnerable to receive these fake titles. These crimes also cost the State of Texas millions of dollars in taxes and highway funds each year while defrauding consumers of proper ownership documents. Filing false liens against vehicles is common in title fraud cases. In some jurisdictions these crimes have been reported to negatively impact the local auto sales market due to lost transactions.

Registration Fraud – this crime reduces highway revenue to the State of Texas and undermines state air quality attainment goals. When vehicles cannot pass emissions inspections, or cannot be registered due to title issues, owners often resort to purchasing false registration documents or illegally issued temporary permits. This act allows polluting vehicles to remain on roadways and deprives the state of needed highway dollars. Fraudulent paper plates are commonly used by many different crime groups to hide the identity of the vehicle used in the commission of the crime. This is common in theft, narcotics, robbery, and other fraudulent criminal activity.

Two predominate methods are used in the commission of these crimes. First, individuals illegally use TxDMV systems (e-Tags and temporary permits) to generate documents that make it appear that vehicles are appropriately registered. Second, and more prevalent, is the generation of fictitious documents such as registration insignias to make it appear that a vehicle is properly registered. Harris County recently discovered a ring manufacturing registration stickers and paper plates using sophisticated technology. Taskforces along the border have reported the paper plates sold on the internet are manufactured in Mexico and exchanged for cash on US/Mexico bridges.

Insurance Fraud – Taskforces often receive reports of stolen vehicles and upon investigation quickly determine that the reporter or family member is committing insurance fraud. The vehicle may have been illegally exported, hidden or sold prior to the insurance claim. The NICB says that insurance fraud costs thousands of dollars to families in increased insurance costs. Other motor vehicle insurance fraud is committed by companies performing bogus repairs and using fictitious liens to seize vehicle. Often insurance company investigative units work with MVCPA taskforces. The NICB special agents are embedded in many taskforces both to fight insurance fraud and help recover stolen vehicles and other property.

Odometer Fraud – Despite new technology on new vehicles, criminals often defeat secure systems to illegally increase the value of used cars. A used vehicle with extremely low miles on the odometer is generally worth much more than one with high mileage. While odometer fraud is also a federal crime, thresholds for federal prosecution are high. MVCPA taskforces often discover odometer fraud rings connected to stolen vehicle investigations. These rings are usually organized criminal enterprises. One case in north Texas involved hundreds of mostly high-end vehicles having their odometers rolled back.

VIN Fraud (VIN switches/VIN Cloning) – This technique is used to generate higher sales prices and disguise the true nature of the title before an illegal sale. A stolen vehicle cannot be legally sold. Other vehicles, like salvage vehicles damaged in floods or wrecks cannot be sold without a designation (brand) on the title. In one case, the Houston Auto Crimes Task Force discovered one location with over 300 salvaged vehicles that had been purchased using the same salvage license with most of the vehicles having been resold after being VIN switched by the suspects. Taskforces regularly discover vehicles stolen in Texas and other states where a VIN switch was made in the attempt to sell the vehicle.

Identity Fraud Sales and Synthetic Identity Sales – Criminals and criminal enterprises have worked very effectively at avoiding detection at dealerships and rental car companies. These crimes rely on the delay between the transactions and the discovery and the report of a crime. With rental car companies, specific procedures must be followed and notice sent giving at least a week, and sometimes up to a month, before the car is reported stolen. For dealer sales, the delay can be months as transactions and the report of a stolen vehicle may get lost between finance companies and dealers. Over 50% of the taskforces report that stolen vehicles are used in the commission of other offences. These crimes use fraudulent checks drawn on business accounts to purchase several vehicles, or some form of identity theft to defraud both the dealership and the finance company. These stolen vehicles are often quickly sold on social media sites for a quick profit. An increasing number are being VIN flipped and discovered at the TxDMV regional offices or local tax offices during the titling process. A national based used car dealer located in Tarrant County experienced over 60 vehicles stolen from their lot. Many taskforces mentioned that these vehicles are used in human trafficking**.**

Analysis - Methods of Combating the Problem

The vision of MVCPA is to empower local law enforcement agencies and communities to combat and prevent statewide motor vehicle crime so that all Texans will be free from harm and loss caused by motor vehicle crime. The MVCPA is committed to be an evidence based, strategy driven and community-centric network to support law enforcement taskforces, improve coordination, deploy equipment and provide clear messaging to end motor vehicle crime.

MVCPA implements this vision and mission by issuing grants to local law enforcement agencies (taskforces), providing law enforcement investigator training, providing educational information and materials to the public and coordinating activities with TxDMV, TxDPS, the Comptroller of Public Accounts and other state agencies. MVCPA uses both statutory operational performance measures to determine effectiveness of the efforts of MVCPA and its law enforcement taskforces.

Collaborative Law Enforcement Funding

The MVCPA provides financial support to law enforcement agencies for economic motor vehicle theft and fraud-related motor vehicle crime taskforces. These grants fund local law enforcement investigators in the law enforcement taskforces. The chart below shows the law enforcement taskforces funded in FY20-21:

MVCPA FY2020 – 2021 Grant Awards			
	Single/Multi-Agency Taskforce	**FY2020**	**FY2021***
City of Beaumont	Multi-Agency	$528,714	$508,623
City of Brownsville	Multi-Agency	$924,350	$889,225
Burnet County	Multi-Agency	$200,000	$192,400
Dallas County	Multi-Agency	$540,000	$519,480
Galveston County	Multi-Agency	$469,183	$451,354
City of Houston	Multi-Agency	$995,000	$957,190
Lubbock County	Multi-Agency	$404,523	$389,151
City of Mansfield	Multi-Agency	$300,000	$288,600
Montgomery County	Multi-Agency	$337,464	$324,640
Potter County	Multi-Agency	$361,705	$347,960
City of San Antonio	Multi-Agency	$800,000	$769,600
Smith County	Multi-Agency	$332,792	$320,146
Tarrant County	Multi-Agency	$1,145,500	$1,101,971
Travis County	Multi-Agency	$631,137	$607,154
City of Austin	Single	$430,685	$414,319
City of Corpus Christi	Single	$410,973	$395,356
City of Dallas	Single	$625,000	$601,250
City of Eagle Pass	Single	$125,000	$120,250
City of El Paso	Single	$929,465	$894,145
Harris County	Single	$772,403	$743,052
City of Laredo	Single	$685,000	$658,970
City of Paris	Single	$106,709	$102,654
City of Pasadena	Single	$76,000	$73,112
City of Victoria	Single	$154,719	$148,840

*MVCPA was included in the 5% reduced GR funding for the FY20-21 biennium. The lower grant amounts in FY21 reflect part of those reductions.

The **24 taskforces** above represent **129 law enforcement agencies** and employ **236 law enforcement investigators** funded through the grants listed above. These taskforces routinely provide coverage and coordination to another **420 police and sheriff departments** because MVCPA grants allow and encourage them to work across their region and state. The law enforcement investigators perform numerous investigative duties as licensed peace officers coordinated by MVCPA.

Taskforces are operated locally through interagency / interlocal agreements. The investigators perform the statutory required duties of the MVCPA, and their agencies report performance measures through the grant reporting process.

MVCPA Performance Measures

The MVCPA funded law enforcement taskforces work to combat incidents and financial losses in their law enforcement activities. The MVCPA has performance measures set by statute (see Transportation Code §1006.151). Taskforces funded by the MVCPA track recovery of stolen vehicles, cleared cases, and persons arrested. The table below shows the statutory performance measures performed by taskforces in FY20:

Summary of Statewide FY19-20 Statutory Requirements Reported by Taskforces

Motor Vehicle Theft Performance Measures			
Activity	FY 2019	FY 2020	Percentage Increase
Recovered Stolen Vehicles	11,678	12,860	10.1%
Cleared Motor Vehicle Theft Cases	13,491	19,258	42.7%
Persons Arrested Motor Vehicle Theft	3,257	3,593	10.3%
Burglary of a Motor Vehicle Performance Measures			
Activity	FY 2019	FY 2020	Percentage Increase
Cleared Motor Vehicle Burglary Cases	2,565	2,419	-5.7%
Persons Arrested Burglary of a Motor Vehicle	930	736	-20.9%
Fraud Related Motor Vehicle Crime Began FY20			
Activity	FY 2019	FY 2020	Percentage Increase
Cleared Fraud-related Motor Vehicle Crime Cases	N/A	134	N/A
Persons Arrested Fraud-related Motor Vehicle Crime	N/A	51	N/A

In addition to the statutory performance measures, the MVCPA collects other data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the programs. The grant report data elements are the same for all taskforces but responses vary based on location and type of grant program. Over the last three years taskforce investigators have averaged each year in their performance of law enforcement duties the following:

1) $120 million worth of stolen vehicles, parts and equipment recovered.
2) $1.8 million worth of stolen vehicles repatriated back into the US from Mexico.
3) 250 pounds of illegal drugs confiscated.
4) Conducted almost 3,000 covert operations to interrupt criminal enterprise.
5) 15,000 vehicle identification number inspections for citizens needing certain title transactions.
6) Over 7,000 vehicles were inspected prior to entering Mexico.
7) Responded to 3,000 license plate reader alerts indicating location of a stolen vehicle.

Law Enforcement Training

The MVCPA supports and coordinates with the taskforces to provide excellent skills based training for current motor vehicle crime investigators in Texas. The MVCPA curriculum was developed in coordination with TxDMV, TxDPS, NICB, and Texas Association of Vehicle Theft Investigators (TAVTI). The training uses the most knowledgeable instructors and subject matter experts from the taskforces to teach the latest motor vehicle crime investigation techniques and technology. The investigators who complete the training become specialized motor vehicle crime investigators and receive access to the NICB confidential and proprietary databases. With this access they can perform confidential VIN inspections (also referred

to as 68-A inspections) to determine with accuracy the identity of all vehicles (also referred to as 68-A inspections) in accordance with the statute and TxDMV rule. This training and the 68-A inspections lead to a significant number of recoveries of stolen vehicles. The MVCPA trains about 100 investigators per year.

Public Education and Public Awareness Efforts

As reported above, taskforces identified owner behavior (cars unlocked, key in vehicle or car left running) to be a large contributor to MVT and BMV. In a report by the NICB, Texas was identified as second in the nation for MVT with keys left in the ignition. This is often referred to as "victim assisted" theft.

MVCPA works extensively to educate and inform the public using social media and web-based tools to promote motor vehicle crime prevention and to advance its statutory obligations. For example, during the annual *July is Watch Your Car Month*, MVCPA uploads social media messages on MVCPA's TxDMV website, Facebook, and Twitter. The MVCPA works with its taskforces to increase the impact and reach of these messages. In addition, MVCPA collaborates with the Insurance Council of Texas, insurance companies, and NICB to develop and publish recommendations to inform the public on how they can guard against vehicle crime. These common-sense measures on what vehicle owners should always do include: 1) remove keys from the ignition; 2) lock vehicle doors/close windows completely; 3) park in well-lit areas; 4) use audible alarms; 5) use immobilizing devices which can prevent thieves from bypassing the ignition and hot-wiring vehicles (ex. aftermarket solutions of smart keys; fuse cut-offs; kill switches; starter, ignition, and fuel pump disablers, etc.); and 6) wireless ignition authentication. Taskforces dedicate many hours each year to communicate with local press, citizens, neighborhood groups and homeowner associations. They make appearances, distribute materials and conduct presentations at stock shows, county fairs, civic organizations, and racing events. Some taskforces provide public service announcements and purchase billboards to increase education and awareness about preventing motor vehicle crime. Sharing ideas with other state Auto Theft Prevention Associations (ATPAs) that includes Colorado, Pennsylvania, California, and the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators (IAATI) representatives to discuss a centralized theme. The attempt is to create a shared theme that provides consistency in messaging across multi-media platforms for motor vehicle theft locally, nationally and internationally.

When funds were available, MVCPA does statewide public education and awareness media campaigns. The MVCPA partnered with the NICB (a national nonprofit corporation that fights motor vehicle crime and fraud) on a statewide public education campaign. Statute requires the MVCPA to conduct educational programs about methods to prevent motor vehicle crime. Using MVCPA grants, NICB launched the " If You Like It Lock It!" media campaign in English and Spanish with Gary P. Nunn as a spokesperson for the campaign. TV and radio public service announcements were distributed to the Texas Association of Broadcasters members. To date, more than 20,000 spots aired with a total airtime value of more than $1.2 million. The campaign put up 9 billboards reminding Texans to "Lock It " and provided print materials for law enforcement agencies to distribute in their communities.

The MVCPA also distributed through its law enforcement taskforces technologies that allowed Texans to mark and register their pickup tailgates to increase recoveries of stolen tailgates and help catch criminals. The program also issued trailer hitch locking devices and license plate locking screws to help prevent crime. MVCPA also coordinates with other states to look for ways to improve outreach.

Plan for Providing Financial Support

MVCPA adopted the following strategies and tactics to improve its service to all Texans. MVCPA has prepared new grant types to implement these strategies and tactics and make meaningful positive impact on the escalation of motor vehicle crime, the increase in the use of stolen vehicles in the commission of other crimes, and the reduction of stolen vehicle recoveries.

Law Enforcement Support
Add more trained motor vehicle crime investigators to cover Texas
Provide funds for new technology and specialized motor vehicle technologists
Provide motor vehicle crime prevention equipment, technology, and overtime
Develop funding methods that promote law enforcement stakeholders to engage in combating motor vehicle crime on a regional basis
Provide secure web-based command and communication systems to improve collaboration, intelligence gathering, and data sharing among taskforce investigators and state agencies
Provide full-time specialized motor vehicle criminal intelligence analysts for all regions
Provide more training for investigators and crime prevention specialists
Provide for increased availability of VIN inspections to the public
Develop and fund a statewide taskforce
Improved Prosecution
Fund specialized motor vehicle crime prosecutors
Fund fraud-related motor vehicle crime training to local prosecutors
Engage the Public to Prevent Motor Vehicle Crime
Conduct coordinated effective education campaigns
Improve education programs and content for the public
Provide clear messaging to end motor vehicle crime
Provide Experimental Equipment to Assist Motor Vehicle Owners
Identify, promote, purchase and distribute new technologies such as immobilizer systems and personal use tracking devices
Develop connectivity of databases between inspection stations and toll systems to law enforcement stolen lists
Prevent Stolen Motor Vehicles from Entering Mexico
Support local law enforcement efforts to host voluntary self-registration tracking or title management technology to allow vehicle owners to prevent removal of their vehicles from the US
Provide funds to expand law enforcement agencies intelligence sharing along US / Mexico border
Improve Fee Collections and Refund Process
Develop a dedicated unit to oversee the collection of the MVCPA insurance fee and promote equity in fee collections across the motor vehicle insurance industry
Improve and streamline the process for insurers that overpaid to obtain a refund

Grant Funding Accountability

Grants are the most reliable and cost-effective method to encourage local law enforcement agencies to pursue the state strategy and interest in combating and preventing motor vehicle crimes. MVCPA is a reimbursement only grant so that local law enforcement agencies receiving grants lay out the funds and receive reimbursement only for allowable costs. Because the MVCPA grant program has had reduced funding, city and counties have increased their funding over the last ten years as state funding has diminished. The MVCPA and its local taskforces are committed to continuing the critical work and coordination to address these highly mobile crimes. MVCPA has the strategy and network to reduce these crimes and make deep impact into the criminal networks harming all Texans.

The MVCPA conducted a survey of chiefs of police and sheriffs as well as existing taskforce commanders. The three groups communicated solutions that focus on meeting the challenges to reduce motor vehicle crime over the next few years. The consensus of strategies that MVCPA can employ are focused on increasing paid time available to investigators, more detection and surveillance technology that can support more fewer investigators and tools to increase agency coordination. Law enforcement is changing and the ability of departments to recruit and expand taskforces is limited. The options left to respond to increased motor vehicle crime are present through the grant program structured based on outcomes that augment the existing taskforces. The use of technology, rapid response strikeforce funding, targeted overtime, saturation patrols, community oriented solutions and some expanded or new taskforces will meet the future and reduce motor vehicle crime.

Improve Coordination

The MVCPA is committed to continuing to improve coordination among stakeholders to leverage existing resources to fulfill its mission. Three TxDMV investigators are placed with MVCPA taskforces and TxDMV personnel and materials are included in MVCPA law enforcement training. Also, the MVCPA has coordinated with TxDMV to provide training sessions for the NICB auto theft schools. The TxDMV has coordinated through the MVCPA with taskforces to work closely to combat title fraud and other methods of converting stolen motor vehicles into economic gain.

The MVCPA is committed to improving the grant program data collection and analysis. The MVCPA has improved and streamlined the reporting processes associated with its grants. A greater emphasis on statutory performance measures and program and fiscal monitoring has been established between the MVCPA and its taskforces.

The border and port security performance measures will continue to improve. Better communication between TxDPS and the MVCPA has produced an increased understanding regarding vehicle recovery, arrest data, and cleared cases. The need for coordinated strikeforce operations between taskforces and other law enforcement agencies is evident. The MVCPA will also help taskforces and other law enforcement agencies improve and develop communication tools by promoting virtual command centers and regional intelligence briefings.

Continue Promoting and Providing Motor Vehicle Crime Investigator Training

The MVCPA will continue to manage the Intermediate and Advanced Motor Vehicle Crime Investigator training programs. The expertise regarding motor vehicle burglary and theft investigations is now centered in local law enforcement agencies, specifically MVCPA funded taskforces. These courses are available free to all qualifying law enforcement investigators. The MVCPA, in partnership with TxDMV, TxDPS, NICB, and TAVTI will continue the training program and update materials as needed. The MVCPA taskforces report that the coordination of the MVCPA network and the specially trained personnel are extremely beneficial aspects of the MVCPA program.

Public Education and Awareness Expansion

MVCPA plans to replicate public education and awareness initiative similar to "If You Like, Lock It" Campaign by awarding performance and activity based grants for statewide multimedia campaigns to educate Texans on their role in mitigating vehicle theft and burglary. MVCPA will continue to support community education efforts with the taskforces and other agencies with a variety of crime prevention materials. These materials create awareness and help citizens learn and implement steps to protect their own property and enhance communication with others to take prevention and protection steps.

Insurance Industry Cooperation to Combat Crime

Insurance companies and associations often provide taskforces with resources such as bait cars, targeted grants, equipment and crime prevention parking lot signs. Currently, there is no method to coordinate these efforts to avoid duplication and ensure the broadest possible coverage. The MVCPA will coordinate with the insurance companies and associations to promote the best use of resources and to determine areas that the grant funding and operations can be coordinated for maximum effectiveness. The MVCPA also will work with the insurance industry to develop education programs and to implement new technologies that potentially provide insurance cost reduction for consumers. For example, if the MVCPA demonstrates through a pilot program that new technology was effective, then coordination with

the insurance industry may result in discounts or incentives for consumers to help expand the technology and reduce motor vehicle crime.

Border and Port Security Improvement

The 86th Legislature earmarked $10.4 million of appropriated funds to the MVCPA to provide enhanced border and port security for Texas. The requirement under the General Appropriations Act Article IX, Section 7.11 and Sec. 17.07 provided the MVCPA opportunities for improved reporting and added reporting requirements for taskforces located in designated counties. Some jurisdictions routinely performed activities in the ports or along the Texas / Mexico Border. The earmark and designation is likely to continue, and MVCPA taskforces will continue to expand their capabilities in apprehensions, indictments, recovered vehicles and drug seizures. The presence of taskforces would be greatly improved with signal jamming detection technology, increase surveillance equipment, criminal intelligence analysts and overtime to increase the hours available to monitor the bridges and perform port inspections.

Promoting Insurer Compliance with the MVCPA Motor Vehicle Insurance Fee

The MVCPA worked closely to identify non-payers and non-filers of the MVCPA insurance fee. MVCPA submits non-filers to the Texas Department of Insurance which pursues enforcement investigations and actions – 6 for FY18 and 4 for FY19. Statute (Transportation Code §1006.153) requires that 20% of the fees collected by MVCPA shall be appropriated to the MVCPA. Another 60% is deposited to the designated trauma facility and EMS account (5111), which received over $55 million in FY20. The remaining 20% is deposited to the general revenue fund for criminal justice purposes.

Based entirely upon the statutory allocation of funding for the MVCPA, the MVCPA is requesting 3 additional staff to improve insurance company compliance with paying the fee. Examination of records maintained by the Comptroller of Public Accounts indicates that there may be at least $2.5 million per year not being properly collected. Also, in many requests for refunds by insurers, fees have likely not been calculated correctly. MVCPA has never had staff dedicated to the collection of the fee and request the authority to hire three additional staff as submitted in the legislative appropriations requests submitted by TxDMV on behalf of the MVCPA.

Interconnectivity between Urban and Rural Law Enforcement

MVCPA bears the standard for providing regional solutions to combating all forms of motor vehicle crime. Without MVCPA funds, coordination and training, small jurisdictions would not have the capacity to handle the complexity of most elements of the motor vehicle crime such as vehicle identification; complex titling documents; rigorous training in a constant shifting technology; and numerous state and local jurisdictions involved in the processes. Vehicles stolen in urban areas often are moved to stage for border crossing or disposal in rural areas. The MVCPA will continue to provide state resources to encourage regional approaches. Local law enforcement always coordinates but do not generally allow officers to work cases regionally unless the state provides most of the funds. MVCPA monthly meetings, regular coordination and funding provide effective ways for urban and rural law enforcement to solve the statewide motor vehicle crime problem.

Estimate of Funds Required to Implement Plan

The Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority adopted the FY22-23 Plan of Operation elements to reduce harm and loss from motor vehicle crime, promote effective community based law enforcement, and provide to insurers fair and stable fee collection and refund business processes.

The MVCPA priority is to serve all Texans in all of Texas. Whether through the expansion of existing regional taskforces or the creation of new taskforces, all citizens should have access to the services provided by these law enforcement taskforces such as specialized investigations, recovery of stolen property, vehicle identification for titling, preventing their vehicle from illegally leaving the state and public awareness/education reminders.

Another priority is to improve the motor vehicle crime prevention network through secure intelligence sharing, improved investigation and better prosecution of motor vehicle crimes. Many of the crimes that MVCPA covers are extremely complicated, document intensive and are often difficult for local prosecutors to pursue. Often the victim is the State of Texas, the motor vehicle crime is a misdemeanor, and prosecutors' dockets are overwhelming.

MVPCA proposes that with the funds required to be provided in Transportation Code 1006.153(e)(1) and the three (3) additional FTEs listed below both submitted on its behalf by TxDMV to the Legislative Budget Board the MVCPA can implement the entire plan of operation.

FY22-23 MVCPA Plan of Operation Funding Request			
Items of Appropriations	**FY22**	**FY23**	**Biennial Total**
TxDMV - Base Funding Appropriation Request			
Protect the Public			
Strategy B.2.1. – Automobile Theft Prevention	$17,123,359	$17,123,359	$34,246,717
Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	5	5	
Exceptional Item Requests			
Expanded Coverage	$2.5 million be provided as required by Transportation Code 1006.153 (e) (1) which represents the full amount based on actual MVCPA fee collections of $91.8 million		$2,553,282
Fee Collection Unit	Authorize 3 FTE to improve awareness and compliance with the MVCPA Fee requirements. Positions will also provide analysis, audit, outreach and education to insurers. Funding will be covered by the MVCPA base appropriation for FY 2022-2023.		$0 3 FTEs
Total MVCPA Appropriation Request FY22-23	$18,400,000	$18,400,000	**$36,800,000**
FTE Total	8	8	Rounded