



Texas Department *of* Motor Vehicles

# Activity and Funds Report

for the

**Automobile Burglary & Theft**

**Prevention Authority**

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Prepared for the  
Texas Legislature for  
**Fiscal Year 2018**  
April 1, 2019



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Auto Burglary & Theft Prevention Authority

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# Executive Summary

The Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (**ABTPA**) Fiscal Year (**FY**) 2018 Activity and Funds Report is required by Texas Revised Civil Statutes, Article 4413(37), §6(d) and (i). The ABTPA 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 Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (**TxDMV**) and staffed as a division of TxDMV. The ABTPA Board and the local law enforcement teams that comprise the ABTPA network present this **FY2018 Activity and Funds Report**. This report demonstrates that ABTPA funding of highly trained and specialized motor vehicle burglary and theft investigators is effective in meeting the statutory goals of recovering vehicles, arresting offenders and clearing cases. For over 25 years, the ABTPA has been an essential part of Texas law enforcement. The ABTPA law enforcement agencies promote safety and work to reduce losses for all Texans by working to reduce motor vehicle crimes. The core mission of the ABTPA is to build, coordinate, and fund a collaborative statewide network of law enforcement agencies, government agencies, and insurance companies to reduce motor vehicle burglary and theft. Local jurisdictions contribute more than \$11 million in cash and over \$7 million in other local resources to ABTPA's \$12.8 million in funding the statewide effort of reducing motor vehicle burglary and theft in Texas.

The ABTPA meets its mission through the following tasks:

- 1) **collect** a \$2 fee per vehicle on all motor vehicle insurance policies issued in Texas;
- 2) **fund** and train specialized motor vehicle law enforcement investigators organized in community-based law enforcement teams called motor vehicle crimes **taskforces**;
- 3) **fight** illegal use and export of motor vehicles in Texas by providing funds for law enforcement to conduct operations in border and port jurisdictions; and
- 4) **educate** the public on what they can do to reduce motor vehicle burglary and theft crimes.

ABTPA maintains a collaborative network, training, technology, communication, and effective law enforcement strategies. The 2018-2019 biennium appropriation to the ABTPA was reduced by over \$2 million to \$12.8 million per year, a decrease of almost 15%. Conversely, revenues collected by ABTPA from the \$2 Motor Vehicle Theft fee on each vehicle covered by motor vehicle insurance policies rose to over \$49 million in FY18, a 5.7% increase over FY17 collections.

The level of motor vehicle burglaries and thefts has remained fairly stable, however, the monetary losses to the public from these crimes rose to over \$1 billion, partially due to the increase in the number of vehicles less than five years old being stolen. In FY18, the ABTPA funded law enforcement taskforces increased the recovery rate of stolen motor vehicles. The taskforces cleared fewer theft cases but made more motor vehicle theft related arrests than the previous year. Taskforces reported declines in cases cleared and people arrested for burglary of a motor vehicle. ABTPA believes this was due to a combination of the reduced appropriation causing taskforces to prioritize motor vehicle theft over burglary and the launch of a new data tracking system that improved data collection.

The ABTPA helps local law enforcement develop and maintain trained and specialized motor vehicle burglary and theft taskforces. Many taskforces are multijurisdictional, consisting of municipal and county law enforcement. With state funding, these taskforces can coordinate responses to motor vehicle crimes throughout a region. State funding also provides rural agencies the ability to maintain an expert investigator as a resource for the region and to coordinate with large agencies' taskforces. Motor vehicle crimes are often tied to organized crime. This requires taskforces to communicate across jurisdictional boundaries. The provision of state resources through the ABTPA ensures that local law enforcement has the coordination and training to effectively combat these perpetrators across multiple jurisdictions.

## ABTPA at a Glance

Created in 1991 to provide state funding for local law enforcement agencies to combat motor vehicle burglary and theft crimes through investigative enforcement and prevention initiatives.	
By law, the ABTPA is comprised of a Board of six (6) Governor Appointees and the TxDPS Executive Director. ABTPA is administratively attached to the TxDMV.	
Statutorily ABTPA shall:	
1) Collect \$2 assessment on all motor vehicle insurance policies used to combat auto theft;	
2) Develop a statewide plan to combat and reduce motor vehicle burglary and theft;	
3) Provide grants to local law enforcement to implement the plan;	
4) Educate the public on their role to prevent motor vehicle burglary and theft; and	
5) Report the performance and impact to the Legislature.	
Total TxDMV Full Time Employees (FTEs) for ABTPA Grant and Education Program	5
Total Administrative Costs Percent	3.7%
<b>FY18 Appropriation</b>	
	\$12.8 million
<b>FY18 Funds Collected by ABTPA</b> from \$2 auto theft assessments on motor vehicle insurance policies sold in Texas	
	\$49 million
<b>2018 Registered Vehicles in Texas - TxDMV</b>	
	24.8 million
<b>2017 Motor Vehicle Thefts in Texas</b>	
	67,285
<b>2017 Burglary from a Motor Vehicle and Theft of Parts in Texas</b>	
	204,056
<b>2017 losses from Motor Vehicle Burglary and Theft in Texas</b>	
	\$1 Billion
<b>FY18 Total People Arrested for Motor Vehicle Theft by grant funded officers</b>	
	3,295
<b>FY18 Total People Arrested for Burglary of Motor Vehicle by grant funded officers</b>	
	974
<b>FY18 Recovered Stolen Vehicles by grant funded officers</b>	
	11,038
<b>FY18 Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) (68A) Inspections for Texas title transactions by grant funded officers</b>	
	14,565
<b>FY18 other VIN Verification Inspections</b>	
	35,417
<b>FY18 Number of vehicles inspected at international bridges and outbound ports (10 agencies reporting)</b>	
	5,753

## ABTPA Fee Collections and Appropriations 2014 to 2018

Fiscal Year	Fee Collected By ABTPA	Amount Appropriated to ABTPA	Amount Remaining in General Revenue
2014	\$42,796,154	\$14,904,341	\$27,891,813
2015	\$44,563,043	\$14,904,340	\$29,658,703
2016	\$46,068,858	\$14,920,849	\$31,148,009
2017	\$46,436,967	\$14,920,849	\$31,516,118
2018	\$49,083,185	\$12,835,851	\$36,247,334
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$228,948,207</b>	<b>\$72,486,230</b>	<b>\$156,461,977</b>

# FY 2018 Activity Report



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## Losses to Texans from Motor Vehicle Burglary & Theft in CY 2017

Type of Crime	Number	Value of Loss	Average Loss
Burglary from a Motor Vehicle and Theft of Parts	204,056	\$228,416,721	\$1,115
Motor Vehicle Theft	67,285	\$785,475,693	\$11,674
<b>CY 2017 Est. Total Loss</b>		<b>\$1,013,892,414</b>	

Source: The Crime in Texas Report for 2017, Texas Department of Public Safety, CY= calendar year

### Statutory Performance Measures Statewide Grant Program Coordination

The ABTPA grant funded police and sheriff taskforces work to combat motor vehicle burglary and theft and the associated financial losses. The ABTPA has three performance measures mandated by state law (Texas Revised Civil Statutes Article 4413 (37) § 6(j)): 1) recovery of stolen vehicles, 2) cleared cases, and 3) persons arrested. The table below shows the taskforces' statutory performance measures for FY18:

#### Summary of Statewide FY 17-FY18 Statutory Performance Measures

<b>Motor Vehicle Theft (MVT)</b>			
Activity	FY 2017	FY 2018	Percentage Increase
Recovered Stolen Vehicles	10,732	11,038	2.85%
Cleared Motor Vehicle Theft Cases	15,951	14,617	-8.36%
Persons Arrested Motor Vehicle Theft	2,931	3,295	12.42%
<b>Burglary of Motor Vehicles (BMV)</b>			
Activity	FY 2017	FY 2018	Percentage Increase
Cleared Motor Vehicle Burglary Cases	5,801	3,425	-40.96%
Arrested Burglary of a Motor Vehicle	1,496	974	-34.89%

The chart above reflects a decline in BMV cleared cases and BMV arrests. Based on reports from taskforces the declines are partially attributable to reduced ABTPA appropriations causing taskforces with less resources to prioritize investigations of motor vehicle thefts over motor vehicle burglary. Additional impacts are resulting from ABTPA launching a new statewide grant report and tracking system, conducting numerous training sessions on accurate reporting, and investigators reporting increased inspection activity. ABTPA works with its taskforces to ensure that statutory performance measures are correctly reported and monitored.

## ABTPA Grant Performance Measures Statewide Law Enforcement Coordination

In addition to the statutory measures above, the ABTPA board sets additional grant reporting requirements to determine the performance and effectiveness of the taskforces. Most grant funds are used to hire, train and retain specialized motor vehicle crimes investigators. The grant program priority is to reduce motor vehicle burglary and theft and combat economic auto theft. Economic auto theft includes many methods used by criminals to convert stolen property into economic gain for themselves and their organized criminal networks. It also includes using stolen motor vehicles and component parts to defraud the State of Texas (taxes and fees), insurers (claims) and individuals (fraudulent sales and illegal representations). ABTPA taskforces provide substantial data to demonstrate their effectiveness to combat motor vehicle crime in their communities and statewide. Below are some of the significant activities that the taskforce reported in FY18:

<b>FY18 ABTPA Taskforces Performance Measures</b>	
Motor Vehicle Theft = <b>MVT</b> / Burglary of a Motor Vehicle = <b>BMV</b>	
<b>Measure Description</b>	<b>Total Number</b>
<b>Investigations</b>	
MVT related cases presented to prosecutor	3,180
BMV related cases presented to prosecutor	1,035
Other felony cases identified during MVT and BMV investigations	1,115
Other misdemeanor cases identified during MVT and BMV investigations	506
Number of cases of insurance fraud identified	543
Total of all apprehensions resulting in cases submitted to prosecutors	4,735
<b>License Plate Readers</b>	
License Plate Reader (LPR) Deployments	2,803
Alert Notifications	4,716
Number of vehicles recovered as a result of LPR detection	1,786
Number of arrests subsequent to LPR detection	75
<b>Bait Vehicles and Bait Equipment</b>	
Bait vehicle deployments	1,937
Number of arrests from bait vehicle deployments	125
Other types of bait and tracked device deployments	2,469
<b>Drugs</b>	
Number of arrests for MVT/BMV where drugs were present	229
Amount of drugs and controlled substances seized	33.81 pounds
<b>Weapons</b>	
Total number of weapons recovered	190
Value of weapons recovered	\$102,887
<b>Equipment</b>	
Number of units of equipment recovered	5,809
Value of equipment recovered	\$2,817,177

<b>Law Enforcement Collaboration and Coordination</b>	
Outside agency investigation assists	21,322
Intra-department investigation assists	4,160
Taskforce coverage area law enforcement investigation assists	7,343
TxDMV and Tax Assessor Collector (TAC) investigation assists	742
TxDPS or other state law enforcement investigation assists	898
Federal law enforcement investigation assists	446
<b>Taskforce Intelligence Gathering and Dissemination</b>	
Number of groups of auto theft offenders identified operating in communities	416
Offenders with three or more cases identified operating in communities	1,827
Number of covert operations conducted	2,730
Number of intelligence meetings attended by investigators	1,295
Number of crime analysis bulletins disseminated	1,568
Number of Border Incident Assessment Reports submitted to a Regional Joint Operations Intelligence Center	3,846
<b>Identify Vehicles and Local Business Operations Support</b>	
Vehicles inspected for the public to perform title transactions at TxDMV or TAC (68-A)	14,565
Vehicles inspected at businesses, dealerships, other transactions or looking for stolen vehicles	35,417
Number of inspections of businesses related to vehicle enterprise (salvage yard, repair shop, parts recycling center, used car dealership, salvage rebuild)	928
Vehicles inspected at out-bound international bridge or ports	5,753

### Grant Management and Tracking System

The ABTPA Board authorized the development of a Grant Management and Tracking System (GMTS). The website allows grantees to track their grant progress and submit required reports online. GMTS tracks grants individually throughout their lifecycle from application submission to closeout to compliance tracking, all the while allowing for the production of customizable, on-demand reports that assemble real-time data on budgets, personnel, expenditures, inventory, recovered vehicles, arrests and more. The development of GMTS was an effort to: 1) improve ABTPA grant management practices related to risk and resource management; 2) ensure the integrity of the grant application and issuance process; 3) develop clear reporting to document and measure all grantees' activity and expenses; 4) track the overall effectiveness and impact of the grant program; and 5) reduce the transaction costs for local law enforcement units that split time between grant management and crime investigations. The deliverables included building the database, user access, contact information, grant applications, status reports, scoring applications, acceptance or denial of grants, progress report, expenditure reports, grant adjustments, inventory tracking, monitoring and development of reports. By reconfiguring the platform for grantees to manage their grants the process has been streamlined and allows for better accountability and transparency.



## Law Enforcement Activities

### Statewide Effort and Coordination

#### Collaborative Law Enforcement

The greatest resource the ABTPA has to combat statewide motor vehicle burglary and theft is the men and women in local law enforcement agencies trained to combat motor vehicle crime. Local law enforcement agencies rarely have specialized motor vehicle crime experts and corresponding equipment without an ABTPA grant-funded program. The ABTPA grants allow local communities to have highly trained investigators performing specialized investigative tactics. The ABTPA works to leverage state funds with local resources to meet its statutory mandates and prevent supplanting. Taskforces and their local governments must provide at least a 20 percent cash match for any grant funds received. The ABTPA grants to local law enforcement programs are organized into motor vehicle burglary and theft law enforcement taskforces. Of the 24 taskforces funded in FY18, 10 taskforces are single jurisdiction and 14 are multijurisdictional. The single jurisdiction taskforces regularly provide coordination and effort outside their agency. The ABTPA incentivizes taskforces to use their resources in a coordinated effort for the benefit of the entire state.

ABTPA taskforces reported over 21,000 events where they directly assisted another law enforcement agency investigating a motor vehicle burglary or theft and assisted units within their departments over 4,000 more times. Law enforcement agencies with staff funded by the ABTPA are more likely to collaborate and extend more courtesies beyond their city or county limits to confront the highly mobile nature of motor vehicle crimes.

#### Investigators

The ABTPA FY18 grants provide funds to support about 239 highly trained and specialized law enforcement investigators in communities across Texas. More than 91% of the ABTPA grant program expenditures are law enforcement personnel related costs. Local jurisdictions use ABTPA grants to cover much of their investigators' salaries. The ABTPA funded investigators are trained on the most advanced investigative techniques and the latest automotive technological trends.

#### Specialized Equipment and Supplies

Specialized equipment used by motor vehicle crimes investigators includes high-tech surveillance and recording devices, vehicle identification cameras and software, bait trackers, and bait marking technology. Video recording is common in law enforcement, officers wear cameras, patrol vehicles are equipped with cameras, businesses and communities have cameras. Most equipment purchased with the ABTPA grant funds is specialized so that it would not be available to many local law enforcement agencies without state funding. Even when they purchased the equipment, most departments coordinate with ABTPA taskforces for the training to operate it.

Less than half of ABTPA taskforce vehicles are operating with license plate readers (**LPR**). LPRs are devices that can read license plates, connect to state and national lists of reported stolen vehicles and quickly identify to investigators a stolen vehicle in their vicinity. LPRs are also used to provide location intelligence to investigators about patterns where cars are stolen and recovered. LPR detections accounted for more than 16% of the vehicles recovered by the ABTPA investigators.

Surveillance systems can help identify and provide evidence on persons who commit motor vehicle burglaries and theft crimes. Tracking devices and GPS signal emitters are used to assist investigators in locating stolen vehicles and equipment. Bait cars, bait equipment and bait markers provided by ABTPA grants help investigators increase

the number of persons arrested and cases cleared in Texas. In addition, the ABTPA taskforces are routinely called upon to provide assistance and the use of this special equipment to narcotics, robbery, and vice divisions.

The ABTPA taskforces have reported a greater need to use technology to provide prosecutors with more documentation, clearer audio-visual recordings, and better evidence. The trend impacting much of the criminal justice system is called the “CSI effect.” This is where prosecutors, jurors, and the public expect that criminal investigation comports with dramatic television shows more than what investigators can often provide in real life. Investigators may spend inordinate amounts of time pouring over audio/visual recordings, cell phone data, license plate reader data, photo data, internet sales data, and other forms of data. Specialized technology is increasingly a major factor to solve and prosecute motor vehicle crime.

### *Training*

The ABTPA supports and coordinates with the taskforces the provision of excellent skills-based training for current motor vehicle burglary and theft investigators in Texas. These education efforts are aimed at expanding the knowledge of current theft investigators by allowing them access to confidential proprietary databases. Local law enforcement training is also conducted by taskforces to expand awareness and provide skills in identifying stolen vehicles across departments and regions. Taskforces in Mansfield, San Antonio and Tarrant conducts auto theft recognition and identification training for law enforcement officers to focus on auto theft trends and increased apprehensions. The Corpus Christi Auto Theft Taskforce held training to on identification of altered and stolen vehicles including trailers.

### *Techniques of ABTPA Taskforces*

ABTPA law enforcement taskforces use many combinations of techniques to combat motor vehicle burglary and theft. Below is a partial list of techniques used by taskforces, a brief illustration of the technique and a summary of taskforce usage in FY18:

### *Investigation*

The ABTPA funded investigators operate in specialized units that investigate motor vehicle crimes reported by the public (reactive investigations) and monitor and reduce community vulnerabilities to such crimes (proactive investigations). Most ABTPA taskforces have many strong elements of proactive enforcement. All funded investigators work to recover stolen vehicles, arrest perpetrators, and clear open criminal cases as required by the ABTPA statute. Investigators write and examine reports, operate covert investigations, review and provide intelligence briefings, develop leads and witnesses, identify offenders and networks, identify and track criminal organizations, inform prosecutors and other agencies, and develop sources of information from victims, informants and community members.

One exemplary example from Harris County showed the time, coordination and expertise required to dismantle a sophisticated motor vehicle theft ring operated in many major cities in Texas. Harris County Sheriff’s Office Auto Theft taskforce along with TxDPS, Austin Police Department Taskforce, and the Grand Prairie Auto Theft Unit conducted a two-year multi-agency investigation known as “Operation Slingshot.” The criminal organization stole vehicles from dozens of dealerships and sold them through social media and online. This collaborative effort required skill, initiative and state resources to investigate, identify, and arrest multiple individuals operating the criminal organization across many jurisdictions. Investigators obtained 17 indictments on 9 defendants.

### *Identify Vehicles*

Motor vehicle burglary and theft investigators receive specialized training to identify motor vehicles and certain parts of motor vehicles. Manufacturers of vehicles, trailers, equipment and certain parts follow national and

industry standards for marking and maintaining identification of their produced items. They jointly work with insurance companies and governments to maintain limited access to confidential proprietary databases most of which are managed by National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). Properly credentialed law enforcement investigators use these databases to identify with certainty all vehicles, certain vehicle parts and most equipment. This proper identification is required to perform some Texas title transactions, to establish the elements of motor vehicle crime for prosecution purposes, and to recover vehicles where criminals have worked to remove, conceal or change the vehicle identity markings. The specialized skill in vehicle identification has been used to assist other law enforcement agencies in critical moments of shootings and human trafficking.

One recent example was where the Tri-County (Mansfield) taskforce received a request to assist with the investigation from the Texas Sheriffs Combined Auto Theft taskforce (Travis County). A recovered truck from a salvage yard in Corsicana had its VIN switched with another vehicle. The Tri-County taskforce (Mansfield) worked with the local police department to conduct an inspection of this business. This law enforcement coordination and skill in identifying vehicles uncovered a massive VIN switching operation that had operated for several years in many major cities across the State. The suspects stole new, high-end trucks from car dealerships throughout Texas, and then placed VINs and other false identifiers onto the stolen vehicles.

#### *Communicate and Collaborate Across Jurisdictions*

To effectively combat motor vehicle crime and recover stolen property quickly, taskforces depend on communication and collaboration. The ABTPA taskforces perform their investigations with and across local, state and federal departments and jurisdictions. This is especially true when they work to identify and interrupt criminal enterprises. Taskforce investigators communicate with other taskforces, other law enforcement agencies, vehicle manufacturer representatives, insurance industry professionals, as well as motorists and families in the communities they serve. They receive and analyze intelligence data that is provided through TxDPS Crime Information Centers and their own command structures. When taskforces identify criminal patterns or suspects they share the information to leverage the information across jurisdictions. Investigators often share what they see and learn on social media platforms.

The ABTPA and taskforces communicate and collaborate with international, national and state organizations such as International Association of Auto Theft Investigators (IAATI), Auto Theft Prevention Authorities Committee (ATPAs) and the Texas Association of Vehicle Theft Investigators (TAVTI). These organizations provide the ABTPA and funded investigators with direct access to communicate with motor vehicle manufacturers about vulnerabilities. Investigators regularly receive information about new trends across the world and nation. Best practices to solve and prevent motor vehicle crime are promoted and developed to promote coordination.

As an example, the Lubbock County taskforce collaborated with the Lamb County Sheriff's Department to conduct a successful bait operation. The suspects stole the bait trailer/welder implanted with tracking devices and headed north. After their arrest, it was learned that suspects were in route to Amarillo. The suspects' information was forwarded to the Panhandle Auto Theft taskforce (Amarillo) for additional follow-up investigation.

#### *Identify Prolific Offenders*

Many motor vehicle burglary and theft crimes are committed by the same individuals or groups. These prolific offenders are identified by the taskforce investigators who spend time analyzing multiple streams of information. They review offense reports, witness statements, and intelligence briefings to identify these perpetrators. These prolific offenders usually commit a disproportionate number of motor vehicle crimes. The ABTPA taskforces have

reported high volume per case of weapons charges, credit card thefts, and other fraud cases when the crime was committed by prolific offenders.

The investigator in one case from the Beaumont Southeast Auto Theft taskforce filed four counts of Burglary of a Motor Vehicle on a prolific offender that had 13 prior convictions of BMV. Tarrant County had one unusual case where investigators knew the prolific offender's pattern and collected DNA evidence tying him to 21 cases.

### *Business Support*

Taskforces conduct inspections of salvage yards, recycling centers, rebuilders and other motor vehicle-related businesses. When stolen vehicles and parts are identified, the taskforces work with local businesses to identify and interrupt the criminal network that brought the stolen items into the system. Taskforces also work to shut down illegal operations that dismantle stolen motor vehicles and parts, which are often referred to as "chop shops". Illegal operations undermine legitimate businesses throughout the state.

The Heart of Texas Auto Theft (Burnet County) taskforce was contacted by TxDMV and asked to conduct a criminal investigation spanning four counties on a licensed salvage dealer. TxDMV alleged that the dealer did not report vehicles the dealer was selling to a metal recycler in Waco. The investigation revealed that beyond failure to report violations, many stolen vehicles were being delivered to the recycler. The case resulted in the arrest and indictments of 3 suspects, recovery of 17 stolen vehicles, and documentation that the suspects made \$3,000,000 in over 2,000 transactions. A local news article about the arrests quoted a nearby business owner lamenting the harm done to his legitimate business.

### *Technology*

The methods thieves use to illegally reap economic gain out of a stolen vehicle or parts have become more sophisticated because of technology. To keep pace with those methods, investigators develop more sophisticated techniques to identify and arrest offenders who burglarize and steal motor vehicles. The taskforces use bait cars, bait trailers, bait equipment, license plate readers, surveillance equipment, and, when authorized by courts, tracking devices. This technology, and the expertise needed to successfully utilize them is critical to increasing recoveries of stolen vehicles, increasing clearance rates, and stopping criminals through arrests.

For example, some criminal organizations specialize in stealing electronic control modules (**ECM**) from vehicles. The ECM is essentially the brain of a vehicle. In large trucks, an ECM can be worth up to \$6,000. The City of Dallas taskforce used advanced technology to stop a string of ECM thefts on newer vehicles. They placed a tracker on a vehicle and a pole camera at a suspected chop shop. Another taskforce recovered 10 ECM sensors with an approximate value of \$61,000. Investigators successfully identified 8 of these 10 ECMs as stolen and linked them to specific case numbers.

### *Gangs and Prolific Offenders*

Another major component of the scope of the motor vehicle burglary and theft crime problem is that the ABTPA taskforces spend significant time interrupting organized crime networks and prolific offender enterprises. One-third of taskforces indicated organized crime was a major cause and influence of motor vehicle theft in their communities. Taskforces identified over 400 groups operating motor vehicle theft operations. They identified over 1,100 offenders with three or more offenses of MVT and an additional 659 offenders with three or more offenses of BMV.

Many of these gangs are transnational operations with ties in numerous foreign countries. Others, like motorcycle gangs (Bandidos) and hate groups (Aryan Nation), operate simultaneously in many states. Taskforces also

routinely identify and interdict local gangs that form primarily for economic benefit through motor vehicle crime. State funding and the ABTPA network support the cross-agency communication needed to interrupt gangs and prolific offenders. The following gangs operating motor vehicle burglary and/or theft enterprises in Texas were identified by the ABTPA taskforces:

Gangs and Cartels Encountered by Taskforces		
18th Street	Cartel Del Noreste	North Dallas Vagos
415 bloods	Chuco Tango	Sinaloa Cartel
457 bloods	Eastside Homeboys	Surenos 13
65 Groveside	Ferguson 64	Tango Blast
Artistas Asesinos	Juarez Cartel	Texas Syndicate
Aryan Nation	La Linea	Local Juvenile Gangs
Bandidos MC Gang	Los Mexicles	
Barrio Azteca	Mexican Mafia	

## Border and Port Security

The 85<sup>th</sup> Legislature in the General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article IX, Section 17.07, designated \$5.6 million for the biennium for border security funding. GAA, Article IX, Section 7.11: 1) provides agency reporting requirements; 2) defines border security as deterring crime and enforcing state laws related to offenses listed in Texas Government Code 772.0071; and 3) defines border as counties adjacent to an international border or the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway. The ABTPA board designated specific grant funded taskforces "border security grants." The designation included all taskforces operating in counties designated by the law along Texas' border with Mexico (City of Brownsville, City of Eagle Pass, City of El Paso and City of Laredo) and where Texas' seaports are located (City of Beaumont, City of Corpus Christi, Galveston County, Harris County, City of Houston, City of Pasadena and City of Victoria).

The new requirement provided ABTPA with opportunities to improve reporting as well as some additional work for ABTPA taskforces located in designated locations. Some jurisdictions routinely performed activities in the ports or along the Texas / Mexico Border. A few ABTPA taskforces had to modify their activities and some just provided additional reporting to meet the requirements.

<b>FY18 ABTPA Grant Funded Taskforces Border Security Performance</b> (Subset of Measures Reported Above)	
<b>ABTPA Statutory Performance Measures for Border Security Taskforces</b>	
Number of stolen motor vehicles recovered	3,258
Number of motor vehicle theft cases cleared	7,499
Number of arrests for motor vehicle theft	880
Number of motor vehicle burglary cases cleared	2,803
Number of arrests for motor vehicle burglary	606
<b>Standard Legislative Budget Board Border Security Performance Measures</b>	
Intelligence referrals	145
Lbs. of drugs seized	16.82
Apprehensions for smuggling	5
Apprehensions resulting in cases charged	453
<b>ABTPA Additional Border Security Report Elements</b>	
Value of vehicles recovered	\$33,998,762
Number of apprehensions resulting in cases charged	1,889
Number of vehicles recovered from Mexico	150
Value for vehicles recovered from Mexico	\$2,904,642
Number of cases with one or more persons identified as transnationals	116
Number of groups, gangs or associates identified as transnational	48
Number of arrests - transnational	37
Number of vehicles inspected at bridge/port	5727
Collaborations with US Customs and Border Patrol	571
Collaborations with other federal agencies (DHS, FBI, etc.)	273
Number of arrests for motor vehicle theft or burglary where drugs were present	111

## Multi-Regional Border Operation

One example of the impact the ABTPA taskforces have along the Mexico border was when the Laredo taskforce began 'Operation Full Throttle'. Laredo Police joined with the Texas Border Prosecution Unit, Joint Task Force,

Homeland Security Investigations, San Antonio Police Department and the TxDPS. They dismantled an auto theft ring stealing vehicles across Texas cities and delivering them to a transnational criminal organization (TCO). The TCO used the stolen vehicles to carry out their criminal activity. The operation originated after Laredo Border Patrol witnessed an increase in stolen vehicles being used for human smuggling (also used for transportation of narcotics, transportation of weapons, evading arrests, and damage to property). The Laredo taskforce also detected an increase in recoveries of stolen vehicles from San Antonio. The operation identified, disrupted and dismantled the criminal cells involved. The result of the operation was:

- 5 criminal cells operating in the network have been identified
- 65 targets arrested (State and Federal arrest)
- 80 stolen vehicles recovered
- 14 stash houses identified
- 223 Illegal Aliens detained
- 15 suspects indicted for felony organized and conspiracy crimes

### Hurricane Harvey

During and immediately following Hurricane Harvey, the taskforces in the affected areas were faced with emergency response to assist their communities. Harvey not only caused direct damage, but indirect damages which caused interruption of the taskforces' activities such as: some agencies experienced lost productivity, staffing shortages, extended work hours, personal hardships, delay in filling investigator positions and some investigators with the taskforces were reallocated to complete 68A's on vehicles affected by Hurricane Harvey.

The taskforces' affected by the storm showed resilience, for example: The City of Beaumont, Southeast Texas Auto Theft Task Force dealt with the flooding that ravaged the area during the month of September conducting 98 68A inspections and recovered 39 vehicles worth \$572,677. Other property recovered totaled \$176,156 for a total recovery worth of \$748,833. There were three groups of prolific auto theft offenders identified along with three prolific motor vehicle theft offenders. There were five prolific BMV offenders identified that were working as an organized ring and engaging in organized criminal activity. The City of Houston supported their community with all ABTPA funded officers working long hours (at one point four days straight) assisting their residents first to survive the storm and then to recover from the damaging floodwaters. They hosted several police officers and vehicles sent by other Texas police departments to assist during the recovery stage.



**View of the Texas Motor Speedway, which became a holding ground for flooded vehicles.**



## Motor Vehicle Burglary and Theft Investigator Training Professional Skills-based Motor Vehicle Crimes Investigation

Motor Vehicle Burglary and Theft Investigator training provides excellent skills based training to current Motor Vehicle Burglary and Theft Investigators in Texas. This is accomplished by using the most knowledgeable instructors, subject matter experts, and the latest crime investigation methods and technology. The ABTPA Board-adopted curriculum was developed in coordination with and input from TxDMV, TxDPS, NICB, and TAVTI. The training provides required hours for Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) continuing education credit for law enforcement officers completing the courses.

The classes are only available to licensed peace officers designated by their departments as motor vehicle theft investigators, whether working in or with an ABTPA taskforce. All TxDPS investigators and some other auto theft unit investigators are authorized to attend these classes. The training qualifies officers that complete the course access to manufacturers’ and insurance industry proprietary databases used to positively identify vehicles. This is often referred to as a confidential Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) inspections. Since state law requires a vehicle identification inspection by an auto theft unit to complete certain title transactions, access to those proprietary databases are vital to the inspections and to combat motor vehicle crimes.

ABTPA worked with its broad base of stakeholders—including TxDPS—to ensure that the training resource is available in Texas. ABTPA uses funds and staff to coordinate facilities and instructors, reimburse travel to instructors, manage registration, buy training supplies and material, copy handouts and instructor notes onto USB drives, and acquire and manage acid wash and safety supplies needed to train on fraud investigations.

In FY18 ABTPA conducted three Intermediate Motor Vehicle Burglary and Theft Investigator Training classes for 102 law enforcement investigators. The classes were held in Dallas, San Marcos and San Antonio.

<b>ABTPA Motor Vehicle Burglary and Theft Investigator Training Summary</b>	
<b>Training Classes</b>	3
<b>TCOLE Hours per Class</b>	32
<b>Funds Spend for Instructor Travel and Materials</b>	\$10,615
<b>Investigators Completing Classes</b>	102
<b>Number of Trainers</b>	14
<b>Number of Different Agencies Represented in Classes</b>	37

ABTPA staff also conducted presentations at two (2) NICB TCOLE approved auto theft training classes.



## Educating the Public

### Statewide Crime Prevention through Marketing & Education

Funds appropriated to ABTPA are used to conduct “educational programs designed to inform automobile owners of methods of preventing automobile burglary or theft” according to Section 8 of the ABTPA’s enabling statute (TRCS Art. 4413(37)). The following descriptions are examples of activities that are most commonly conducted by local law enforcement entities who were awarded ABTPA’s grant funds.

The taskforces also use the ABTPA publications, messaging, copyrighted material and marketing products to communicate with their communities to help the public reduce motor vehicle burglary and theft. Most taskforces provide these items to support surrounding communities. The taskforces and the ABTPA also communicate and collaborate with state agencies, community organizations, business groups and insurance stakeholders like NICB and Insurance Council of Texas to promote and expand the mission of the ABTPA.

<p><b>VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER ETCHING EVENTS</b></p> <p>VIN etching helps to prevent motor vehicle theft by permanently marking the windows and other valuable vehicle components with the VIN, which makes it more difficult for thieves to sell stolen parts. Most of the taskforces offer free events that allow the public to protect their vehicles and components while learning about other prevention measures.</p>	<p><b>EVENTS &amp; EXHIBITS</b></p> <p>Events include car shows, rodeos, county fairs, health fairs, National Night Out, and other neighborhood association gatherings. By maintaining an active presence at community events, taskforces are able to make important connections with members of the community.</p>
<p><b>PRESENTATIONS &amp; CLASSES</b></p> <p>Presentations and classes offer an opportunity for trained experts to teach the public about advanced methods that can be used to protect their property. Often, these presentations are delivered to Citizen Police Academies or to Neighborhood Associations.</p>	<p><b>LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING</b></p> <p>Additionally, ABTPA taskforces train locally to ensure their departments and surrounding departments know how to recognize stolen vehicles, recover vehicles and to apprehend perpetrators. ABTPA taskforce officers trained almost 4,000 officers in 186 different presentations.</p>
<p><b>PROMOTION &amp; ADVERTISING</b></p> <p>ABTPA grant funds have been used to purchase billboards and other signage. ABTPA grant funded law enforcement agencies report spikes in motor vehicle crime during the holiday season and summer break. In response to increased reports during these periods, taskforces have arranged to broadcast public service announcements.</p>	

Taskforces use creative methods to help communicate the importance of keeping vehicles secure, especially during the busy holiday season. In Travis County, for example, the use of mock “citations” reminded holiday shoppers to lock their vehicles and keep valuables out of sight. The Sheriff’s Combined Auto Theft Taskforce often patrol busy shopping centers, looking inside cars, much like a burglar would, to look for valuables in sight. When they spot something that could be a target, they issue drivers a “citation.” This provides a simple reminder that they left valuables inside their vehicle. The note says, “Don’t panic, I’m not a real citation, just a friendly reminder.”

## Summary of Educational Program Activities by ABTPA Taskforces

ABTPA develops and distributes educational material and other promotional material. ABTPA works with taskforces to maintain a consistent message about what the public can do to help prevent motor vehicle crime throughout the state. Taskforces plan their own activities throughout the year and use grant funds to develop their own unique material. While the taskforces are encouraged to collaborate on their educational programs, the local approach allows ABTPA staff to gather data about the methods that appear to be most effective. This information is often shared during monthly webinars in which taskforces participate.

The following table provides a summary of the educational program activities conducted by ABTPA taskforces throughout FY 2018. Activities are tracked monthly via progress reports, which are completed as a condition of the grant.

Law Enforcement Action	Measure	Quantity	# of Taskforces Performing
Conduct media outreach, including public service announcements, press releases, and interviews	# of outreaches	509	18
Conduct educational outreach events (include trade show, exhibits, booths at community events, vehicle displays, brochures, etc.)	# of outreaches	726	24
Conduct educational presentations to community groups & individuals	# of presentations	485	24
Operate trade show exhibits/booths at community events	# of events	726	24
Conduct vehicle identification number (VIN) etchings	# of etching events	112	21
Purchase advertisements in local outlets	# of advertisements	49	3
Provide assistance and/or information to individual citizens (phone/e-mail/ other media)	# of citizens requesting assistance	26,955	19
Conduct vehicle report card initiatives	# of report cards issued	13,615	21
Utilize social media outlets	# of postings	6,992	24
Deploy outdoor public notification signage	# of deployments	2,592	16
Conduct law enforcement training (TCOLE)	# of classes	186	20
Conduct vehicle crimes presentations to law enforcement agencies (non TCOLE)	# of classes	170	15

ABTPA provides promotional items and written material to taskforces as well as the public. The written material is used to educate the public on how to lower their risks of getting their automobile stolen or burglarized. ABTPA also purchases promotional material to raise public awareness and to remind them to protect their vehicle.

ABTPA’s written materials consists of a brochure on 25 tips on how to avoid auto crime and a wallet sized 5 tips produced in English and Spanish. Also disseminated are wallet cards and magnets to keep your car information on in the case a vehicle is stolen. Over 15,000 items were distributed last year.



To raise public awareness and serve as reminders to lock cars, ABTPA provides promotional material used at community events and conferences. ABTPA and law enforcement agencies place “Watch Your Car” or “Protect It, It’s Yours” logo on the items, along with ABTPA contact information in hopes that when the public uses these items it reminds them to protect and secure their vehicles. ABTPA sent out over 20,000 items in FY18 to law enforcement agencies. ABTPA maintains around a dozen different items that are sent out. Automobile shaped pens, key holders, tire gauges and coloring books are the most popular items.



## Social Media

ABTPA reaches out to the community through social media to educate and reinforce the message. ABTPA tracks impact via social media analytics. Based on data examined, several posts received high levels of attention:

- 1) New technology being used by car thieves to use key fob signals to steal cars;
- 2) Governor Abbott’s proclamation of August 2018 as “Watch Your Car Month”;
- 3) Mansfield taskforce arrests on tailgate thefts;
- 4) Laredo taskforce arrests on cartel activity from Laredo to San Antonio;
- 5) Montgomery County gang related arrests; and
- 6) Austin organized ring targeting specific cars in specific areas.

Many of the taskforces also have social media accounts that amplify the message. The taskforces provided 6,992 posts on their law enforcement agencies social media accounts.

# FY 2018 Funds Report



## Funds Collected

State law requires insurance companies to pay "...to the authority a fee equal to \$2 multiplied by the total number of motor vehicle years of insurance for insurance policies delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed by the insurer..." in Texas (see TRCS. Art. 4413(37), Sec. 10 (b)). Each insurer is authorized by Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) rule (28 T.A.C. §5.205) to recoup the fee from the policyholder/customers. Insurance companies pay the fee every six months as provided in statute. In Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18), ABTPA collected \$49.1 million, a 5.7% increase over FY 2017. The funds are not deposited into a dedicated account. They are deposited into the General Revenue (GR) fund under revenue account 3206. Funds Report-Chart 1 shows the total amount collected each fiscal year since FY14.

ABTPA continued working with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) and the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) to coordinate and improve collection efforts in FY18. ABTPA reviewed collection reports with CPA staff. The reports listed property and casualty insurers and their payment status. Collection efforts and coordination are continuing with CPA. The TDI is notified when insurers fail to pay the fee.

### **Funds Report- Chart 1: Revenue Collected from the ABTPA Fee**

Year	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
<b>Amount Collected</b>	\$42,796,154	\$44,563,043	\$46,068,858	\$46,436,967	\$49,083,185

## Funds Appropriated

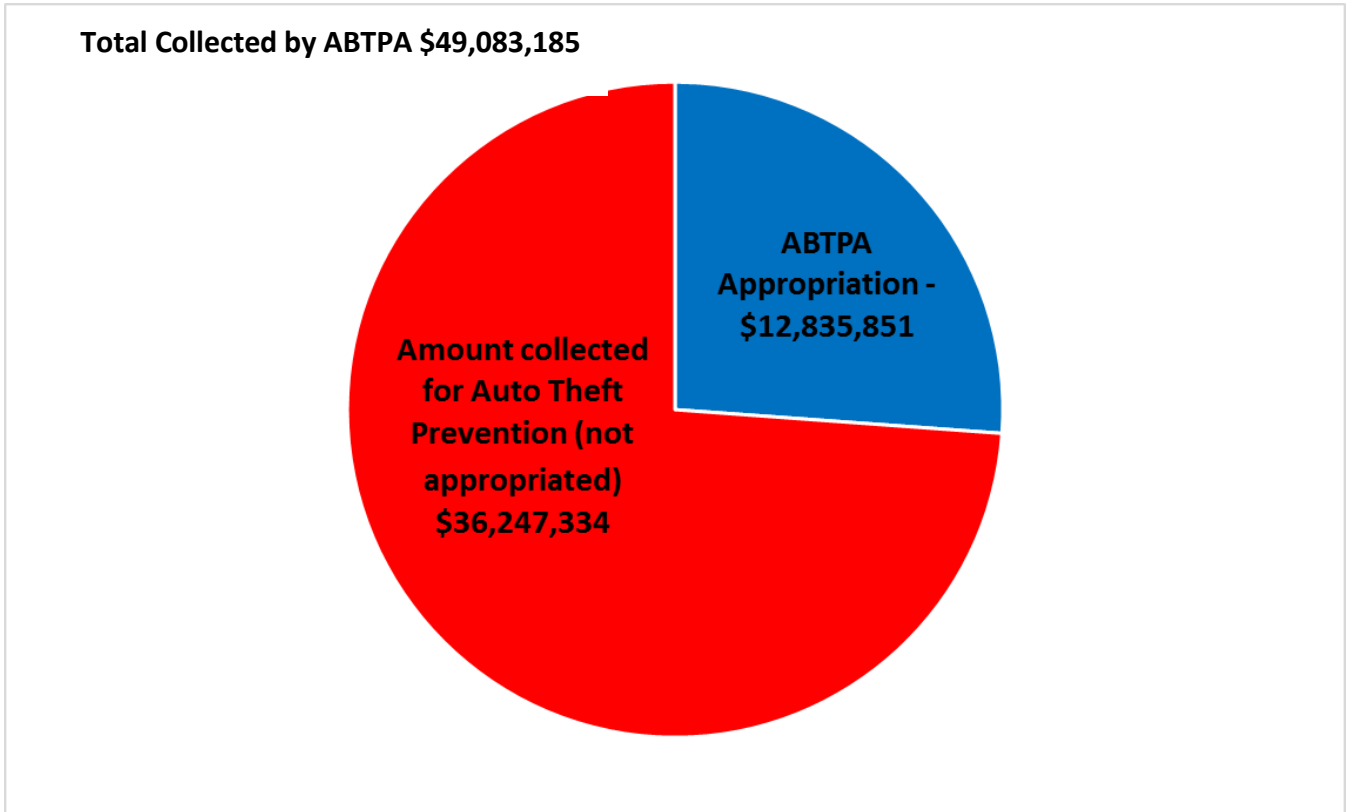
The General Appropriations Act (SB 1, 85R), appropriated \$12,835,851 for ABTPA purposes for FY18. Appropriated biennium funding for ABTPA has been reduced by over \$4.1 million. Unexpended balance (UB) authority for FY18 was approved by the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor to carry forward up to \$500,000 into FY19. Funds Report-Chart 2 provides a history of ABTPA appropriations.

### **Funds Report- Chart 2: ABTPA Appropriations**

Year	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
<b>Appropriation</b>	\$14,904,341	\$14,904,340	\$14,920,848	\$14,920,849	\$12,835,851

Just over one-quarter of the ABTPA fees collected are appropriated to ABTPA. The amount of ABTPA fees collected that are not appropriated for ABTPA purposes remain in GR. Funds Report- Chart 3 illustrates the ratio between ABTPA-related fees collected and the amount actually appropriated for ABTPA purposes.

**Funds Report- Chart 3: FY18 ABTPA Revenues vs. Appropriation**



**FY18 ABTPA Total Funding**

	<b>Amount</b>
<b>FY18 Appropriation</b>	\$12,835,851
<b>Additional funds for Benefit Replacement Pay</b>	\$1,027
<b>Total Available Funds</b>	\$12,836,878

**Funds Spent**

Out of FY18 appropriations, ABTPA will expend a total of \$12.5 million. There were \$2,921 (administrative) encumbered for outstanding obligations. A portion of the outstanding obligations is projected to be lapsed later. The UB carry forward amount is estimated to be \$357,894.

State law (TRCS Art. 4413(37), Sec. 8(b)) limits the ABTPA’s administrative expenses, including salaries, travel, marketing and other overhead expenses, to not more than 8% of total expenditures. ABTPA administrative expenses in FY18 were 3.7%; less than half of the maximum allowed by statute.

The specifics of ABTPA’s FY18 expenditures are in Funds Report- Chart 4.

**Funds Report- Chart 4: FY18 ABTPA Expenditures**

Expenditure Category	FY18 Expenditures
<b><u>Administration</u></b>	
<b>Salaries and Wages</b>	\$357,246
<b>Professional Fees and Services</b>	\$53,028
<b>Consumable Supplies</b>	\$1,021
<b>Travel (Board and staff)</b>	\$17,136
<b>Advertising and Promotion</b>	\$22,023
<b>Other Operating Expenses</b>	\$12,557
<b>Administration Subtotal</b>	\$463,011
<b><u>Grants</u></b>	
<b>Law enforcement (reimbursement grants)</b>	\$12,012,025
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$12,475,036</b>

<b>FY18 Encumbrance Pending</b>	\$2,921
<b>FY18 Projected Grants and Administration Lapse (projected UB)</b>	\$357,894

**Grants Awarded**

In accordance with FY18-FY19 GAA, Article IX, Section 4.02 Grants, the ABTPA distributes grants on a reimbursement basis. Of the total FY18 ABTPA expenditures, 96.3% were spent on law enforcement activities through grants. In FY18 24 law enforcement agencies received grant award funding in amounts ranging from \$76,000 to \$1,225,500. All of the grant award funding went to law enforcement entities such as municipal police departments and county sheriff departments. Fourteen grant recipients served as the administrative grantee for multi-jurisdictional taskforces. Funds Report- Chart 5 identifies, for FY18, each grant recipient, the amount of the grant awarded, and the actual amount of funds disbursed.

**Funds Report- Chart 5: FY18 Grant Recipients and Utilization Amounts** (as of March 1, 2019)

<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Multi / Single Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Grant Amount</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Grantee U/B</u>
Austin, City of	S	\$490,685	\$477,670	\$13,015
Beaumont, City of	M	\$422,971	\$367,527	\$55,444
Brownsville, City of*	M	\$949,480	\$944,223	
Burnet County	M	\$326,734	\$323,145	\$3,589
Corpus Christi, City of	S	\$475,973	\$475,973	
Dallas County	M	\$672,558	\$668,400	\$4,158
Dallas, City of	S	\$554,462	\$554,462	
Eagle Pass, City of	S	\$151,222	\$151,222	
El Paso, City of	S	\$894,500	\$894,500	
Galveston County	M	\$430,346	\$369,418	\$60,928
Harris County	S	\$1,017,922	\$1,017,922	
Houston, City of	M	\$787,597	\$777,689	\$9,908
Laredo, City of	S	\$510,214	\$510,214	
Lubbock County	M	\$469,523	\$469,516	\$7
Mansfield, City of	M	\$410,058	\$397,052	\$13,006
Montgomery County	M	\$337,464	\$299,356	\$38,108
Paris, City of	S	\$90,709	\$90,709	
Pasadena, City of	S	\$76,000	\$76,000	
Potter County	M	\$349,113	\$335,472	\$13,641
San Antonio, City of	M	\$634,094	\$574,849	\$59,245
Smith County	M	\$332,792	\$332,792	
Tarrant County	M	\$1,225,500	\$1,185,169	\$40,331
Travis County	M	\$574,910	\$558,769	\$16,141
Victoria, City of	S	\$154,719	\$154,719	
<b><u>TOTALS**</u></b>	<b><u>M=14 S=10</u></b>	<b><u>\$12,339,546</u></b>	<b><u>\$12,012,025</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 327,521.00</u></b>

\*\$5,257 obligation pending payment

\*\*Apparent errors in addition due to rounding



## Border Security Designated Grants

A subset of the grants above is designated as border security grant funded programs. Beginning in the FY18-FY19 biennium, the GAA, Article IX, Section 17.07, set an earmark of \$5.6 million for the biennium for border security funding. GAA, Article IX, Section 7.11 provides agency reporting requirements, defines border security as deterring crime and enforcing state laws related to offenses listed in Texas Government Code 772.0071 and defines border as counties adjacent to an international border or the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway. The ABTPA board designated as border security grants as those listed above that operate along the Texas border with Mexico (City of Brownsville, City of Eagle Pass, City of El Paso and City of Laredo) and in the Texas seaports (City of Beaumont, City of Corpus Christi, Galveston County, Harris County, City of Houston, City of Pasadena and City of Victoria). Funds Report - Chart 8 shows the amounts of expenditures by border security grantees.

**Funds Report- Chart 8: FY18 Border Security Expenditures by Grantee** (as of March 1, 2019)

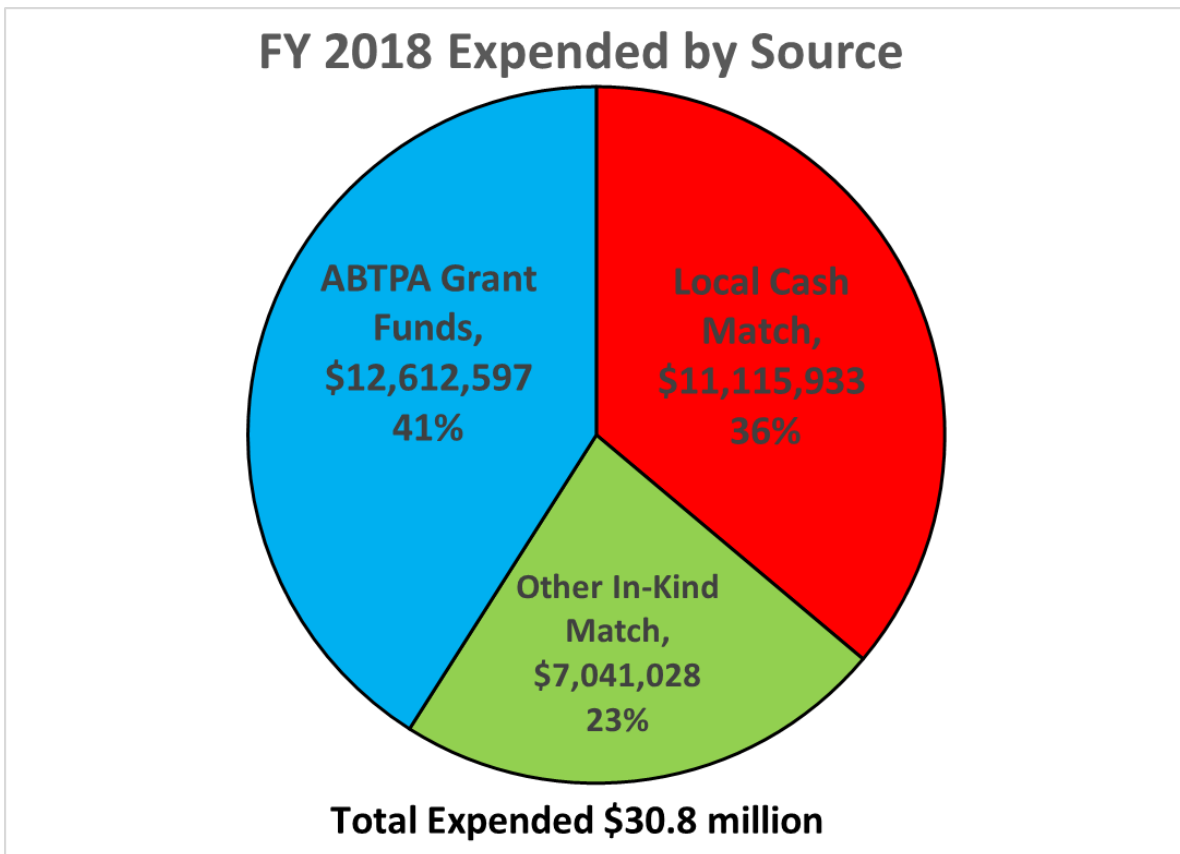
Grantee	Border / Port Jurisdiction	Amount Expended (as of March 1, 2019)
Eagle Pass, City of	B	\$151,222
El Paso, City of	B	\$894,500
Laredo, City of	B	\$510,214
Brownsville, City of	B & P	\$949,480
Beaumont, City of	P	\$367,527
Corpus Christi, City of	P	\$475,973
Galveston County	P	\$369,418
Harris County	P	\$1,017,922
Houston, City of	P	\$777,689
Pasadena, City of	P	\$76,000
Victoria, City of	P	\$154,719
<b>TOTALS</b>	11 of 24 total grants	<b>\$5,744,665</b>

## Grantee Expense and Obligation Detail – Source and Category

During the FY18 grant term (September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018), the grant programs reported program operation costs of over \$30 million dollars combating motor vehicle burglary and theft. Local jurisdictions provided a total of over \$11.1 million in direct cash match contributions. Examples of cash match include paying direct program costs such as personnel, equipment, travel, and other direct operational expenses as agreed to in the grant award. ABTPA's Grant Rules (Title 43, Texas Administrative Code Chapter 57) require all grant recipients to provide a minimum twenty percent (20%) cash match toward grant funded activities. Most law enforcement agencies funded by ABTPA provide additional cash well above their minimum cash match. The total program cash match contribution is 36%.

Additionally, local programs provided resources in the form of in-kind contributions above their ABTPA grant funding and cash match. Grant funded jurisdictions and their sub-grantees provided an additional \$7 million of in-kind contributions. Examples of "In-kind match" include jurisdictions or third parties paying for additional personnel, rent, fuel and other direct operational expenses from all sources to combat motor vehicle burglary and theft in the state. Funds Report- Chart 6 shows ABTPA grant expenditures by source.

### **Funds Report- Chart 6: FY18 Grant Expenditures by Source** (as of March 1, 2019)

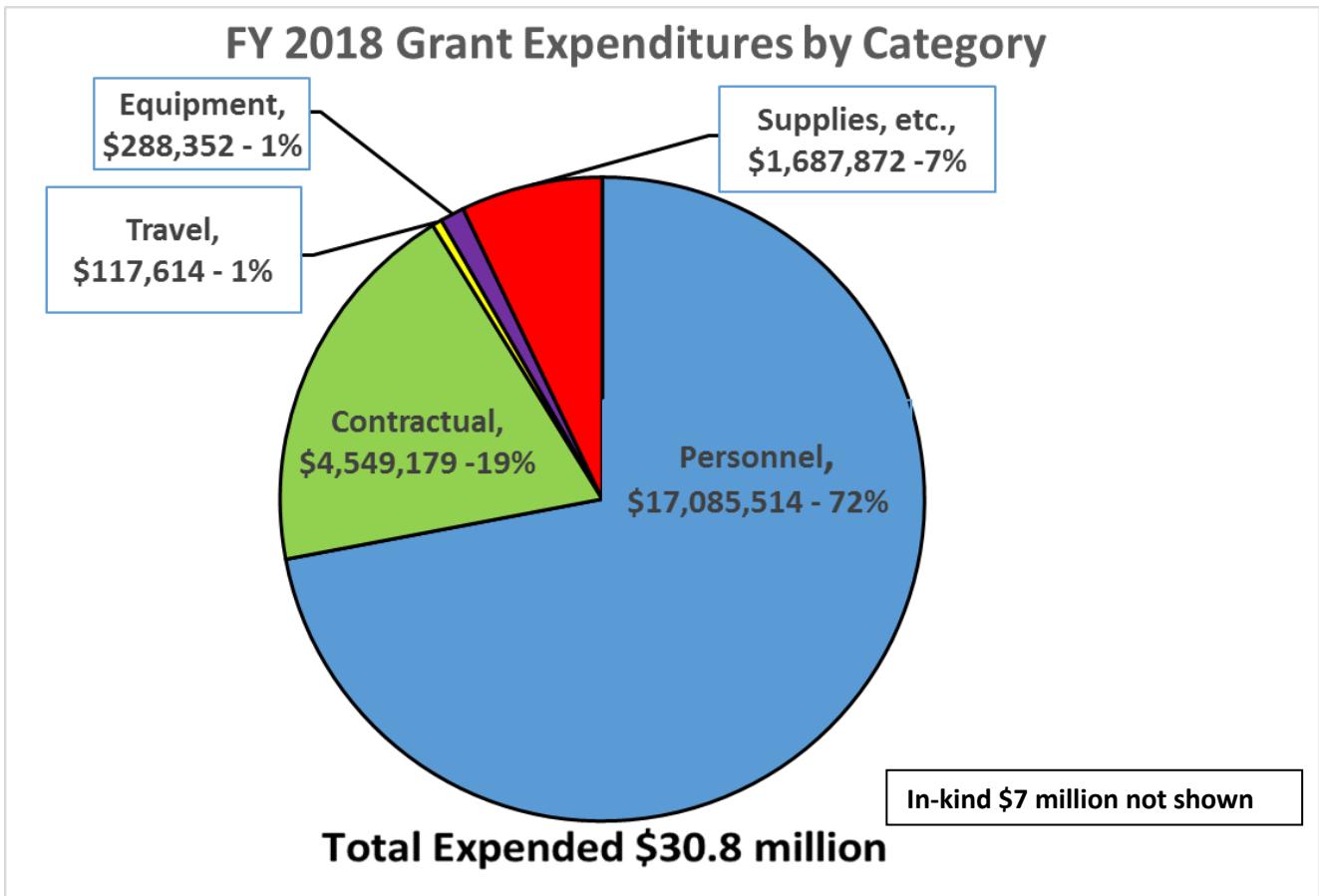


majority of grant funds (91.2%) are spent on motor vehicle burglary and theft investigators in the Personnel, Fringe, and Overtime categories (this includes contract investigators). Funds Report - Charts 7 & 8 show grant expenditures by expense category.

**Funds Report- Chart 7: FY18 Grant Expenditures by Category** (as of March 1, 2019)

Category	Total	Percent
Personnel	\$ 11,870,708	50.0%
Fringe	\$ 4,939,929	20.8%
Overtime	\$ 274,877	1.2%
Contractual*	\$ 4,549,179	19.2%
Travel	\$ 117,614	0.5%
Equipment	\$ 288,352	1.2%
Supplies, etc.	\$ 1,687,872	7.1%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 23,728,530</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>In-Kind</b>	<b>\$ 7,041,028</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 30,769,558</b>	

\* Contractual is predominately funds used for law enforcement investigators salary & fringe. These investigators are assigned to a taskforce from subgrantee jurisdictions.





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