



Car part thefts – will you be next?

When we think about the risks of car ownership and why we need insurance, most of us would think about damage to our cars due to accidents or theft. However, have you considered the risk of vital parts of your car being stolen?

What's being stolen and why?

Guild Insurance has noticed an increase in claims due to theft of catalytic converters. Introduced to Australian cars in 1986, they're vital to the operation of your vehicle and part of the exhaust system in petrol cars that filter emissions so they're less harmful to the environment.

These are stolen because:

- > Catalytic converters are made from valuable metals including rhodium, palladium, and platinum, all attracting a high retail price when sold to wreckers.
- > They aren't difficult to steal; it can be done in a matter of minutes with simple tools, just by climbing under a car.

What's the impact once stolen?

- > **You can't drive the car** – the car will start yet will be extremely unsafe to drive. Plus, it's illegal to operate once removed.
- > **Delays in replacements** – replacements can be problematic if there are delays in accessing the necessary part, leading to vehicles being off the road for a long period.
- > **Insurance cover** – some car insurance policies will offer a hire car if the car is stolen, but not always if only a part of the car is stolen, leaving the owner without a car while waiting for the replacement.

If the Hire Car Option Additional Benefit has been taken out on a Commercial Motor Vehicle Insurance policy with Guild Insurance, the holder of this policy will be entitled to a hire car if they have a catalytic converter stolen. If your vehicle is essential to your work and daily activities, speak to your Guild Insurance Account Manager or insurance specialist to be sure you have the cover you need.

What can be done to prevent theft?

Consider where you park:

- > Where possible, park securely in an area that can't be accessed by members of the public.
- > Avoid parking in quiet, poorly lit, isolated areas where thieves can go about their business without being seen.
- > Parking near CCTV cameras is recommended as these can be deterrents for thieves.
- > If you have a high-riding vehicle, consider parking near objects which might make it harder for someone to access the underside of your vehicle, including gutters or other cars.

Internet searches will suggest there are catalytic converter covers on the market that make it harder to access and remove them, but before adding any item to your vehicle, speak to your mechanic or car manufacturer to be sure any modifications or additions are done safely and in line with manufacturer guidelines.

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Don't go it alone