GONE IN 60 SECONDS
Motor vehicle theft impacts upon our livelihoods, our ability to work, socialise, travel and complete our daily tasks. There are practical steps you can take to make your car a less-appealing target to would-be thieves.

FACTS ABOUT CAR THEFT
Because of their ease of access, cars manufactured prior to 2001 are more at risk of theft. These cars often lack contemporary security measures such as central locking and engine immobilisers, making them a potential target to would-be thieves.

Most vehicle thefts are opportunistic. Many car thefts occur because a motivated offender observes a vehicle that they perceive will be easy to get into.

Even simple steps to increase an offender's efforts can have a significant impact on reducing car theft.

THERE ARE FOUR EASY STEPS THAT EVERYONE CAN TAKE TO HELP SECURE THEIR CAR:

1. REMOVE TEMPTATION
Thieves can be tempted by your vehicle if they see valuable items on display. Remove tempting items, such as GPS devices, mobile phones, handbags and electronic equipment, from view. If you must leave items in your vehicle make sure they are stored out of sight before arriving at your destination.

2. PROTECT YOUR KEYS
If a thief can see your car keys there is a good chance they can steal them. Ensure your car keys are secure at all times.

When out and about put them safely in your handbag or pocket and avoid leaving them sitting on tables at cafés. At home, put your keys out of view, in a draw or cupboard. It is also a good idea to store spare keys in a safe.

3. PARK SAFELY
When in a hurry, it's easy to forget about parking safely. This is, however, a very important element in protecting your car from theft.

Always park in well-lit areas that have good pedestrian traffic. Avoid poorly lit car parks that are isolated as there is less risk of a thief being interrupted in such locations. If secure parking is available (eg garage, behind a fence) it is advisable to use it.

4. SECURE YOUR VEHICLE
An engine immobiliser provides an effective car-theft deterrent. If you don’t have an immobiliser you can still secure your vehicle by ensuring that all doors (including the boot) are locked and windows are closed.

Remember, it only takes a short time for someone to steal your car so ensure it is locked whenever it’s unattended. Be sure to lock your vehicle even if you’re only leaving it for a minute at the petrol station, shops and even at home.