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## Auto theft takes dive during Vancouver's Olympic Games

BY TIFFANY CRAWFORD, VANCOUVER SUN MAY 17, 2010 COMMENTS (22)

STORY

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An image from inside a stolen Vancouver bait car.

Photograph by: Handout, Vancouver Police

METRO VANCOUVER -- Auto theft in the province dropped by 22 per cent in February despite thousands more cars on the roads during the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, officials said Monday.

According to the provincial government, 730 cars were stolen in B.C. in February, down from the 940 vehicles stolen in the same month last year.

There were also fewer break-ins over the same period last year, with 1,335 in February compared to 2,015 in 2009.

Overall, auto crime has plummeted in recent years with officials touting the provincial bait car program — special vehicles equipped with cameras and microphones that catch would-be thieves on film — as working to deter criminals.

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In 2009, for example, the province recorded 11,000 vehicle thefts, down 15 per cent from 2008 and down a whopping 55 per cent from 2003.

Before the bait car program was created in 2004, the province recorded 2,030 stolen cars in February alone.

Solicitor-general Michael de Jong called the program a success during the Games given the number of visitors' vehicles in B.C. during the event.

"We warned car thieves that bait cars would be everywhere during the Games, and it appears they got the message," said de Jong, in a news release Monday.

The government says since the program began, ICBC's stolen vehicle claims have been cut in half, to \$47 million in 2009 from \$98 million in 2003, while break-in-related claim costs have fallen to \$17 million from \$27 million.

The program is run by the Integrated Municipal Provincial Auto Crime Team, or IMPACT.

During the Olympics, police flooded random parking lots with an unknown number of bait cars, including five Vanoc parking and departure hubs, and Olympic training and preparation centres.

"Our priority was to ensure that hundreds of thousands of visitors didn't mean more opportunities for car thieves," said Sgt. Gord Elias, a spokesman for IMPACT.

Some bait cars were stocked with valuables such as cameras and laptops marked with MicroDot DNA technology.

MicroDots are microscopic dots that each contain serial numbers registered to IMPACT. The dots are planted on the valuables, making them easy to identify as stolen and providing indisputable evidence in court.

Elias said the MicroDot DNA technology was introduced to the bait car program as a pilot project during the Olympics.

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<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 9:04 PM on May 17, 2010 Well, if there has to be something to celebrate as a result of the olympics, I suppose this is good enough.. We wouldn't want to talk about the fact that BC will be in debt for the next 30 years as a result of the olympics.</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:59 PM on May 17, 2010 when there are half the cars to steal because of road and parking restrictions, don't you think that would be reflected in the stats? duhhhhh.</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:24 PM on May 17, 2010 4.52pm Professional job downtown eh? Well, maybe you should take a trip outside your bubble and stop being so naive. Huge success - What a joke. Nobody yet knows the affects of money made or lost, way to early to tell. Filling Robson Street with people and nothing to do is not what most people who have partied round the world a success. Get a life or a plane ticket!</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:18 PM on May 17, 2010 The Olympics were a massive success that we all will be reminded for many years to come, tax increases today, tomorrow, next week, next year and many years to come. What was the event all about ?</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:17 PM on May 17, 2010 Big f^% deal, with all the Security in place, is anyone surprised at such results, it looked like a state police. But now that the games are over, just watch it.</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:09 PM on May 17, 2010 what were the crime statistcs elsewhere where the police forces were halved by attending the games? if they went up then it's the fault of the Olympics. if they went down then there are too many police. tell us the numbers, dare you.</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:09 PM on May 17, 2010 The Olympics were a massive success. Those still complaining about it are the exact same people that complain about everything they cannot get for free. You need to wake up, get jobs and stop expecting everyone else to pay your way through life.</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:07 PM on May 17, 2010 seems that 4:52 enjoyed and profited from the games. a professional working downtown? could she be a hooker?</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span> 8:05 PM on May 17, 2010 many of the car thieves were given free tickets by the government to attend the hockey games.</p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span></p>	<p>   Report Abuse</p>

<p>7:53 PM on May 17, 2010                  Oh 4.52 your a professional worker who likes to post things on your companys dime,your no better than the people you were making fun of.The Olympics are a joke,of course there was very few auto thefts,every cop on the planet earth was here and if you did steal a car most streets were blocked or closed off</p>	<p>Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  6:55 PM on May 17, 2010                  gordon campbell is a thief a liar and a murder and an alcoholic...all behaviour of a sociopath and a narcissistic one at that ....</p>	<p>                  Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  6:53 PM on May 17, 2010                  the car thieves weren't trying hard enough... there is no committment anymore amongst thieves and devils...ask campbell and falcon...even they are burnt out ...but I need a red acura before the hst comes in...anybody anybody ....bueller ?                   no committment I tell ya'...</p>	<p>                  Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  6:40 PM on May 17, 2010                  The IMPACT program was not attached to the Olympics and therefor not part of the Security budget.                   Yes, they prioritized their target areas due to the Olympics but the costs came out of the normal IMPACT budget. Sorry, Olympics naysayer goats, this one can't be blamed or credited to the Olympics.</p>	<p>                  Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  6:04 PM on May 17, 2010                  With \$10 Billion they could have bought cars for everyone in the province.</p>	<p>                  Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  5:46 PM on May 17, 2010                  Typical British Columbia fascist Hillbillies trying to turn the Olympic fiasco into a success story. 10 billion wasted, Government now paying twice for assets that they already own. Over 10 billion dollars that could have been spent on a bullet train to the Okanagan valley. It is more important to provide opportunities to your own people instead of a bunch of fly by night foreign free loaders. Your children and grand children will be paying for this for a life time to come. All the time year after year finding more unemployment, more poverty, while the world that you invited rockets by and leaves them in a third world slum with a view. Fantastic legacy why don't you just give them some Jim Jones koolaid.</p>	<p>                  Report Abuse</p>
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  5:42 PM on May 17, 2010                  and only a billion dollars for security.</p>	<p>                  Report Abuse</p>
<p>Name withheld <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  5:32 PM on May 17, 2010  <i>This comment has been removed because it contains material which was deemed inappropriate.</i></p>	
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>                  5:07 PM on May 17, 2010                  I know its unbelievable what reporters will right despite everyone knowing the security bill for the Olympics was enormous. And the Olympics who cares about the Olympics no one as its history as the party is over and now everybody is paying the price.</p>	<p>                  Report Abuse</p>

<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>          4:53 PM on May 17, 2010          So if we spend \$26 billion for year round Olympic-style security we'll cut up to \$64 million in auto and property crime. Math seems right to me let's go!</p>	   Report Abuse
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>          4:52 PM on May 17, 2010          That is an amazing statistic given how many more people there were and the opportunities available. The Olympic naysayers and complainers are still around, and DESPITE multiple reports saying that the Olympics were a huge success, they continue to whine. Just FACE IT you Debbie Downers - the Olympics were way more successful than anyone imagine they could be and had far less downsides than expected. It was a great 2 week event that had CANADIANS coming out in droves and never have I seen patriotism so strong here in our native land. I would pay another \$10,000 in extra taxes just to see it again if I could. By the way - I work in a professional job in downtown Vancouver. Not sitting at home playing video games in your parent's basement like so many of you whiners.</p>	   Report Abuse
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>          4:26 PM on May 17, 2010          ...so the solution is to have the Olympipcs every month.</p>	   Report Abuse
<p>anonymous <span style="float: right;">Score: 0</span>          3:43 PM on May 17, 2010          Wow. A billion dollars in extra security and auto crime went down 22 percent for a month. It's hard for me to contain my joy.</p>	   Report Abuse

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