

MEMORANDUM TO: All Chiefs of Police and
Commissioner Thomas Carrique
Chairs, Police Services Boards

FROM: Richard Stubbings
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division

SUBJECT: Upcoming Initiatives to Combat Auto Theft

DATE OF ISSUE:	May 8, 2023
CLASSIFICATION:	General Information
RETENTION:	Indefinite
INDEX NO.:	23-0036
PRIORITY:	Normal

In recent years, Ontario has experienced a significant increase in auto thefts, including the use of violence, threats, intimidation, weapons and firearms to steal vehicles. There is a need to disrupt the current trends in auto theft by identifying and dismantling organized criminal networks involved in auto theft and related activities, as well as through the implementation of preventative approaches to addressing these crimes.

There is also a need to enhance prosecution and court resources to provide support to the Joint Forces Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Organized Crime Towing and Auto Theft Team, and effectively case manage and prosecute these complex cases to keep communities safe.

In response to these concerns, Ontario is investing in bold and comprehensive new measures to fight the rise in auto thefts across the province. Specifically, Ontario is investing approximately \$51 million over three years to fund new policing and prosecution resources and support existing initiatives to combat auto theft, including:

- The creation of the **Organized Crime Towing and Auto Theft Team** led by the OPP, which will draw upon the experience of previous successes of the province's towing joint force operation and work with police services to identify, disrupt and dismantle organized crime networks participating in vehicle theft.
- A new **community safety grant program** that targets auto theft, in which the OPP, municipal and First Nations police services will be eligible to apply for funding for tools, supports and resources to fight and prevent auto theft in their

communities.

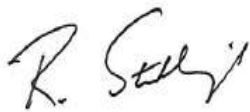
- Creation of a new **Major Auto Theft Prosecution Response Team**, which will provide dedicated legal and prosecutorial support to the OPP to effectively prosecute complex cases, with corresponding court support staff and resources.

The Ontario government is also taking further action against auto theft by exploring opportunities to work in partnership with Canada Border Services Agency, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and shipping container and rail companies. To help stop the illegal export of stolen vehicles and target violent crime linked to criminal organizations, the Ontario government is investing \$1.4 million over three years in the Greater Toronto Area-Greater Golden Horseshoe Investigative Fund. This funding will continue to provide eligible police services with the resources they need, including cutting-edge technology.

Lastly, as part of Ontario's Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy, the Ministry of the Solicitor General is investing an additional \$13.4 million in funding in 2023-24 to support a number of initiatives, including extending the Ontario Closed Circuit Television Grant Program.

Further information on these initiatives will be available in the coming months.

Sincerely,



Richard Stubbings
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division

c: Mario Di Tommaso, O.O.M.
Deputy Solicitor General, Community Safety