



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

<https://watpa.waspc.org>

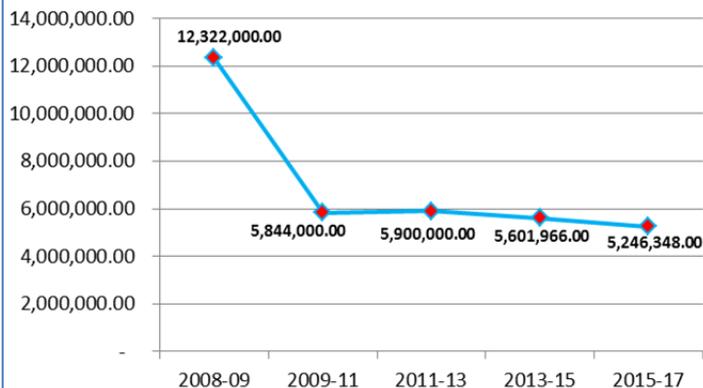
Auto Theft Rankings by State

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1	CA	CA	CA	CA	CA	CA
2	TX	TX	TX	TX	TX	TX
3	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL
4	GA	GA	GA	GA	WA	WA
5	MI	IL	IL	WA	GA	GA
6	IL	MI	MI	IL	MI	MI
7	AZ	WA	WA	MI	IL	OH
8	WA	OH	OH	OH	OH	AZ
9	OH	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ	IL
10	NY	NY	NY	NY	MO	MO

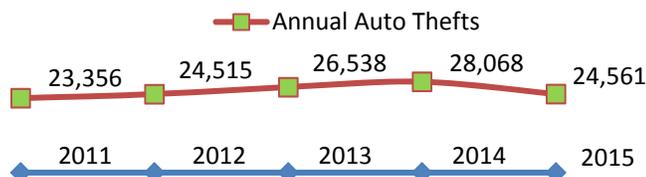
Source: 2015 DOJ FBI Uniform Crime Report

reduction from 2013-15 when the authority allocated \$5,246,328. By comparison, and following the authority's inception in 2007, funding for the same programs during the 2007-2009 grant periods was \$12,322,000.

WATPA Funding Allocations



Washington State Auto Theft 2011 - 2015



Auto Theft in Washington:

Washington remains at #4 nationally but hope to see our standing improve after experiencing a significant drop in 2015.

November 2015: Although Washington continues to work tirelessly toward auto theft reduction, and overall the state experienced a **14% reduction in auto theft in 2015**, two of our communities are ranked in the top 10 nationally (Spokane/Spokane Valley #6 and Seattle King County #8) in 2014. WATPA continues to dedicate considerable resources to both of these areas and funded an additional detective in the Spokane area for 2015-17. This ranking, and the devastating effect of property crime, continues to underscore the significant impact these crime have on Washington residents.

Grant Awards: WATPA awarded \$4,991,829 for the 2015-17 grant periods for a variety of activities including: law enforcement, prosecution, crime analysis,

The importance of WATPA: The mission of the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority is to prevent and reduce motor vehicle thefts in the State of Washington. The information that follows is only a glimpse into what the agencies supported by WATPA did in 2015 on behalf of all the constituents of WA State.

Snohomish County Auto Theft (SNOCAT) Task Force (Everett and North Puget Sound area) initiated a number of steps to enhance enforcement and prevention activities in north Puget sound including efforts to enhance law enforcement relationships with the Swinomish, Tulalip and Stillaguamish tribes to combat auto theft where vehicles are stolen, recovered or transported on or through tribal lands. SNOCAT has also partnered with numerous state and local agencies to identify and dismantle illegal wrecking yards (chop shops) which pose a significant threat to residents' quality of life and the environment.

SNOCAT has an impressive social media presence that has been effective in educating the public on auto crimes and ways to keep from being victimized.

During the first nine months of 2015, SNOCAT's Prosecution filed 48 cases that resulted in 80 convictions. Detective investigations led to 42 physical arrests for vehicle theft charges (i.e. taking/trafficking in stolen vehicles, operating a wrecking yard without a license (aka chop shop), and motor vehicle title fraud.

Preventing Auto Theft through Operational Links (PATROL) Auto Theft Task Force (King and North Pierce Counties): Detectives were extremely active over the past year and continued aggressively targeting chronic violent offenders who have direct links to auto theft and organized crime. PATROL has also actively exercised social media to inform and educate the public and provide a tip line for crime information.

Task Force Detectives investigated a prolific auto thief suspect who had close ties to organized crime. This investigation led to a search warrant of the suspect's residence. During the execution of the search warrant, two subjects fired shots at SWAT officers. Later, the suspect engaged patrol officers in at least two vehicle pursuits and in September the suspect and girlfriend were riding motorcycles in excess of 100 mph on I-5 when the girlfriend was involved in a fatal collision while riding a stolen motorcycle. Detectives continued to network with surrounding jurisdictions, including SNOCAT and federal fugitive task forces, and in early October the suspect was taken into custody.

On June 22, 2015 task force Detectives assisted Pierce County Sheriffs in the recovery of over \$500,000 in stolen construction equipment. The main suspect was arrested and ultimately released and during release the suspect continued to steal vehicles, trailers and equipment and was eventually arrested and held in custody a second time. This case speaks to the recurrent nature of criminal behavior that continuously places the public at risk.

During the first six months of 2015, PATROL detectives recovered 91 vehicles and filed 144 charges on 36 different prolific auto thieves.

Auto Crimes Enforcement (ACE) Task Force (Tacoma and South Puget Sound): As the region's coordinator for anti-auto theft efforts, the ACE Task Force actively solicits opportunities to present auto theft topics to the community. Topics also include the complexity of auto theft and what the legislature has done to address it by developing WATPA, the task force's efforts in the region, and education and prevention tips.

The ACE Task Force conducts an annual warrant sweep during the winter Holidays in an effort to incarcerate the area's most wanted auto thieves and prowlers *before* they can victimize families. Utilizing analytical data as the informed-decision to identify the worst offenders based on police field reports and forensic results from abandoned stolen cars, and then identifies those with valid arrest warrants. Last year's operation netted 8 of the worst offenders out of the 16 identified for arrest.

A prolific auto thief was identified as stealing 5-7 cars in Tacoma's historic "North End" district. He attracted the task force's attention because he was eluding police during pursuits, committing home-invasion robberies, and car

thefts at gunpoint. Task force detectives used sources of information and many hours of surveillance to develop leads for his arrest, and just prior to Christmas was apprehended in the Hilltop neighborhood after an 8 hour standoff with a SWAT team. During his interrogation, he claims to have stolen over 700 cars over an estimated 3 year period, but is now serving a 120-month sentence for his crimes. Since that arrest and conviction, the region saw an immediate reduction in auto thefts. Over the past two years, auto theft has declined by 12% (2014) and 3.4% (2013).

Spokane Police Department (Spokane and eastern Washington) developed a PSA informing listeners they could pick-up free anti-theft devices (The "Club") from local police substations. The "Prevent an Auto Theft with a Club" campaign is also featured on Spokane PD's homepage.

In June, 2015, a stolen vehicle was involved in a hit and run collision involving a Spokane Transit Bus. During the investigation, a suspect was located and Detectives were able to establish probable cause to arrest the suspect. The suspect was later booked for possession of a stolen vehicle, hit and run and reckless driving.

Yakima Auto Theft Reduction Initiative (Yakima and South Central Washington): A Kittitas County Deputy contacted Yakima County regarding possible stolen motorcycles. The deputy had stopped 4 subjects in three different vehicles and discovered a trailer and multiple power tools that appeared suspicious. The motorcycles and trailer were registered to an address in Douglas County (DCSO) and ultimately the Yakima County ATTF detective worked with a DCSO deputy who checked the victim's residence and found a shop that had been broken into and motorcycles stolen. Investigation resulted in recovery of a stolen motorcycle, stolen jet ski, a trailer and power tools. This case covered three counties and resulted in multiple arrests.

Tri-Cities (covering South Central Washington beyond Yakima): This area continues to be a leader in community engagement, information sharing and leveraging of enforcement technology. Automated license plate reader technology (ALPR) continues to be a useful resource for investigations in the Tri-Cities. Richland Police were able to identify the suspect vehicle used in a reported robbery using ALPR technology. Crime analysts are on the leading edge of data collection and reporting and continue to share and disseminate regional intelligence regarding auto theft offenders, trends, and theft and recovery locations of stolen vehicles.