

Thank you for your enquiry of 23rd January 2007, concerning how many stolen cars have never been recovered for years 2000/ 2001/ 2002/ 2003/ 2004 and 2005, and for the further clarification which you provided on 9th February 2007. We are now in a position to offer a full reply to your enquiry.

The table below contains estimates of the numbers of cars stolen in each of the calendar years 2000 to 2005 and estimates of how many had been recovered by the end of the calendar year concerned, drawn from data collected in connection with Home Office Car Theft Indices. These estimates are based on records of all cars reported stolen during the year in question, as held on the police national computer (PNC), and on how many of these records were removed from the PNC during the course of the year concerned, because the vehicle concerned had been recovered. These estimates are then adjusted to take account of the fact that a significant proportion of vehicles reported stolen are recovered before there has been an opportunity to send their details to the PNC. These adjustments are made by contacting a sample of forces and asking them to supply comprehensive details of all the car theft reports which they had received during the year in question. This is cross-referenced with the data held on the PNC for these forces so that the extent of undercounting can be estimated and adjustment factors calculated. The estimates of the numbers of cars which had not been recovered by the end of the calendar year concerned comes from subtracting the estimates of the number of cars recovered from the estimates of the number of cars stolen.

This information relates to cars stolen in England, Wales and Scotland, and does not include the thefts of vehicles which are not cars.

Year	Cars stolen	Cars recovered	Cars not recovered
2000	342000	260000	82000
2001	342000	263000	79000
2002	315000	256000	59000
2003	283000	223000	60000
2004	238000	177000	61000
2005	200000	149000	51000

It can be seen from this that although we estimate that there were 38% fewer 'unrecovered stolen cars' in 2005 than there were in 2000, we estimate that there has been an even greater drop (of 42%) in the numbers of cars which were stolen in the respective years. As a consequence, our estimate of the proportion of stolen cars in 2005 which were not recovered (26%) is slightly higher than the corresponding proportion in 2000 (24%).

I hope that you find this information of interest, and would like to assure you that this comprises all relevant information that the Home Office holds related

to this question, other than the published information from the British Crime Survey to which I referred you in my earlier reply.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. The department therefore, will be simultaneously releasing to the public the information you requested together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting your complaint to the below address quoting reference 6071.

Information Policy Team
Information and Record Management Service
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4th Floor, Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
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Email: info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

During the independent review the department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. Should you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you will have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.