

Designing Out Crime

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9 An evaluation of a campaign to reduce car thefts

D. Riley

Reference was made in Riley and Mayhew (1980, Chapter 1) to a number of car theft advertising campaigns run in the United Kingdom over the past few years, the most important of which was the 1976 national press and poster campaign sponsored by the Home Office and organised by the Central Office of Information (C.O.I.). There is little reason to think that this campaign produced savings in the number of offences the police had to deal with, despite the fact that autocrime (the term used throughout this chapter to refer to thefts of and from motor vehicles) increased to a smaller extent in 1976 than in previous years. The limited impact of the 1976 campaign is matched by the results of the study conducted by the Home Office Research Unit (see Chapter 8), which assessed the effect on car-locking behaviour of a specially-mounted police autocrime campaign run in Plymouth at the end of 1977. Other local and generally smaller-scale initiatives also fail to provide any sound evidence of positive campaign effects on car-locking or vehicle thefts, though a number of claims have been made to the contrary on the basis of apparently inadequate analyses of variations in the level of autocrime offences known to the police.

Despite this somewhat negative picture, growing concern over the amount of police resources taken up with dealing with thefts of and from vehicles (together accounting for 25% of all the indictable offences known to the police in 1978)¹ provided the grounds for a fresh Home Office initiative in the early part of 1979, again organised by C.O.I. This campaign has been the subject of two evaluations. One of which - dealt with in this chapter - was conducted within the Home Office Research Unit and assessed the impact of the campaign on police autocrime statistics, as well as on the extent to which parked vehicles were left secure by their owners. In a separate study, conducted by N.O.P. Market Research Limited for C.O.I., the effectiveness of the campaign was further evaluated in terms of changes in motorists' attitudes to car theft, their beliefs about the risks involved and their reported car-locking behaviour. The results of this survey are discussed briefly later.

THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign took the form of two separate advertising projects. Both were

¹ The average amount of police time spent in dealing with a reported theft of a motor vehicle including the prosecution of offenders has been estimated to be approximately six man-hours. Costing this conservatively, and taking into account the number of reported incidents of vehicle theft in England and Wales in 1978, the 'cost' to the police of thefts of motor vehicles alone is in excess of £8 million a year. The cost of dealing with incidents of theft of property from cars may be less than this, but still substantial.

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directed mainly at the owners of older cars without steering column locks, although the main recommendation never to leave one's car unlocked was relevant to all motorists. The first used television advertisements on Tyne-Tees Television in north-east England; the second used the more usual form of autocrime publicity - press and poster advertisements - in north-west England. It was anticipated that differing degrees of effectiveness might be apparent from the two media, which would provide some useful pointers for future campaigns. Both campaigns ran for eight weeks starting on 28 February 1979 and together cost in the region of £100,000, equivalent to a national campaign costing £2 million at 1980 prices. The main aim of the campaign was to reduce the number of stolen vehicles (a rather optimistic reduction of 10% in the number of stolen vehicles in the campaign areas during 1979 was hoped for, calculated to provide a saving of some £200,000). Although more secure vehicles might also be expected to reduce the incidence of thefts of property from cars (virtually the same in number as thefts of cars), this was not a factor which featured in the advertising content.

Television campaign

The television publicity took the form of two different advertisements both on a humorous theme in which a motorist, apparently unconcerned about locking his car, leaves it with a 'Please steal me' sign on the roof. The commentary ran as follows:

"If you don't lock your car you might as well put a big sign on top of it. Especially if you've got an older model. Of the hundreds of cars stolen each day, 80% are T registration or earlier. Remember, an unlocked car is an open invitation. LOCK IT."

The television advertisements also showed a simple anti-theft device being used to secure the steering wheel of a car with the clear implication that this was a further way in which motorists without steering column locks on their cars could protect their vehicles.

The press and poster campaign

A number of national newspapers print different regional editions and these were used to restrict the display of the campaign press material to the target area in north-west England. The newspaper advertising took the form of rather more detailed advice to motorists than was given in the television commercials. A typical press advertisement read as follows:

"It only takes two seconds to lock a car, and not much longer to steal an unlocked one. Every day a thousand cars are stolen. So if you're not locking your car you might as well place a sign on the roof. Many cars are stolen from car parks, or when the owner was 'only gone a minute'. 80% of stolen cars are over 7 years old, and cars of that age don't usually have steering locks. If your car doesn't have a steering lock, you can buy a simple but effective anti-theft

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device for a few pounds. It won't cost as much as your no-claims bonus. But the most basic form of security still consists of remembering to wind up all your windows and lock all your doors when you leave your car. Then when you get back there'll be more than just an empty parking space. AN UN-LOCKED CAR IS AN OPEN INVITATION. LOCK IT."

The newspaper publicity was additionally supported by displays on poster sites and buses.

THE STUDY

It was considered that the most direct way of measuring the success of the 1979 campaign - given the emphasis of the advertising on vehicle security - was to examine directly whether drivers were more careful after the campaign than before it about locking their cars. This involved physical checks on a total of over 25,000 vehicles. In addition, account was taken of the number of thefts of and from vehicles recorded by the police², as the campaign also had the objective of reducing police workload, and as potential offenders might be deterred by the attention given to autocrime even if drivers' security behaviour was not improved.

In order to take account of the fact that any observed changes in the campaign areas may have been due to factors operating independently of the publicity, police statistics and vehicle security were also examined in a 'control' area not exposed to any publicity.

For the two types of police records examined (see below), a comparison was made between February and March 1979 when the advertising was shown and the following month of April - together referred to as the *campaign period* - and the same period of 1978 - referred to as the *pre-campaign period*. For the physical checks on cars, observations were made immediately before and at the end of the campaign.

In detail, the three measures of campaign effectiveness which were used in the present evaluation were as follows:

i. Criminal statistics

Firstly, the number of recorded offences of thefts of and from motor vehicles were obtained for police forces within the campaign and control areas, for the campaign and pre-campaign periods. Also, since changes in the overall tendency to crime in a given area might be expected to influence the number of autocrime

¹ The term 'thefts of', which is used throughout, includes the police categories of vehicles 'stolen' (which are not recovered within a set period of time) and those 'taken without authority' (which are).

² While statistics may have some limitations in measuring changes in the level of autocrime, figures of thefts of cars in particular are much more reliable than some other police data as far as the reporting of offences is concerned because of the requirement that the police are notified when an insurance claim for theft is made and because of the owner's dependence on the police to help recover the vehicle.

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offences independently of any publicity, the total numbers of indictable offences other than autocrime were analysed. In the press and poster campaign area these data were obtained for the police forces of Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside; in the T.V. campaign area for the Durham, Cleveland and Northumbria forces; and in the control area for the Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire, West Midlands and West Yorkshire forces,

ii. Police crime reports

A second measure was derived from detailed information on police crime reports recording the theft of a motor vehicle¹ (thefts from vehicles were not considered). Since the campaign was directed specifically at the owners of older vehicles not fitted with integral steering column locks, it might have been expected to influence these owners more than those with newer vehicles. To take this into account, the vehicle registration suffix letter appearing on each police crime report was used to obtain the year of registration of stolen vehicles². For the press and poster campaign area, details of crime reports relating to stolen vehicles were obtained for the Greater Manchester and Merseyside forces, and for the T.V. area for the Durham and Northumbria forces. The control area was the same as that used in the analysis of criminal statistics.

iii. Police checks on parked cars

Vehicle security checks were carried out by police officers on parked cars in January 1979 before the campaign began and in March 1979 at the end of the campaign. The cars checked were those parked in suburban streets where there was little or no garaging of cars. Checks were carried out in suburban areas since it was felt that this would maximise the proportion of vehicles included in both stages of the exercise. The streets in which cars were checked were selected by the co-operating police forces. The checks were made after midnight in order to reduce the chance of motorists locking cars because they had observed the police checking vehicles. The registration number of each vehicle checked was recorded in addition to the number of doors (including the boot) or windows left insecure;

¹ Crime reports relating to thefts of motor cycles, mopeds and heavy goods vehicles were excluded from the analysis.

² The registration suffix letter indicates the 12-month period (1 August-31 July of the following year) in which the vehicle was first registered for use. Older vehicles were taken to be those with a registration suffix letter of 'H' or earlier, indicating that the vehicle was registered prior to 1 August 1970. Newer vehicles were taken as those with a suffix letter of 'J' to 'R' indicating that the vehicles were registered between 1 August 1970 and 31 July 1977. As steering column locks were made compulsory on all cars manufactured in and imported to this country from January 1971, it is possible that some T registered vehicles were without steering column locks. The numbers of these, however, may not be very great as manufacturers were fitting improved locks on cars for some time before the 1971 measure, in anticipation of it. Since for the period February-April 1978, 'S' registrations were still continuing and, of course, there were no 'T' vehicles, comparisons of the vehicle 'populations' in 1978 and 1979 omit consideration of *S' and 'T' registered vehicles. In addition, there are a number of instances when the registration suffix will not correspond with the age of the vehicle - for instance, in the case of second-hand imported vehicles and 'personalised' registrations. There is no reason, however, to suppose that these (infrequent) exceptions would have differed between the test and control areas, or over time.

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it was also noted whether the vehicle was fitted with an anti-theft device other than an integral steering column lock. On the basis of the car registration suffix, separate quotas were established for the checks on older (pre-T registration) and newer vehicles, permitting an assessment of the effect of the campaign on each group of vehicles. In the press and poster campaign area, the police checks on vehicles were carried out by the Greater Manchester force, in the T.V. campaign area by the Northumbria force, and in a control area by the West Midlands and West Yorkshire forces. In all, over 25,000 vehicles were checked by the four forces involved which each carried out approximately 3,000 checks both before the campaign and at the end of it.

RESULTS

i. Autocrime offences recorded by the police

Table 9:1 shows, for each of the campaign areas and the control area, the number of recorded offences during February-April 1978 and in the same period in 1979, relating to (i) theft of a motor vehicle, (ii) theft from a motor vehicle, and (iii) the total number of other indictable offences.

In relation to both thefts of motor vehicles and thefts from motor vehicles, the number of recorded offences showed the largest decrease in the *control* area rather than in either of the test areas. Taking the two test areas together, thefts of vehicles fell by less than 1% and thefts from vehicles by less than 2%, compared with decreases in the control area of over 13% and 10% respectively.

However, since the recorded number of autocrime offences may be expected to be related to overall changes in the level of crime independently of any advertising campaign, account must also be taken in each of the three areas of changes in the level of other indictable crime. The changes in the number of autocrime offences in each test area expressed as a percentage of the total number of other, non-autocrime offences were compared with those in the control area. This indicated that in the press and poster campaign area, changes in both thefts of and thefts from motor vehicles were not statistically significantly different from the corresponding changes in the control area. In the T.V. campaign area, while the change in thefts from motor vehicles was not significantly different from that in the control area, recorded thefts of vehicles- relative to the control area constituted a significantly higher proportion of all indictable offences during the campaign period than during the same period in 1978. Thus, it would not seem that publicity directed at autocrime served to produce any gains for the police.

ii. Police crime reports relating to thefts of 'old' and 'new' motor vehicles

The number of police crime reports recording the theft of a motor vehicle assumed to be with ('new') and without ('old') steering column locks are presented in Table 9:2 for the test and control areas, in each of the campaign and pre-campaign periods. In this table the number of vehicles 'on the road' in the old

Table 9: 1
The effect of the campaign on the number of autocrime offences recorded by the police*

	<i>Theft of a motor vehicle</i>			<i>Theft from a motor vehicle</i>			<i>Total of other indictable offences</i>		
	<i>February– April 1978</i>	<i>February– April 1979</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>February– April 1978</i>	<i>February– April 1979</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>February– April 1978</i>	<i>February– April 1979</i>	<i>Change</i>
Press and poster campaign area	14173	13321	–6.0%	9273	9039	–2.5%	60863	63570	+4.4%
T.V. campaign area	4697	5439	+15.8%	4476	4487	0.2%	32506	32761	+0.8%
Control area	15324	13306	–13.2%	11353	10193	–10.2%	82596	79331	–4.0%

* Recorded offences also include those relating to motor cycles, mopeds and heavy goods vehicles.

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Table 9:2
The effect of the campaign on the theft of 'old' and 'new' vehicles

	'Old' vehicles*			'New' vehicles		
	February- April 1978	February- April 1979	Change	February- April 1978	February- April 1979	Change
Press and poster campaign area	7075	5965	-15.7% ^a	3444	4064	+18.0% ^b
T.V. campaign area	1561	1572	+0.7% ^c	790	1185	+50.0% ^d
Control area	6822	6073	-11.0% ^{a,c}	2585	2785	+7.7% ^{b,d}

* Note: The classification of 'old' and 'new' vehicles is explained in footnote 2, page 116.

a. $\chi^2 = 4.71$, 1 d.f., $p < .05$; b. $\chi^2 = 6.37$, 1 d.f., $p < .025$; c. $\chi^2 = 9.46$, 1 d.f., $p < .005$; d. $\chi^2 = 38.18$, 1 d.f., $p < .001$.

and new age-groups has been taken into consideration by adjusting theft figures in each area by the percentage change in the number of registered older and newer vehicles between the pre-campaign and the campaign period.¹

Table 9:2 shows that, in the press and poster campaign area relative to the control area, there was a statistically significant decrease (— 15.7%) in thefts of older vehicles but a significant increase (+18%) in thefts of newer vehicles.

In the T.V. area, relative to the control area, there were significant increases in thefts of both newer and older vehicles and, thus, apparently no evidence that the campaign was successful. As may be seen in Table 9:1, there was an increase in overall crime levels relative to the control area. Whilst this may go some way toward accounting for the increase in thefts of older vehicles in the T.V. campaign area relative to the control area, it is clearly insufficient to account for the much larger percentage increase in the number of thefts of newer vehicles.

Analysis of police crime reports suggests at first sight, then, that in the press and poster campaign area the autocrime advertising may have had some success in reducing the number of thefts of older vehicles. This finding can be contrasted with statistically significant increases in thefts of newer vehicles in that area and with significant increases in thefts of both older and newer vehicles in the T.V. area. However, just as attributing the observed *increases* in motor vehicle thefts to the campaign would seem to be counter-intuitive and unlikely to be justified, it may be similarly unwise, in view of the overall evidence here, to attribute the reduction in thefts of older vehicles in the press and poster campaign area to the effects of the advertising. In addition, such selectivity in the effects of the

¹ This information was obtained from the Department of the Environment motor vehicle census in June 1978 and in December 1978. The changes over this six-month period were doubled to provide an estimate of the annual changes between June 1978 and June 1979, an interval approximating to that between the campaign period in 1979 and the corresponding period in 1978. Decreases in registrations over this interval were taken into account by increasing the actual number of recorded offences by the annual percentage change, and vice-versa.

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advertising is arguably improbable. Rather, the decrease in thefts of older vehicles in the press and poster area may simply represent an unsystematic seasonal variation in the thefts of older cars in that region, although in the absence of relevant data this remains untested. The suggestion derives some support, however, from the results of vehicle security checks reported in the following section which, to anticipate their presentation, fail to show any consistent evidence of a change in motorists' actual car-locking behaviour.

iii. Police checks on parked vehicles

The results of the vehicle checks were analysed in a number of different ways, for older and newer vehicles separately¹. The analyses were based on:

- a. the numbers of completely secure vehicles;
- b. the total number of points of insecurity;
- c. the number of vehicles with secure driver's doors;
- d. the number of vehicles fitted with an additional anti-theft device (that is, a device other than an integral steering column lock).

In addition, since two vehicle security surveys were conducted, both in the same general area, there were a number of vehicles which were examined by the police twice. Analysis of the checks on this subset of vehicles, presented later, provides an opportunity to assess the effects of the advertising campaigns minimising the problems of sampling variations.

a. *The numbers of completely secure vehicles*

Table 9:3 presents the proportions of both older and newer vehicles found to be *completely* secure (i.e. with no doors or windows insecure) in the two surveys in the two campaign areas and in the control area.

Table 9:3
The percentage of vehicles found to be completely secure

	<i>'Old' vehicles</i>		<i>'New' vehicles</i>	
	<i>Before campaign</i>	<i>End of campaign</i>	<i>Before campaign</i>	<i>End of campaign</i>
Press and poster campaign area	84.7% (1487)	81.1% (1525)	88.4% (1752)	87.0% (1789)
T.V. campaign area	81.3% (1777)	80.7% (1555)	86.2% (1990)	88.1% (1863)
Control area	78.0% (2350)	77.3% (2283)	86.2% (3882)	86.4% (2956)

NB: The number of vehicles involved in each check is given in parentheses.

¹ Older vehicles are taken to be those with a registration suffix of 'H' or earlier. Newer vehicles are those with a suffix of 'H' or earlier. Newer vehicles are those with a suffix letter from T to T\

It can be seen that in neither the press and poster campaign area nor in the T.V. area was there any statistically significant increase in the proportion of vehicles found completely secure in the second check¹. The proportions of vehicles which were secure, incidentally, compares well with the security levels observed in the Plymouth study (see Chapter 8); older vehicles were less secure and the slightly higher overall number of secure vehicles in the present exercise (83.9%) than in Plymouth (79.8%) can probably be explained by the fact that owners leaving their cars parked overnight are more likely to secure them than owners parking in the late evening.²

b. Number of points of insecurity

An analysis of changes in the numbers of points of insecurity found in the vehicle surveys was included to allow for the possibility that, while the proportions of secure and insecure vehicles might remain unaltered by the advertising, the total number of points of insecurity might decrease³.

In the press and poster campaign area, there were statistically significant reductions at the end of the campaign period in the number of points of insecurity for both older vehicles (falling from 386 to 285 compared with a decrease from 826 to 790 in the control area) and newer vehicles (falling from 419 to 311 compared to a decrease from 681 to 677 in the control area). In the T.V. area, there was also a significant decrease in the case of newer vehicles (falling from 356 to 286 compared to the decrease from 681 to 677 in the control area), but not for older ones. These apparently positive effects of the advertising are not, however, consistent with the result of an additional analysis, discussed below, on the subset of vehicles which were checked by the police in both surveys.

c. Number of vehicles with an insecure driver's door

As the advertising may have been expected to have had maximum impact on the number of vehicle owners locking the driver's door - the most likely point of unauthorised entry - a check was made on the proportions of vehicles with a secure driver's door in the two surveys. There were, however, no statistically significant changes in either test area, the proportion of cars with secure driver's doors remaining fairly high at around 93%.

¹ Vehicle security may be expected to be affected to some extent by weather extremes in that cars may be unused for longer intervals during periods of adverse road conditions. The change, however, in the weather in the test and control areas was roughly comparable between the two stages of the vehicle survey and is unlikely to have exerted a significant bias on the extent to which owners locked their cars.

² A few other surveys involving checks on cars parked during the *daytime* (e.g. R.B.L., 1977) have shown security levels to be between 60% and 65%.

³ Account was taken, of course, of differences in the number of vehicles checked by the police in each survey; and a check was also made that the proportion of two- and four-door vehicles checked did not differ significantly in the two surveys.

d. *Additional anti-theft devices*

Although the advertising was designed to encourage motorists owning vehicles without an integral steering column lock to fit extra security devices, the proportion of older vehicles found to be protected by such a device varied remarkably little between the two surveys in both the campaign areas and in the control area. In the press and poster area, about 8% of older vehicles had security devices in the two surveys; in the T.V. and control areas the figure was about 11%. For newer vehicles in the T.V. and control area, about 6% had extra devices in the two surveys. In the press and poster areas, 5-3% of newer cars were found to have additional protection at the end of the campaign compared to 11-5% at the beginning. This is more likely to represent a sampling difference in the vehicles checked in the two surveys rather than an actual decrease in the use of security devices.

CARS CHECKED TWICE

The analysis of checks on vehicles involved in both security surveys¹ provided an additional measure of the effects of the publicity in which sampling variations between the two groups of vehicles were completely controlled.

Vehicles checked twice can be placed in one of four categories:

- a. Completely secure on both checks.
- b. Insecure on both checks.
- c. Insecure on first check but secure on the second.
- d. Secure on the first check but insecure on the second.

If the campaign had been successful, there would have been a significantly greater number of vehicles falling into the third category than into the fourth. Table 9:4 below, indicates that this was not the case for either older or newer vehicles in either the press and poster campaign area or the T.V. area. (The result for older

Table 9:4
The security of vehicles checked twice

	<i>Number of 'old' vehicles</i>				<i>Number of 'new' vehicles</i>			
	<i>Secure both checks</i>	<i>Insecure both checks</i>	<i>Insecure first check, secure second</i>	<i>Secure first check, insecure second</i>	<i>Secure both checks</i>	<i>Insecure both checks</i>	<i>Insecure first check, secure second</i>	<i>Secure first check, insecure second</i>
Press and poster campaign area	318	25	45	61	399	18	47	60
T.V. campaign area	308	25	64	58	284	9	23	29

¹ For the four forces carrying out the surveys the average number of vehicles which were checked twice was 445.

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vehicles in the T.V. area is not statistically significant.) These findings confirm the conclusion, based on the results of the complete set of vehicle checks, that the advertising was not successful in increasing the number of vehicles which were found by the police to have all doors and windows secure.

The apparent decrease in the number of points of insecurity for both vehicle groups in the press and poster campaign area and for newer vehicles in the T.V. campaign area is not supported by the corresponding analysis on vehicles checked twice. The numbers of vehicles with fewer points of insecurity on the second check than on the first were compared with the numbers of vehicles with a greater number of points of insecurity on the second check than on the first. Clearly, if the publicity has been successful in reducing the number of points of insecurity, the number of vehicles in the first category would have been *greater than* the number of the second. In the press and poster campaign area, the corresponding figures were 49 vs. 72 for older vehicles and 55 vs. 65 for newer ones. Similarly, in the T.V. area the numbers were 70 vs. 65 for older vehicles and 25 vs. 31 for newer ones. None of these four differences indicates a statistically significant *decrease* in vehicle insecurity. A similar analysis for vehicles checked twice of the use of additional anti-theft devices indicated no increase in the use of such devices for older cars in either of the campaign areas. This again reinforces the earlier result based on the complete sets of vehicle checks.

CONCLUSION

In summary, none of the three measures used to evaluate the 1979 autocrime campaign showed that there were any benefits which could be unequivocally attributed to the advertising. In the first place, while the number of recorded autocrime offences fell somewhat in the press and poster campaign area, this was less than in the control area and has to be set against an increase in offences in the T.V. area.

Secondly, the analysis of crime reports relating to stolen vehicles, which examined the effects of the advertising on older and newer vehicles separately indicated that, in the press and poster campaign area relative to the control area, there was a significant decrease in thefts of older vehicles but a significant increase in thefts of newer vehicles. This latter finding may be partly attributable perhaps to the greater increase in the rate of other indictable offences in the test area. The reduction in thefts of older vehicles, which may have reflected an unsystematic seasonal variation in the number of offences relating to such vehicles, was contrasted with the negative results of the police security checks on parked cars. In the T.V. campaign area, relative to the control area, there was no apparent reduction in thefts of either older or newer cars.

The security checks on parked cars, thirdly, produced no consistent evidence that the autocrime advertising encouraged car owners in either of the campaign areas to be more conscientious about locking their vehicles. In the press and poster area, certainly, there was a decrease for both older and newer vehicles in the

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number of points of insecurity at the end of the campaign period. Set against this, however, is the apparent failure of the press and poster advertising to effect any improvement in vehicle security as measured by the percentage of completely secure vehicles, the percentage of vehicles with secure driver's doors, or the percentage of vehicles fitted with an additional security device. Further, the results of checks on vehicles which came to be included in both the police surveys in the press and poster area do not provide any indication of an increase in security. The results of the checks in the T.V. area indicated that only for newer vehicles was there a decrease in the number of points of insecurity at the end of the campaign period. Again, however, the security checks in the T.V. area showed that the advertising had no measurable effect on the percentage of completely secure vehicles, the percentage with a secure driver's door, or the percentage of vehicles fitted with an extra anti-theft device. Nor was there any indication from newer (or older) vehicles checked twice by the police in the TV area of an increase in vehicle security.

N.O.P. Survey

Fieldwork by N.O.P. Market Research Limited was carried out on behalf of C.O.I, before and after the campaign was run in both the press and poster and the T.V. areas (see N.O.P., 1979). Different samples of respondents at the two stages were asked about how they behaved with respect to securing their vehicle. In addition, a series of attitude statements (for example, 'A car is reasonably safe unlocked if it's only left for a minute') were read to respondents who were asked how far they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Those interviewed also indicated how likely they thought it was that their car would be stolen.

In brief, the N.O.P. surveys found no statistically significant improvements in claimed car security behaviour, perceived risk of car theft, or in any of the attitude measures taken singly. However, N.O.P. were prepared to conclude on the basis of the data for the complete set of attitude statements that, in both campaign regions, attitudes registered a 'very slight but fairly consistent shift' in a positive direction.

In conclusion, then, the findings of the evaluation reported in this chapter suggest that the 1979 autocrime campaign met with little success either in achieving improvements in car-locking behaviour or in reducing the number of recorded car thefts. This finding is in close agreement with the results of other victim-oriented campaigns on residential burglary and autocrime discussed by Riley and Mayhew (1980, Chapter 1) insofar as these have measured direct changes in behaviour on the part of victims. Following the arguments laid out there, it is suggested that the present campaign failed to produce discernible improvements in vehicle security for two main reasons. Firstly, security habits appear to reflect subjective perceptions of the overall risk of car theft and the risk faced in particular situations (for example, when a car is parked for a short time or in a seemingly 'secure' condition - cf. R.B.L. 1977). In this respect, the present campaign may not have improved security behaviour because it failed to produce

large enough changes in perceptions of risk either generally or in relation to specific parking situations, a point confirmed by the results of the N.O.P. survey. While the campaign pointed out that secure locking (particularly for 'older' cars without steering column locks) reduces the chance of having one's car stolen, the advertising was not designed to promote the idea that an individual motorist stood a greater chance of having his vehicle stolen after the campaign than before it if he left his security habits unchanged. Secondly, the advertising may have done little to overcome other beliefs supporting non-compliance with the campaign recommendations. Personal views about the ineffectiveness of car-locking may not be much altered simply by the expression of a contrary position: many motorists, for instance, feel that thieves will resort to duplicate keys even if a car is locked (cf. Chapter 8). Moreover, the advertising in this case may not have upset the feeling that the consequences of theft are often minimised by insurance protection, or more important perhaps, that the risk of autocrime is remote in any case - a view no doubt well-based on personal experience in most cases.