



Senator Chris Ellison
Minister for Justice and Customs

Senator Judith Troeth
**Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister
for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

J O I N T M E D I A R E L E A S E

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New guide to help stop farm crime

A new Australian Government guide will help farmers and other people living in rural and regional Australia in the battle against crime on farms, the Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator Chris Ellison and Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Judith Troeth, said today.

Launching *Crime Prevention for Farms* at Korumburra Saleyards in Gippsland, Victoria, Senator Ellison and Senator Troeth said people living in rural and regional communities were not immune from the threat of crime.

"However, there are many practical steps that can be taken so people can protect themselves from crime, regardless of their distance from town," Senator Ellison said. "The Government has funded this publication as part of its commitment to increase the safety and security of all Australians. Crime is also a drain on the rural economy which makes such a large contribution to the economic wellbeing of our country."

Senator Troeth said *Crime prevention for farms* provided tips for farmers on how to prevent crime on their properties, which included:

- Securing property boundaries by keeping fences and gates in good repair and ensuring gates were securely locked
- Maintaining accurate stock records and ensuring all animals were marked for easy and precise identification
- Reporting all incidents of farm crime to police.

"It is especially important that crime incidents are reported to police, as previous research has shown that many crimes are not reported and therefore no action can be taken by police," she said. "Farmers now have to risk manage crime in the same way they risk manage fluctuations in stock prices and the weather — and take steps to prevent crime affecting their business."

Since 2001, the Australian Government, through the National Crime Prevention Program, has provided almost \$500,000 to fund research into crime affecting Australian farms. The Australian Institute of Criminology has conducted three national farm crime surveys in conjunction with the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. These surveys have revealed that:

- an average of 16 per cent of broadacre and dairy farms experienced some type of crime over the three years of the surveys
- 39 per cent of farm crime occurred within sight of public roads, while 37 per cent occurred around the survey farm's residences and sheds
- between 2001 and 2003 the cost of farm crime was estimated at \$72 million per year, an average of \$2,500 for each farm where crime occurred, with crimes including livestock theft, theft of farm machinery, tools, materials or produce, theft of parts from farm vehicles or machinery, and damage to farm property (including arson)
- repeat victimisation was highest on broadacre and dairy farms in very remote areas (59 per cent), and/or on large farms (60 per cent), and that the rate of victimisation was higher than those recorded for break and enter and motor vehicle theft in the most recent Crime and Safety Survey.

Crime prevention for farms is available by calling 1800 708 777 or by visiting www.crimeprevention.gov.au.

Further information:

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