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## Crime and Caravan Parks

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Very little information is available regarding crime and caravan park populations. The National Crime Survey excludes caravans from the sample of households surveyed. Yet a considerable proportion of caravan park inhabitants are permanent residents. Caravan parks host families on holiday, retirees touring the country, tourists who camp in tents, permanent residents living in caravans or on-site units, as well as seasonal workers who utilise this type of temporary accommodation while working in a district. Therefore, there can be an eclectic group of Australians as well as overseas visitors in one closely confined space. Little is known about property crime victimisation within these groups.

### The Problem

Tourists, particularly overseas tourists, often carry considerable sums of money, and possess items such as cameras, mobile phones, portable CD players, cash and credit cards, that are of interest to thieves. Many retirees travel with their own four-wheel drive vehicle, caravan or mobile home, as well as a trailer and boat, all valued between \$150,000 and \$400,000. The transient nature of park residents, the fact that tourists carry "stealable goods", and the ease of access to caravans and mobile homes means that caravan parks can be an inviting target for thieves, vandals and other criminals. Furthermore, it is highly likely that many crimes in caravan parks go unreported due to the transient nature of victims.



### Research Goals

The aim of the study is to gather valuable information on the nature and extent of property crimes within caravan parks, such as theft, vandalism and arson. This information will be gathered via surveys and interviews with caravan park residents, park managers or owners, police and security guards. The relationship between victimisation and physical deterrence factors will also be examined. The research will also measure the extent and patterns of security practices undertaken by park owners/managers, and assess their effectiveness. The information gathered will provide a basis for future policing strategies and crime prevention initiatives for caravan parks. The study will be conducted in two regions in Western Australia, and two regions in New South Wales.

### Key Objectives

The research will address four key questions:

- How extensive is the problem?
- How does risk vary between caravan parks and between caravan sites/mobile homes within parks?
- Why does risk vary?
- How can park property crime offences be reduced?

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### Project Details

**Project Title:** "Crime and Caravan Parks"

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