

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Roads

Minister for Road Safety and the TAC

Minister for Fishing and Boating



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FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Friday, 22 March 2019

TECHNOLOGY TRIAL TO BUST NUMBER PLATE THEFT

The Andrews Labor Government is trialling new technology to crack down on number plate theft and cloning.

Minister for Roads Jaala Pulford was in Bundoora today to announce the start of new trials that will aim to improve vehicle identification, and combat number plate theft and misuse.

One technology being trialled is Radio Frequency Identification inside a sticker on a vehicle's front windscreen, which will act as a third number plate.

The sticker self-destructs when removed, enabling police to identify vehicles that are suspected to have a stolen or cloned number plate.

The second technology is Dedicated Short Range Communications, a new digital technology that can communicate with road infrastructure and could also be used to identify automated vehicles in the future.

Additional security features for number plates, like holographic patterns on driver's licences and passports, will also be tested.

New digital identification methods would make it harder for an offender to hide a vehicle's identity as the additional identifiers will not match a stolen or cloned number plate.

The trials will determine how the technologies operate in practice and how they will integrate with existing systems including Automatic Number Plate Recognition currently used by police.

In the 12-months to September 2018, Victoria Police recorded more than 19,000 incidents of number plate theft.

Stolen and cloned number plates are often used to hide a vehicle's identity when committing other crimes such as ram raids, petrol drive-offs and toll evasion.

The trials are a partnership between VicRoads, Department of Justice and Community Safety, Victoria Police and La Trobe University.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Roads Jaala Pulford

"We're testing new digital technology that will make it easier to identify vehicles with stolen or cloned number plates quicker and easier."

"We are proud to lead this Australia-first research and technology trial and know it will go a long way to help reduce number plate theft and cloning."