



VICTORIA POLICE

## MEDIA UNIT

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MEDIA RELEASE

23 January 2002

### POLICE AND BUSINESS SECTOR JOIN FORCES TO TARGET LAPTOP THEFT

An interactive computer program has been developed to combat the growing incidence of laptop computer theft in Victoria's business sector.

The Notebook Safety Watch Program is designed to increase awareness within the business sector of the rise in laptop computer theft. It is also aimed at teaching people how to prevent this type of crime from happening to them.

The program is a joint initiative of Victoria Police and Crime Check Education Systems and follows on from a similar program, launched in 1999, targeting laptop theft among students and within schools.

Inspector Wayne Rotherham from, the Victoria Police Community Consultation and Crime Prevention Unit said police were concerned about the number of laptop computer robberies, particularly in Melbourne's central business district.

Between 1 July 1999 - 30 June 2000, approximately 19,000 offences reported to police involved computers or computer equipment. These reports included theft and burglary related offences.

The majority of laptop computers stolen in Victoria, are taken in household or commercial burglaries or removed from vehicles.

Inspector Rotherham said this program was an important crime prevention tool, which encouraged all laptop computer users to understand the importance of undertaking safety precautions.

"This concept is another fine example of partnership policing and what can be achieved when police, the community and the corporate sector work together," he said

"People need to take precautions - they can't adopt the attitude that it won't happen to me."

The Notebook Safety Watch Program is a resource kit which includes an Interactive CD-Rom and a Safety Tools CD-Rom that provides safety messages for distribution through email and on an organisation's intranet.

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*The information contained in this report may be subject to variation once further details are ascertained.*



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The program addresses four key areas – loss prevention, personal safety, damage prevention and data protection.

Crime Check Education Systems managing director Frank Carlino said that despite the number of security devices available for protecting notebook computers the key factor in notebook loss is user carelessness.

"Notebooks are lost because the most basic security measures are ignored. Constant reinforcement of the basics is crucial to changing these behaviours and that is the aim of the Notebook Safety Watch Program," Mr Carlino said.

Elise Sullivan  
Senior Media Officer

- For further information or to organise an interview with either police or Frank Carlino please contact Elise Sullivan at the Victoria Police Media Unit on 9247 6894.

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