

MEDIA RELEASE

Aussies spending \$5.1 billion to protect homes from break-ins

New report reveals peace of mind comes at a cost in order to alleviate home security fears amongst Aussies

SYDNEY, 9 August 2019 - Australians are increasingly concerned about the security of their homes and have spent a staggering \$5.1 billion on home security measures over the last five years, according to new research released today by Choosi.

The *Choosi Home Fears Report* is the tenth instalment in a national research series that explores the key barriers and drivers behind financial and social behaviours in today's modern society. This chapter explores the concerns around home security and the measures Australians are taking to keep their humble abodes safe and sound.

The research reveals that seven in 10 (70.4%) worry about a potential break-in at their home and a similar proportion (70.1%) are concerned about the security of their home and possessions. These worries have increased over recent years with close to two-thirds (64.7%) agreeing so, the rise in concern is attributed primarily to becoming more cautious with age (59.1%) and to crime rates increasing in neighbourhoods (45.9%).

To help alleviate these fears, 64.9 per cent have physical barriers in place, such as lock and key and security screens.

“Our research shows that Aussies are understandably concerned about the security of their homes and possessions,” said Simon Hovell, Chief Marketing Officer at Greenstone and Choosi spokesperson. “To counter their anxieties, most home owners are already undertaking tried-and-true safety measures like installing security screens and ensuring the house is locked before going out.

“With Australia Post estimating one in 10 items will be bought online by 2020, the theft of mail and packages from people's doorsteps is expected to rise, which will allude to Australians putting more measures in place to protect their belongings. In the future, we are likely to see tech innovations like smart doorbells becoming more mainstream and providing greater peace of mind for home owners.”

Overall neighbourhood safety is also top of mind for many, just under half (46.5%) say reports of break-ins or other crime (48.1%) in or around their area would be enough to make them consider a move.

Despite these worries, the majority of Aussies don't research local crime statistics before moving into a new property, and over half (52.4%) do not have an action plan in place should a break-in occur at their home.

“Many Australians are taking risks with their home security by increasing the wealth inside their homes throughout the year, without also spending money to properly protect their property and possessions,” said, Natasha Morgan, founder and CEO of My Home Watch. “From simple lock and key through to more technologically-advanced systems, there are a variety of ways Aussies can protect themselves and their homes from break-ins.”

Ms Morgan also suggested that burglars might not go for the big-ticket items people expect if they do make it inside.

“Thieves generally want small items they can carry in luggage stolen from your home. Most interesting of all to criminals is the paperwork sitting on your study desk and any files inside – that’s valuable information they can sell,” continued Ms. Morgan. “Even with just a name and address they can clone a person’s identity and sell their credit to the highest bidder, causing the victim issues for months or even years to come.”

Whilst home protection measures may help to provide the security many are after, some are also turning to insurance. Close to two-thirds (65.0%) have a contents insurance policy for their possessions with the vast majority (82.2%) of those insured saying they have a policy in place to protect their possessions in the event of damage or theft, while more than three in five (61.2%) say it’s the peace of mind being insured provides.

Choosi’s top tips for protecting your home:

- Use a service you can trust to take care of your property if you’re going away on a holiday
- Ask neighbours, family or friends to collect all mail and deliveries before you go away
- Hide or remove valuable possessions from easy sight
- Set up a timer to turn lights on and off in your home to make it look occupied when you’re away
- Ask your trusted neighbour to keep a look out for any disturbances while you’re away
- Avoid posting on social media while you’re on holiday
- Never leave boxes from newly purchased items on the footpath for everyone to see
- Trim your bushes and trees regularly so they don’t create hiding spots for thieves

Supporting data is available on the Choosi website:
<https://www.choosi.com.au/blog/lifestyle/home-fears-report>

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About Choosi

Choosi provides information to help customers compare, choose and apply for a range of insurance products online and over the phone. Choosi’s free comparison service lets you compare the benefits and prices of a range of popular insurance products, so you can confidently choose cover that suits your needs, your budget and lifestyle.

About the *Choosi Home Fears Report*

In order to explore the fears around home security held by Australian residents, CoreData surveyed 1,000 typical Australians across the nation in October 2018.

The sample collection employed soft quotas to monitor representativeness of the Australian population. Hard quotas by state were also engaged to ensure all the main states were represented with sufficiently robust samples (NSW = 200, VIC = 200, QLD = 200, WA = 200, Remaining states/territories = 200).