

## 3 ways to avoid your vehicle being car-jammed

South Africa has a serious car hijacking problem as illustrated by South Africa's crime statistics that reported a total of 16 325 cars were carjacked between 2017 and 2018 - a minimal decline from the 16 717 reported car theft incidents in 2016.

If vehicle crime was considered a macro crime trend, then its growing micro offshoot would be remote jamming, also known as car-jamming. It is the practice where criminals use a signal-jamming device to prevent car central locking and alarm systems from being activated, leaving a vehicle vulnerable to theft and vandalism.

Marius Steyn, Underwriting Manager at Santam says: "Car-jamming continues to be an escalating safety concern for many South Africans. Motorists often walk away from their cars while pressing their remote without ensuring that their vehicles are physically locked.

"Because of this behaviour, criminals are provided the opportunity to commit a crime like car-jamming.

"The lesson is to consistently check if cars are locked after pressing their remotes before walking away. 'Stash it, don't flash it' is always the best principle – never leave valuables visible to passers-by in vehicles, but rather lock it away."

Steyn shares tips on how avoid falling victim to car-jamming:

### **1. Better safe than sorry**

When leaving your parked vehicle, always double check that your vehicle is locked by testing the doors after pressing the immobilizer button.

### **2. Be prepared**

Make sure you assess all immobiliser devices and security systems on a regular basis. If there are any faults, contact an authorised service provider to fix or replace the faulty system with a recommended device.

### **3. Mind your storage**

Always store personal items such as sunglasses, cell phones and even groceries in a locked boot or glove compartment and not where they are visible. This reduces the temptation to steal.

The rise in car-jamming incidents also signals a caution to policyholders to not only take greater care when they park but to be mindful of their car insurance conditions when it comes to car-jamming.