MEDIA RELEASE

Michael Gunner
SHADOW MINISTER FOR POLICE, FIRE
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CLP CUTTING POLICE BEATS INSTEAD OF CRIME

Shadow Minister for Police, Michael Gunner, today slammed the CLP Government for closing down Police Beats in Casuarina Square and Nightcliff.

“Police Beats should not be cut. They put police in the middle of the community and make people feel safer,” Mr Gunner said.

“People don’t feel safe because violent crime is at record high levels and closing police beats will only make it worse.

“Police Beats mean police can respond to crime as it happens, not after it occurs when the damage is already done.”

Mr Gunner said the closure of the Police Beats was not outlined in the budget but Adam Giles let the cat out of the bag when he told parliament last week that “We are closing two police beats in Nightcliff and Casuarina”.

“The Police Beat in Casuarina Square is extremely popular with shoppers. It was opened by Labor in 2008 and a survey of retailers undertaken by Casuarina Shopping Centre found 75 percent of respondents agreed it had created a safer environment for customers,” Mr Gunner said.

“The Casuarina Police Beat cut crime. In its first six months incidents at Casuarina dropped by 24 percent and alcohol related incidents were cut in half.

“In contrast the Government’s own latest crime statistics show that violent crime across Darwin has increased by 11 percent in the last 12 months with alcohol related assaults up 15 percent and sexual assaults up by 12 percent.

“Nightcliff is also a crime and anti-social behaviour hot spot and the Police Beat is popular with traders and locals. Closing it is not only wrong but yet another broken promise.

“The CLP promised to upgrade the Nightcliff police station to 24 hours a day but instead they are downgrading it to 0 hours a day.

“The $2 million committed to upgrade Nightcliff police station was not just a promise. According to the CLP it was a “special contract with the people of Nightcliff”.”
Mr Gunner said in the document titled “Our special pledge to You” the CLP pledged to cut crime by 10 percent each year by upgrading the police station. Instead crime went up and they closed the police station.

"The CLPs’ broken promises in the bush are well documented. Their broken promises in the heart of Darwin’s suburbs should also not be forgotten or forgiven."

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