House-breaks have continued to drop across the Territory according to the latest Quarterly Crime and Justice Statistics released today.

The September Quarter 2003 Crime and Justice Statistics reveal house break-ins across the Territory have dropped by 25% over the past 12 months compared to the previous 12 months.

Over the same period general property offences have fallen by 21% and offences against the person have remained stable.

Justice Minister Dr Peter Toyne said the continued drops in property crime and house break-ins are significant and the good results of concerted policing and crime prevention efforts.

“The 25% drop in housebreaks over the past 12 months is a significant fall and translates to 928 less offences and a lot less victims.”

"We will work hard to build on this success and the extra police on the ground in the near future, and the further round of crime prevention projects will add to our crime fighting resources."

“In addition we are increasing efforts on addressing rates of offences against the person.”

“However while sexual assaults are stable, the Government is concerned about quarter rises in these types of crime.”

“A new taskforce announced today will focus efforts on preventing sexual assaults through the development of a whole-of-government prevention plan.”

**Year on Year data results:**

Year on year data which provides comparable information on how crime is tracking from one 12 month period to the next, during the 12 months to the end of September 03 compared to the previous 12 months:

- House break-ins fell by 25% or 928 offences
- Break-ins to commercial premises fell by 22% or 563 offences
- Motor vehicle theft and related offences fell by 23% or 695 offences
- Assaults recorded no appreciable change
- Sexual assault increased by 1% or 2 offences
Quarter on Quarter comparisons for the total number of offences report:

- a total of 6075 offences in the September 03 quarter (1049 against the person and 5026 property offences)
  - a drop of 663 offences against the previous quarter (6738 offences),
  - a drop of 1322 on the same quarter last year (7397 offences: 990 against the person and 6407 property offences)
  - and a fall of 2583 offences on the same time in 2001 (1031 offences against the person and 7627 property offences) (refer pg 13 of the report)

- a total of 1049 offences against the person in the September 03 quarter, up 31 offences against the previous quarter (1018 offences against the person), and up 59 offences on the same time last year (990 offences against the person) (pg13)

- a total of 5026 property offences in the September 03 quarter, down by 694 offences, against the previous quarter (5720 property offences), and down 1381 offences on the same time last year (6407 property offences) (pg13)

Quarter on quarter comparisons for general offences show:

The September quarter 2003 data for house break-ins recorded a 14% drop (or 91 offences) compared to the previous quarter and a fall of 11% (66 offences) from the same quarter last year.

Break-ins to commercial premises also recorded falls, dropping by 21% (or 88 offences) over the September quarter compared to the previous quarter and fell by 33% (or 156 offences) from the same quarter last year.

The number of recorded assaults across the Territory increased by 1% or 12 offences on the previous quarter and increased by 5% or 41 offences from the same time last year.

Sexual assaults increased by 48% or 32 offences over the September quarter and increased by 53% or 34 offences from the same quarter last year.

Trends:

Territory wide the current level of house break-ins is at a two-year low and recording a downward trend over the past 12 months.

Dr Toyne said the downward trend and continuous drops in house break-ins, the 25% drop over the past 12 months, and the levels now down to a two year low, are welcome signs of success in tackling house break-ins across the Territory.

"The trend for assaults over the past 12 months is downward and sexual assaults have remained stable with some quarter increases, the numbers have remained relatively low, but it is an area of crime that the Government continues to focus efforts on.”
The underlying average identifies major changes in crime levels and reports:

- The current underlying average of house break-ins across the Territory at 198 offences per month is the lowest in two years and over the past 12 months the trend is downward.

- In Darwin the current underlying average of house break-ins at 124 offences per month is the lowest in two years and over the past 12 months the trend has been stable

- In Palmerston the current underlying average of house break-ins at 47 per month is the lowest in two years, and over the past 12 months the trend has been stable

- In Katherine the current underlying average of house break-ins at 7 per month is at the upper end of a range between 4 to 8 per month over the past 9 quarters, and over the past 12 months the trend has been stable

- In Tennant Creek the current underlying average of house break-ins at 8 per month is at the lower end of a range between 6 to 11 offences per month, but the trend over the past 12 months has been stable

- In Alice Springs the current underlying average of house break-ins at 18 offences is the lowest in two years and over the past 12 months the trend has been stable

- In Nhulunbuy the current underlying average of house break-ins has ranged between 1 and 2 offences per month and over the past 12 months there was a downward trend.

The September quarter figures are encouraging with continued drops in property crime some and the Government will continue the efforts on all fronts – law enforcement and crime prevention – to continue to bring these levels down.

"Alongside impending extra police resources numerous crime prevention initiatives are already up and running and work is starting on targeted rehabilitation programs in our jails to prevent re-offending."

He said Government initiatives that will continue to impact on reducing crime include:

- $75 million boost to police resources, the largest ever injection of extra funds into police

- 200 extra police on the beat by 2006

- $5 million Itinerants Strategy to address anti-social behaviour

- an annual $400,000 annual crime prevention grants scheme
- Regional Crime Prevention Councils
- new targeted aggravated property offences
- increased resources to target re-offending

**NOTE:** The Crime and Justice Statistics are a measure of recorded crime across the Territory.

- The data is collected from the Police Real-time On-line Management Information System and the NT Integrated Justice Information System.
- Nationally it is recognised that there are varying levels of un-reported crime in our community but that recorded crime is the best available measure of changes in the level of crime in a community.

September Quarter 2003 Crime and Justice Statistics and regional fact sheets are available online at [www.crimeprevention.nt.gov.au](http://www.crimeprevention.nt.gov.au).