1 May 2007

*** STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 11AM TUESDAY 1 MAY 2007 ***

RECORD BUDGET TO MAKE TERRITORY COMMUNITY SAFER

Budget 2007 will see $226 million provided to Police, Fire and Emergency Services to make the Territory a safer place.

“Since 2001, the Budget has increased by 65%,” Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, Dr Chris Burns said.

“The Territory has a unique set of policing challenges – that is why we have the highest number of police per capita in Australia.”

NEW POLICE STATION FOR NORTHERN SUBURBS

The new Casuarina Police Station will be built at a cost of $4.8 million in 2007-08.

This new Police Station will provide better facilities to support police in their efforts to tackle crime in the community.

O’SULLIVAN REPORT FUNDING

“The O’Sullivan Report has been the basis of a major strengthening of Territory Police,” said the Minister.

“Budget 2007 provides $31 million to continue the initiatives of the O’Sullivan Report,” he said.

POLICE FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES ACROSS THE TERRITORY

Budget 2007 supports Police, Fire and Emergency services across the Territory with:

- $147 million for the Darwin region;
- $35.7 million for the Alice Springs region;
- $16.8 million for the Katherine region;
- $12 million for Palmerston and the Litchfield region;
- $6.8 million for the Barkly region;
- $7.6 million for the Top End Rural area; and
- $6 million for the East Arnhem region
TRACKING CRIMINALS NATIONALLY

$3.1 million is provided in 2007-08 and $750 000 in 2008-09 to implement the Minimum Nationwide Person Profile project to help track criminals nationally.

EQUIPMENT

Budget 2007 provides $6.67 million for new and replacement equipment for the Police, Fire and Emergency services.

$500 000 is provided for the Fire and Rescue Service’s Major Fire Appliance program that sees old tankers replaced in Elliott and Timber Creek.

PROTECTING TERRITORY CHILDREN

Budget 2007 provides $35.8 million for Family and Community Services to provide services investigating abuse and supporting abused children.

BREAKING THE CRIME CYCLE

“Fighting crime is a key priority and preventing crime is just as important,” said Dr Burns.

“In Budget 2007 the Government will fund a strengthened crime prevention effort,” he said.

“The Office of Alcohol Policy, the Office of Crime Prevention and the Community Harmony Program are now combined to provide a key focus on community safety in each region.

“Budget 2007 will provide $2.4 million for this renewed crime prevention program. $110 000 will be provided for Neighbourhood Watch,” Dr Burns said.

BREAKING THE OFFENDING CYCLE

46% of released prisoners reoffend. This crime will be tackled through strengthened community corrections.

This year an additional $1.5 million will support 15 extra staff to strictly monitor prisoners released on orders and those released on bail.

TACKLING THE ABUSE OF ALCOHOL

Alcohol abuse is the cause of much crime and violence in the Territory.

“That’s why the Government through Budget 2007 is tackling alcohol abuse. Specifically:

- $200 000 for Alcohol Courts in Darwin and Alice Springs; and
- $500 000 to continue to operate a Licensing Commission.
TACKLING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Government is cracking down on antisocial behaviour. Budget 2007 funds:

- $1.8 million for the Juvenile Diversionary Program;
- $633 000 for the community patrol service in Darwin; and
- $22.7 million for treatment places for people with alcohol and other drug problems.

TAKING AWAY THE PROFITS OF CRIME

Budget 2007 provides additional funding of $1.3 million for taking away the profits of crime under the Criminal Property Forfeiture Act.

LIGHTING TERRITORY PARKS AND LANEWAYS

The Territory Government will provide Councils with $250 000 for lighting laneways in Tennant Creek, Karama and Nakara. This is in addition to the $460 000 provided over the last two years.

PROTECTING TERRITORY WORKERS

Budget 2007 will provide $7.3 million to the Worksafe NT office, which now includes the Electrical Safety Unit.

“Budget 2007 acts across the board to protect Territorians. It tackles crime, the causes of crime, violence, abuse of alcohol, the abuse of children and it protects Territory workers.

“It is a comprehensive budget that will make the Territory a safer place to live today and into the future,” Dr Burns said.

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** Please note this press release covers portfolios under the jurisdiction of other Ministers. Please direct inquiries as appropriate. Eg, for inquiries relating to Community Corrections, contact the office of the Minister for Justice, Syd Stirling. **