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CRIME STILL TOO HIGH

After eight years in office, the Labor Government’s lacklustre response to increasing crime across the Northern Territory continues to fail dismally.

Opposition Leader Terry Mills said the latest quarterly statistics from the Justice Department show that crime in all categories remains at disturbingly high levels – and point to a Government that has run out of ideas on how to reduce the crime rate across the Northern Territory.

“Notwithstanding population increases in the Capital, it’s truly breathtaking that there were 1477 assaults in Darwin in 2008,” Mr Mills said.

“Add to this the 353 assaults in Palmerston, and you have a picture of a Government that is increasingly unable to tackle the epidemic of violence in the Top End.

“The Labor Government blames the introduction of its Crime Reduction Strategy in 2004 on the increase in recorded assaults.

“If that’s the case, why did assaults decline in Palmerston and only narrowly increase in Darwin during 2005?

“And it’s not only violent crimes that remained at troublingly high levels in 2008.

“While there was a slight decline in the number of house break-ins in Darwin last year, this was more than off-set by significant increases in commercial break-ins and motor vehicle thefts.

“This shows that the crooks who would otherwise be breaking into homes, have now turned their attention to businesses and cars.

“Territory wide, the minor decline in violent crime fails to mask the appalling assault statistics that the Government has consistently shown it is unable to address.
“With a population of just over 200,000, it’s almost beyond belief that there were 5285 assaults in the Territory last year.

“There were increases in house break-ins, commercial break-ins and motor vehicle thefts in 2008.

“A Country Liberals’ Government would employ more police and, importantly, get them involved in active policing and not stuck in silos where their relationship with the wider police community is limited.

“As well, we’d establish two boot camps for young offenders to get them back on the rails, ensure violent offenders cop sentences that match the crime and ensure anybody picked up for public drunkenness three times in six months undergoes compulsory rehabilitation.

“This program of responsible reforms is in stark contrast to the Labor Government which, after eight years, has given Territorians no action and no results.”

Further comment: Terry Mills 0418 833 594