Willem Westra van Holthe
Member for Katherine
Media Release

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KATHERINE CRIME RATES

A 40% increase in the rate of violent assault and the incidence of property damage in the March Quarter 2009 crime statistics for Katherine highlights the Henderson Government is losing the battle in key areas of law and order.

“The rate of violent assault and property damage in Katherine are already at unacceptably high levels,” says Willem Westra van Holthe, Member for Katherine.

“A 40% increase in the number of each these crimes between the March Quarter of 2008 and the March Quarter of 2009 should at last spur the Labor Government into decisive action.

“Violent assault often has a devastating impact upon the victim’s physical and emotional health and reducing the incidence of assault must be a priority.

“The Country Liberal’s have long argued for a concerted approach to counter the insidious increase in the rate of violent assault across the Territory during the past decade.

“Only a combination of more police on the beat, tougher sentences for offenders and a real boot camp for youth at risk will bring down the rate of assault in the Territory.

“The Henderson Government should adopt the Country Liberal’s policy of minimum sentences for repeat assault offenders.

“The Labor Government would also be wise to drop its plan for a new $300 million prison near Darwin and put in place a prison farm near Katherine.

“Our current justice system is a merry-go-round between the police cells, the courts and the Territory’s prisons.

“We need to break the cycle that results in so many repeat offenders. That will only be achieved by a concerted effort that tackles the causes of crime.

“A bigger prison won’t help rehabilitate prisoners, a stint a hard work on a prison farm combined with drug and alcohol rehabilitation and some basic education will.“

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