PAUL HENDERSON
Chief Minister
Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

DELIA LAWRIE
Minister for Justice and Attorney-General

GERRY MCCARTHY
Minister for Correctional Services

5 May 2009

Record Investment To Make Our Streets Safer

The Territory Government will invest a record $279 million in police, fire and emergency services as part of Budget 2009 to make our streets safer.

Chief Minister and Police Minister Paul Henderson today said the $279 million invested as part of Budget 2009 represented a 104% increase in spending since 2001.

“Budget 2009 continues to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour with more police on the beat,” Mr Henderson said.

“More spending on corrections, programs and focusing on rehabilitation and reintegration into the community is an integral part of Budget 2009.”

SAFER STREETS WITH MORE POLICE

“Budget 2009 provides 54 more police and brings the total number of additional police positions since 2001 to 339,” Mr Henderson said.

“The $9.3 million Safer Streets initiative continues in Budget 2009 with an additional $5.1 million to deliver a further 25 police officers dedicated to patrolling suburban streets.

“Safer Streets also provides 10 additional police auxiliaries to support frontline police in the communications centre.

“The Northern Territory Government continues to make Territory streets even safer with more police on the beat.”
POLICE STATIONS AND POLICE BEAT

Mr Henderson said Budget 2009 provides $6 million for a major upgrade of the Alice Springs police station.

“We will invest $2 million towards converting the Numbulwar Police Post to a police station, which will include housing to maintain a permanent police presence,” Mr Henderson said.

“The Police Beat initiative continues with $2.5 million in Budget 2009 for Police Beats in shopping precincts across the Territory.”

BETTER RESOURCES FOR POLICE

The $13 million upgrade of the police digital radio communications system, to help police respond rapidly and more effectively to keep our community safer, continues with Budget 2009 providing $7.26 million for this initiative.

Budget 2009 also provides $3.35 million for closed circuit television monitoring in the greater Darwin area and $524,000 to enhance the capacity of the forensic science branch.

NEW FIRE STATION AND MORE FIREFIGHTERS

Mr Henderson said Budget 2009 commits $12.3 million towards a new fire station to be built at Berrimah in 2011-12 to support our growing population and port facility.

Budget 2009 also provides $3.5 million over two years to boost the capacity of NT Fire and Rescue Service with:

- 11 extra fire fighters in Darwin;
- 9 extra fire fighters in Alice Springs.

Budget 2009 also includes an extra $200,000 per year to fast-track the upgrade and replacement of fire and rescue trucks and $280,000 for additional training.

BOOSTING COURTS AND PROSECUTIONS

Attorney-General Minister Delia Lawrie said Budget 2009 provides a record $3.3 million funding boost to courts and prosecutions services, including:

- $2.3 million for additional magistrates, court security resources and court support staff;
- $1.03 million for extra resources for public prosecutions and witness assistance staff to increase the support provided to witnesses in remote and regional areas.

“The Territory Government will also direct $400,000 to upgrade and install new video conferencing facilities, with witness box recording capability to protect vulnerable witnesses,” Ms Lawrie said.
“In addition, Budget 2009 provides $320,000 for minor upgrades to courts across the Territory.”

NEW ERA IN CORRECTIONS

Corrections Minister Gerry McCarthy said Budget 2009 delivers $21 million for headworks for the new 1000-bed Doug Owston Correctional Facility.

To manage prisoner numbers in the meantime, $1.4 million will provide short and medium term accommodation for an additional 240 prisoners in Darwin and Alice Springs, with an additional $2.29 million for associated operational costs.

“Budget 2009 also commits $2 million to establish a prisoner work camp in the Barkly region to provide prisoners with life skills and real work experience,” Mr McCarthy said.

“The Territory Government continues to focus on improving rehabilitation and reintegration outcomes to break the cycle of crime, with Budget 2009 providing $1 million for expanded education courses and training delivery in correctional centres.”

CLOSING THE GAP

Budget 2009 includes Closing the Gap funding for community safety and justice initiatives, including:

• $6.2 million to expand the Child Abuse Taskforce, with additional staff to increase investigative activities in remote communities in conjunction with the Department of Health and Families;
• $2.3 million for extra police resources in remote areas;
• $2.11 million to support offender rehabilitation programs;
• $1.92 million for alcohol management and treatment initiatives; and
• $1.89 million for courts, corrections officers and witness assistance services.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REPORTING

The reporting of serious physical harm arising from domestic violence is mandatory in the Territory.

$15 million will be provided over three years from 2009-10 to support the delivery of crisis accommodation, counselling services, public education and legal support for women and families threatened by or exposed to domestic violence.

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