**MEDIA RELEASE**

**GROG BANS HAVEN’T WORKED**

Terry Mills MLA  
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The belated release of the September quarter crime statistics shows Labor is losing the war against violent assaults and property crime. Opposition Leader, Terry Mills, said the latest Justice Department figures, released today, show crime is out of control, and point to a Government clutching at straws to find a solution.

"It's no wonder Labor refused to release these figures because they paint a damning picture of the Government’s failure to reduce crime," Mr Mills said.

The assault figures make stark reading, with 562 more assaults across the Territory in the 12 months to 2010 than in the previous year. The 6678 assaults in the year to September meant, on average, there were more than 18 serious assaults in the Territory every day.

Since 2005, violent assaults in the Territory have increased by 70%.

House break-ins are up by 30% and motor vehicle theft by 14%. Commercial break-ins fell marginally in the 12 months to September, but increased by 58% since September 2005. The decline in sexual assaults is welcome.

In Darwin there were 1609 assaults, up by 10% on the previous year and 927 house break-ins, a 28% increase.

Once again Alice Springs recorded more assaults than Darwin – an appalling statistic given the town is approximately a third the size. There were 1688 assaults in the year to September – a 25% increase and 385 house break-ins, an 80% increase.

The increase in assaults in Alice Springs challenges the Government’s claim that its alcohol bans will reduce violent crime. Despite grog restrictions in Katherine and Tennant Creek, violent assaults have increased substantially over the past few years. The slight reduction in Katherine in the year to September comes off an appallingly high base.

Instead of Territory-wide grog restrictions, the Government should be ratcheting up rehabilitation services and focusing on punishing violent offenders through tougher sentencing.

"If the Government could show categorically their alcohol bans worked, the Country Liberals would support them. Instead, it’s fixated on implementing Territory wide bans that have been in place in three major centres for years, while violent crime has continued to rise."

Further comment: Terry Mills 0418 833 594