FEAR OF ASSAULT ‘A MAJOR PROBLEM’
John Elferink MLA

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More Territorians fear being physically assaulted in their neighbourhood than residents in other jurisdictions, according to a Federal Government report.

Shadow Justice Minister, John Elferink, said the latest Report on Government Services shows the high levels of violent crime across the Territory have sapped public confidence and increased community fear.

The report shows the proportion of people who consider physical assault in public a ‘major problem’ or ‘somewhat of a problem’ in their neighbourhood is higher in the Territory than other jurisdictions.

Under the ‘Estimated Victims’ reporting category, the Territory led the nation in assaults and sexual assault, homicide, property crime, break-ins and attempted break-ins and motor vehicle theft.

The Territory also has the highest rates of recidivism in the country, 47.9% of prisoners released in 2007-08 back in jail within two years, compared to 37.6% nationally.

“Territorians have a right to go about their business without fearing physical assault,” Mr Elferink said.

“The lack of rehabilitation services in our prisons contributes to the high return rate of inmates and leaves the community exposed to the activities of violent criminals.”

The report also identified on-going failures within the education system with the country’s lowest secondary age retention rates and a decline in the number of Indigenous full time students between 2008 and 2009.

The average public housing turnaround time increased substantially in 2009-10, despite the Minister pledging empty public housing would be re-occupied within three weeks.

Just 34% of new public housing allocations to those in greatest need took place under three months.

“The Report on Government Services showcases the failure of Labor to provide Territorians with adequate levels of safety and security,” Mr Elferink said.

“After a decade in office, it’s disappointing to see Labor continues to fail to deliver.”

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