The Country Liberals have provided the definitive evidence today that Chief Minister Paul Henderson’s has misled readers in Central Australia about assault figures in Alice Springs Opposition Leader Terry Mills says.

Paul Henderson claims that the 85% increase in assaults in Alice Springs is:

‘entirely false and without base in truth’

‘The Henderson Government’s own Justice Department figures show most recently, to the end of the March quarter 2010, there were 1648 crimes against people in Alice Springs, 1595 of which were assaults and sexual assaults.’ Mr Mills said

‘In the equivalent period to March 2004 there were 869 crimes against people, of which 843 were assaults and sexual assaults.

‘The Chief Minsters maths is deeply suspect if he can’t see an 85% increase between 2004 and 2010.

‘In regards to the Territory as a whole, the equivalent figures between 2004 and 2010 are a 60% increase in violent crimes.

‘Having a public dummy spit about being caught out on crime figures doesn’t solve the problem.

‘The real response is to boost Alice Springs Police numbers and give them the power to respond quickly to crime through monitoring CCTV’s and answering the phones locally.”

The Chief Minister’s woeful grasp of the facts regarding violent crime mirrors his lack of knowledge regarding tourist visitor numbers to Alice Springs.

When asked to explain why he won’t be imposing the same alcohol sales restrictions in Darwin as he does in Alice Springs the Chief Minister said - 'Well I think Darwin is a bit different in as much as we are a capital city and a capital city that caters for thousands of tourists, not hundreds of tourists.’ (ABC Darwin breakfast program)

In effect the Chief Minister was claiming the tourism industry in Alice Springs is of limited importance to the local economy despite the fact 386,000 tourists visited Alice Springs in 2009.

‘The October 9th by-election offers the voters of Araluen the chance to let Paul Henderson know that neglecting the people of Alice Springs won’t be rewarded,” says Terry Mills.

Further comment : Terry Mills 0418 833 595