The work of the Katherine Region Harmony Group was praised today by Community Development Minister John Ah Kit as he announced a $50,000 boost to providing an additional Daytime Foot Patrol for Katherine.

"There is a social crisis here in the Northern Territory, and in recognition of this the Martin Government is extending the Itinerant’s project programs to all major centres in the Territory—including Katherine. We are committed to reducing the damage caused by anti-social behaviour throughout the Territory.

"The Katherine Region Harmony Group has been identified as the coordinating body for extending the Itinerants Strategy into Katherine. It is a community-driven focus for working out long term solutions for problems that have been getting worse for many years.

"In recognition of the success of the Kalano Day Foot Patrols, we are allocating extra resources to this effort," said Mr Ah Kit.

In 2003-04 $600,000 has been allocated to the Itinerants Strategy in Katherine. It includes provision for:

- Elders visitation program
- a Centrepay guarantee fund for return to home programs
- capital works for basic shelter
- specialist intervention programs for alcohol and mental health issues
- daytime diversionary facility
- local program coordinator.

"No one pretends that solving anti-social behaviour will be a simple job—nor will it be solved overnight. However I am really happy to see how the Harmony Group—linking as it does so many different groups in Katherine—is strongly dedicated to making a difference. It is good to see their willingness to address social, economic and physical needs of the Katherine region.

"Interviews for the Katherine Regional Project Co-ordinator position, funded by the Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs, will be held next week, with an appointment in October," said Mr Ah Kit.

"The position will work closely with the Katherine Region Harmony Group who will continue to provide strategic direction for the Katherine Community through introducing programs and projects aimed at both social intervention and situation prevention."