Palmerston has recorded a 14% drop in house break-ins over the past 12 months alongside a 25% Territory wide drop in house break-ins over the same period according to the December quarter 2003 NT Quarterly Crime and Justice Statistics released today.

Minister for Justice Dr Peter Toyne said the large drops in house break-ins over the past 12 months were significant and welcome signs of improvement.

“The 14% drop in house break-ins in Palmerston translates to 86 less offences over the past 12 months.”

“These drops are welcome news for the community and a reinforcement of the good work of our police and crime prevention initiatives on the ground.”

"We will work hard to build on this success and the extra police on the ground in the near future, and the further round of crime prevention projects will add to our crime fighting resources."

“Break-ins to commercial premises in the Palmerston area continues to be of concern but targeted police initiatives expect to make an impact on reducing these levels.”

An important part of these overall positive results is the bolstering of police resources under the $75 million Building Our Police Force Plan.

There are more police in operational duties across the Territory.

Between August 2003 and the end of February 2004 the number of operational officers ranked constable and above has increased by over 40 and the number of Aboriginal Community Police Officers has increased by 11.

**Year on Year data results:**

Year on year data provides comparable information on how crime is tracking from one 12-month period to the next, reports during the 12 months to the end of December 03 compared to the previous 12 months:

- House break-ins fell by 14% or 86 offences
- Break-ins to commercial premises increased by 5% or 7 offences
- Motor vehicle theft and related offences fell by 28% or 79 offences
- Assaults increased by 4% or 12 offences
Quarter on quarter comparisons for the total number of offences report:

- a total of 778 offences were recorded by police in the September 03 quarter (99 against the person and 679 property offences)
  – an increase of 102 offences on the previous quarter (81 offences against the person and 595 property offences)
  – and a fall of 296 offences on the same time in last year (104 offences against the person and 970 property offences)

- a total of 99 offences against the person, were recorded by police in the December 03 quarter, up 18 offences against the previous quarter (81 offences against the person), and down 5 offences on the same time last year (104 offences against the person)

- a total of 679 property offences were recorded by police in the December 03 quarter, up 84 offences, against the previous quarter (595 property offences), and down 291 offences on the same time last year (970 property offences)

Quarter on Quarter comparisons for general offences show:

The December quarter 2003 data for break-ins to commercial premises recorded a 14% drop (or 5 offences) compared to the previous quarter, and a drop of 50% (or 32 offences) from the same quarter last year.

Break-ins to homes recorded an increase of 18 offences or 17% over the December quarter compared to the previous quarter, but a decrease of 50 offences or 29% from the same quarter last year.

The number of recorded assaults in Palmerston increased by 24% or 16 offences on the previous quarter, and decreased by 3 offences or 4% from the same time last year.

Trends:

The trends in house and commercial break-ins in the Palmerston region have remained stable over the past 12 months.

The underlying average level of commercial break-ins at 11 per month is at the lower end of a range of between 9 to 19 offences per month for the past two years.

The current underlying average level for house break-ins at 38 offences per month is at the lower end of the range between 38 and 70.

The trend for assaults has remained stable over the past 12 months.

Dr Toyne said the December quarter figures are encouraging with continued drops in property crime, particularly house break-ins, and the Government will continue the efforts on all fronts – law enforcement and crime prevention – to continue to bring these levels down.

NOTE: The preceding statistics are a measure of recorded crime across the Territory.
The data is collected from the Police Real-time On-line Management Information System.

Nationally it is recognised that there are varying levels of un-reported crime in our community but that recorded crime is the best available measure of changes in the level of crime in a community.

December Quarter 2003 Crime and Justice Statistics and Regional Fact Sheets are available online at www.crimeprevention.nt.gov.au