The Territory’s first ever comprehensive crime and justice statistics were released by Minister for Justice, Dr Peter Toyne today exposing the mandatory sentencing regime as a failure.

Dr Toyne said the NT Quarterly Crime and Justice Statistics reinforced the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures of May this year that reported an almost 20% rise in property crime in the last year of the CLP Government and its mandatory sentencing regime.

"Despite the ABS figures, the CLP Opposition has continued to peddle the mandatory sentencing lie and continued to deceive Territorians.

"Territorians can now peel away the rhetoric to clearly see the true record of crime over the period of mandatory sentencing.

"Without a doubt the figures show the regime to have been totally ineffective with no drop in crime even over an extended period, but rather a clear and striking increase in break-ins.

"Following the change of Government at the end of August last year, the repeal of Mandatory sentencing for property crime and introduction of aggravated property offences we are now reaping some reward from a targeted and holistic approach to crime.

"We knew mandatory sentencing was a simplistic, ‘one shot in the locker’ approach that did not work.

"We are tackling crime on all fronts from a whole-of-government focus, targeted crime prevention programs, increased police support and targeted policing strategies, and increased monetary support to community-led crime prevention programs," he said.

"At the sentencing end, the introduction of aggravated property offences reflects the principle that serious crime means serious time in a more sophisticated and targeted manner than the simplistic mandatory sentencing system.

The new regime includes new offences of home invasion, invasion of business premises, and a new sentencing regime for adults convicted of aggravated property offences.

"The new aggravated property offences target the serious and repeat property offenders and deals with those first-time and trivial offenders in an appropriate
way," he said.

Since the tough new sentencing regime has been in operation 136 offences were finalised by the courts, 83% of which applied to unlawful entry with intent type offences.

For those unlawful entry with intent offences 65% received an imprisonment order and 13% a community work order, 22% received other orders including suspended sentences.

Dr Toyne said the era of false claims from the CLP Opposition that mandatory sentencing would fix property crime is now over. The release of the first comprehensive picture of crime in the Territory has revealed the true picture – that mandatory sentencing simply did not work.