Police and the Office of Crime Prevention will work together to tackle the level of assaults and house break-ins in Katherine following the release of the December quarter 2003 NT Quarterly Crime and Justice Statistics.

Assaults increased by 76% over the past 12 months (180 more) and house break-ins rose by 53% (33 more).

An extra five police officers and an Aboriginal Community Police Officer have recently been stationed in Katherine taking the town up to its full complement, and they will be used to tackle assaults in the town.

“We aim to reduce the number of assaults through working with itinerants through our $5 million Harmony Strategy, the development of the alcohol framework and addressing domestic violence.”

Police will launch an in-depth analysis into assaults in the December quarter and to tackle this problem with 4 main targets:

- assault hot spots
- peak periods for assaults
- role of alcohol misuse in assaults
- domestic violence

Katherine police have already taken steps to reduce the number of assaults in the town:

- high profile presence in CBD
- foot patrols of main street, licensed premises and shopping centres
- strong police presence in vicinity of bottle shops
- enforcement of 2km legislation in CBD
- using provisions of Section 128 PAA for intoxicated people

The Katherine Harmony Group has also received funds to develop a community safety strategy. Its main priorities:

- itinerants
- alcohol and substance abuse
- youth problems, and
The December quarter figures did show that many gains have already been made.

Break-ins to commercial buildings and motor vehicle theft in Katherine have both dropped in the December quarter 2003 NT Quarterly Crime and Justice Statistics released today.

Break-ins to commercial buildings dropped by 10% (12 less offences) and motor vehicle theft dropped by 7% (4 less offences).

“The increase in assaults in Katherine is of significant concern to the Government, but strategies already underway like the Itinerants strategy could contribute in the longer term to reducing some assaults, particularly alcohol related assaults.

“The development of a Child and Youth Safety Strategy will also contribute to crime prevention efforts in Katherine.”

“We look forward to these initiatives helping to reduce crime levels over time in Katherine.”

“The Katherine Regional Crime Prevention Committee has received $30,000 to develop a Community Safety Plan.”

**Year on Year comparisons:**

Year on year data, provides comparable information on how crime is tracking from one 12-month period to the next, reports that during the 12 months to the end of December 2003 compared to the previous 12 months:

- House break-ins increased by 53% or 33 offences
- Break-ins to commercial premises fell by 10% or 12 offences
- Motor vehicle and related theft fell by 7% or 4 offences
- Assault increased by 76% or 180 offences

**Quarter on Quarter comparisons for the total number of offences report:**

- **A total of 368 offences** (115 offences against the person and 253 property offences) **were recorded over the December 2003 quarter, an increase of 14 offences against the previous quarter,** and a decrease of 23 offences on the same time last year.

- **A total of 115 offences against the person** were recorded in the December 03 quarter, **up 10 offences against the previous quarter** (105 offences), an increase of 43 offences against the same time last year.

- **A total of 253 property offences** were recorded in the December 03 quarter, **up 4 offences against the previous quarter** (249
offences), but down 66 offences for the same time last year.

Quarter on Quarter comparisons for general offences show:

Over the December 2003 quarter, house break-ins decreased by 8 offences or 29% from the last quarter, and increased by 4 offences or 25% from the same time last year.

Break-ins to commercial premises rose by 119% or 19 offences from the previous quarter, but dropped by 13% or 5 offences from the same time last year.

Assaults increased by 6% or 6 offences over the December quarter compared to the previous quarter, and increased by 37 offences or 54% from the same quarter last year.

Trends:

The underlying average for house break-ins of 7 offences per month is at the higher end of a range of between 4 to 8 offences per month, but the trend over the past 12 months has remained stable.

The underlying average level of commercial break-ins at the lower end of the range over the past two years and there has been a stable trend over the past 12 months.

The trends for assaults have remained stable over the past 12 months.

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