The Government continues its commitment to build safer communities and fight crime, providing additional funds in the 2002/03 Budget to better resource police and fire services and employ more officers.

The Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, Syd Stirling, said the Police, Fire and Emergency Services (PFES) Budget had been increased to $142 million – up more than $8 million, or 6 per cent, from the 2001/02 Budget.

"The Government is committed to ensuring that police and fire officers have the resources and infrastructure they need to get on with the crucial job of protecting our community," Mr Stirling said.

The PFES Capital Works Program for 2002/03 includes:

- $2.12 million towards the fit-out of the new Darwin Police Station, taking the total cost of the project to $4.5 million;
- $1 million for a new police station at Kintore to enable a permanent police presence in the region;
- $350,000 for Stage One of a Mounted Police Patrol facility at the Peter McAulay Centre;
- $870,000 to upgrade police cells at Avon Downs, Galiwinku, Daly River and Tennant Creek as part of an ongoing program to implement recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Other Budget highlights include:

- $570,000 for the purchase of two pumper tankers to be located at Darwin and Katherine Fire Stations; and
- $820,000 for the purchase of a Telecommunications Interception System to further assist police to investigate serious crimes and to identify and target those people producing, financing, trafficking and selling drugs.

Mr Stirling said the Budget also included funding to employ more police officers and firefighters in the Territory.

"As part of the Government’s commitment to employ 50 additional police officers over its first term, the Budget includes $2.58 million to fund the second year intake of 10 police officers," he said.

"Funding of $3.93 million will be provided in 2003/04 and $6.54 million in 2004/05 to fully implement this initiative.

"The additional police officers will give NT Police a greater presence in the community and an enhanced response to break and enter offences.

"The Budget also includes a $460,000 allocation – progressively rising to $1.49 million in 2004/05 – to fund the Government’s commitment for 16 extra fire officers in its first term. Five of those 16 firefighters are currently undertaking a training course."
“Each of these initiatives is about delivering today while investing in the future so Territorians feel safe and secure in their homes and communities.”