Justice Minister Dr Peter Toyne has called on Shadow Jodeen Carney to learn to read crime statistics following the issue of a media release about crime stats that is 100% inaccurate.

"Ms Carney has made four out of four mistakes, in her reference to crime stats and in the same release accused the Government of trying to put one over the people of Alice Springs!"

"Ms Carney has failed dismally in her crime stats test."

In Ms Carney’s media release of 24 September she claims:

- Property crime increased by 29% last quarter – WRONG – property crime decreased by 3% or 24 offences from the previous quarter (pg 48 of the June Quarter 2003 Crime and Justice Statistics report)

- Motor vehicle theft increased by 10% - WRONG – motor vehicle theft increased by 9%, or 6 offences from previous quarter (pg 51)

- Other theft increased by 5% - WRONG – increased by 4% or 13 offences from the previous quarter (pg 52)

- Sexual assault increased by 78% - WRONG, WRONG, WRONG – sexual assault fell by 11% or 2 offences from the previous quarter.

"Ms Carney has misconstrued the figures by taking one high quarter and comparing it to one low quarter to arrive at a ‘Ms Carney trend’ – one that is not true and not statistically sound.

"Ms Carney fails to acknowledge all offences against the person are down 22% on the quarter and down 20% year on year.

"Ms Carney is in denial that property crime is decreasing, falling by 3% or 24 offences against the previous quarter, and equally fails to mention housebreaks fell by a huge 40% or 145 offences over the past 12 months.

"Ms Carney also fails to realise this Government has the courage the CLP never had, to release comprehensive crime figures.

"It is high time Ms Carney starting talking the truth on crime and stopped talking down Alice Springs.

"Yes there are still improvements to be made, but we have made significant inroads," Dr Toyne said.
"Since we took office house break-ins across the Territory have dropped by 32%, and in Alice Springs they are down by 40% over the past 12 months.

"We are pleased with these successes and will continue efforts to reduce these levels further.

"The statistics are published so the community can access the truth about crime levels and there can be some truth to the public debate on crime.

"If Ms Carney wants to quote the crime statistics she should respect the figures in these quarterly reports, complied from police records, and independently audited.

"We would be pleased to provide a briefing to Ms Carney and will even extend the use of a calculator to her to help her understand crime statistics," Dr Toyne said.