VIOLENT CRIME TURNS THE CORNER AS POLICE INITIATIVES TAKE EFFECT

The latest Crime and Justice statistics show that police are making headway in reducing violent crime across the Territory, said Minister for Justice, Syd Stirling.

“The Violent Crime Reduction Strategy has resulted in an increase of 16% in the amount of violent crime reported in the year to June,” said Mr Stirling.

“This does not mean more crime has been committed – it means more violent crime has been reported due to the ramping up of police initiatives.

“In fact, we’ve had a great quarter with offences against the person decreasing by 21% - that’s 292 fewer offences than the last quarter.

“It is encouraging to see that the number of sexual assaults fell over the quarter by 32%, and other assaults fell by 21%.”

The Minister also highlighted the fall in property crime this quarter, following the introduction of the Property Crime Reduction Strategy.

“Although the reporting of property crime has grown in the year to June, it has fallen quite significantly over the past four months,” said Mr Stirling.

“These figures show that our police initiatives are working.”

The Minister said a number of cities and regional centres had contributed to the quarterly improvement:

Darwin

“No significant increases in crime were detected in Darwin,” said Minister Stirling.

“In fact property crime fell by 1% this quarter and has dropped by 37% since the Martin Government came to office.

“Violent crime fell by 3% in the quarter.”

Palmerston

“Excellent local police work has resulted in solid improvement in Palmerston this quarter,” said the Minister.
“Violent crime fell by 23%, including half as many sexual assaults compared with the previous quarter.

“Total property crime fell by 4%, with 12 less offences in the category of motor vehicle theft and related offences.”

**Alice Springs**

Minister Stirling said pro-active and intelligence led policing in Alice Springs had seen a reduction in violent crime in the June quarter.

“Assaults fell by 46% to the lowest number since June 2004, including sexual assault which dropped by 80%,” said Mr Stirling.

He said the *Alice Springs Property Crime Reduction Unit* – formerly named Taskforce Billabong – had seen property offences fall by 21% in the quarter.

Minister Stirling said that breaking the cycle of violence and reducing anti-social behaviour remained a top priority for the Martin Government.

“Alcohol remains a big problem but we are seeing dramatic improvements in communities like Groote Eylandt and Nguiu where there are self-imposed restrictions,” said Mr Stirling.

“We are also directing more chronic drinkers who are responsible for anti-social behaviour into rehabilitation.”

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