Time to Use Riot Provisions in Criminal Code in Wadeye

From the Criminal Code:

‘When 3 or more persons, with intent to carry out some common purpose, assemble in such a manner or, being assembled, conduct themselves in such a manner as to cause persons in the neighbourhood to fear on reasonable grounds that the person so assembled will tumultuously disturb the peace, or will by such assembly needlessly and without any reasonable occasion provoke other persons tumultuously to disturb the peace, they are an unlawful assembly’. (S.63 Criminal Code)

The above, and other provisions in the same Part of the Criminal Code deal with riots and penalties for those participating in riots.

“When people ask, as they have today, ‘what can be done about the gangs at Wadeye’, an obvious answer is to ensure that offenders are charged under these provisions of the Criminal Code”, Leader of the Opposition, Jodeen Carney, said.

“It is time to start charging ringleaders with crimes that will give the Courts the ability to send them to jail. The descriptions from residents of gang related violence in Wadeye, easily satisfy the requirements of the ‘unlawful assembly’ provisions of the Criminal Code and they should be used”, Ms Carney said.

One of the complaints made by a resident yesterday is that a person with 17 pages of criminal history was being re-released into the community again and again.

“If ringleaders are removed, then much of the problem would go away. The crisis at Wadeye and other communities do require legislative change. However, legislation that is already in place can and should be used to effectively deal with the ringleaders at Wadeye”, Ms Carney said.