ALICE SPRINGS RECORDS LESS CRIME THAN IN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

There were 108 (four percent) fewer property offences in Alice Springs in the year April 04-March 05 compared to the previous twelve months. This reduction is despite a traditional March quarter increase in property crime.

This increase is seen as an end of the year phenomenon, which is in common with other centres in the Territory and matches up with the school holidays period.

The figures are recorded in the March Quarter 2005 issue of the Quarterly Crime and Justice Statistics compiled by the Office of Crime Prevention. Released by Justice Minister Dr Peter Toyne today the figures are based on recorded offences by the police.

“We acknowledge an increase in property crime for the March quarter, compared to the previous quarter,” Dr Toyne said.

“It is not surprising given the anecdotal evidence from police and others that the March quarter is usually a time where such crime increases. But it remains a concern and we are examining strategies to attack any seasonal spikes including more activities for youth during holidays and enhanced policing.”

Similar to the property crime area, the March quarter has seen an increase in offences against the person over the preceding December quarter. However, the long term picture is still encouraging as year-on-year there has been a four percent drop in offences against the person.

“This confirms that our strategic approaches of targeted and co-ordinated programs are producing positive long term results,” Dr Toyne said.

“Police and the community are working to identify trouble spots and then fix them.

“It was heartening to see the yearly comparisons show a decrease by 46 percent of reported sexual assault offences. There is more hard work to be done in this area but it’s good to see a recorded decrease.”

Year to Year comparisons:

This data compares figures from one 12 month period to the next. Among the other key findings comparing the total number of offences in the 12 months to March 05 to the total number of offences in the 12 months to March 04:

- assaults decreased by 1% (7 less offences)
- sexual assaults decreased by 46% (22 less offences)
- house break-ins increased by 4% (8 more offences)
- commercial break-ins decreased by 24% (50 less offences)
- motor vehicle theft and related offences decreased by 9% (23 less offences)
- property damage offences decreased by 4% (40 less offences)

**Quarter to Quarter comparisons:**

Quarterly comparisons are the figures from the December 04 quarter (Oct/Nov/Dec) compared to the figures from the March 05 quarter (Jan/Feb/Mar). Care should be taken when interpreting these figures as small changes can produce large percentage figures, these concerns can be compounded by increased property crime during the latter part of the wet season. Characteristically an increase in the March quarter property crime is followed by a reduction in the June quarter. Key findings include:

- total number of offences against the person were up 14% (29 more offences)
- assaults increased 16% (32 more offences)
- sexual assaults decreased 60% (6 less offences)
- total number of property offences were up 33% (193 more offences)
- house break-ins increased 77% (30 more offences)
- commercial break-ins increased 50% (13 more offences)
- motor vehicle theft and related offences increased 70% (30 more offences)
- property damage offences increased 45% (101 more offences)

**Trends:**

Trends are detected when there is a statistically significant upward or downward movement in recorded crime levels of the last 12 months’ data. There were no trends identified for offences in Alice Springs.

March Quarter 2005 Crime and Justice Statistics and Regional Fact Sheets are available online at www.crimeprevention.nt.gov.au

**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.
- Statistics in the Territory can be highly volatile, with large swings from one period or another. This is particularly the case for regional centres where small populations and changes in operational or administrative procedures may heavily influence statistics.

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