Territorians are much less likely to have their house or business broken into or their car stolen than they were in 2001, according to Department of Justice crime statistics released today.

Minister for Justice Syd Stirling said house break-ins had fallen by 50% since April 2001, and commercial break-ins had dropped by 30%.

Car thefts and related offences have fallen by 55%.

“Property crime is down 35% since April 2001 – that’s 11 082 fewer property offences over that period, a significant dent,” said Mr Stirling.

“In Darwin, there were 6418 fewer property offences in that timeframe – a 38% decline,” he said.

“Less property crime means a better way of life for Territorians.”

The Minister expressed concern about the past 12 months, which had shown an increase in the number of commercial break-ins.

“Police have acted swiftly in this area to help protect local business by introducing crime prevention measures, such as security cameras,” said Mr Stirling.

“However, it is great to see property crime reducing over the long term – which provides the most important picture of crime.”

The Minister said the Violent Crime Reduction Strategy meant more offences against the person were being recorded and acted on.

“One assault is too many assaults – but it’s good to see police making sure crimes of violence are being recorded and more perpetrators are being held to account,” he said.

“Since April 2001 there has been an increase in offences against the person of 17% - which police largely attribute to their Violent Crime Reduction Strategy, rather than an actual of increase in violent crimes in the community.
“The recording of assault has increased by 19% in the past six years, 2% in the year, and 6% in the quarter.”

Mr Stirling said alcohol remained the major cause of crime in the Territory.

“At least 57% of assaults were alcohol related in the year to March – and this shows the Martin Government is heading in the right direction in its major crackdown on alcohol abuse,” said Mr Stirling.

“The Government’s strategy focuses on a region-by-region approach to limit the supply, demand and consumption of alcohol,” he said.

“Alcohol management plans are being rolled out right across the Territory – and they are helping to reduce crime in those areas.

“A liquor supply and permit system has been in place on Groote Eylandt since 2005, and is associated with a 75 per cent reduction in public drunkenness and property crime.

“Liquor restrictions in Alice Springs include the declaration of Alice as a “dry town”, and the announcement to ban alcohol in the town camps.

“We will continue to focus our efforts and resources on combating alcohol abuse in the Territory, ensuring it remains a great, safe place to live.”

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