Fatten the thin blue line

By CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW crime statistics have prompted the NT Police Association to renew demands for the Giles Government to hire the full quota of 120 police officers it promised two years ago.

Although down on record-breaking highs last year, the figures show crime is still prevalent across the NT.

In a statement, police association president Vince Kelly called on the CLP to recruit the extra police officers immediately.

“During Budget announcements the Government simply walked away from the promised increases altogether,” Mr Kelly said.

“Police officers rely on trust – this has been breached by (Chief Minister) Mr (Adam) Giles and his Government.”

Territory-wide, crime against the person dropped 1 per cent while crimes against property dropped 9 per cent. Domestic violence-related assaults jumped 3.2 per cent Territory-wide over the same period last year.

Assaults remain virtually unchanged at record levels of 2013, with small drops in alcohol-related assaults and sexual assaults.

In Darwin, domestic violence-related assault was up 23 per cent while commercial break-ins were down 35 per cent.

In Alice Springs, crime was down on the whole, including double-digit drops in sexual assaults and house break-ins.

Commercial break-ins and motor vehicle theft jumped by double digits in Katherine.

Crime against the person in the rural and remote areas remained virtually unchanged.

Justice Minister John Efferink said he was pleased with tough-on-crime initiatives enacted over the last two years.

He said the Government already invested heavily in police, hiring 58 officers since coming into office. But he remained from pledging to hire the remaining 62 officers.

“We’ve put enormous resources into coppers chasing bad guys,” he said. “When that works, we want more coppers chasing bad guys.”

Labor Justice spokesman Michael Gunner called on the Government to keep its commitment to hire the additional officers.

CRIME STATS

Assault - 7239
House break-ins - 3448
Motor vehicle theft - 2041
Crime against the person - 7375 - down 1 per cent
Crime against property - 17819 - down 9.2 per cent

SOURCE: NT Police (Territory-wide statistics for 2013/14)

Stimulate senses on simulator

IF you have ever wanted to get your Goose or Maverick on and feed your need for speed, get down to the Pitch Black Open Day today and try out the Fast Jet Simulator.

Super Hornet pilot Flight Lieutenant James Clarke said the simulator gave aspiring recruits and aviation enthusiasts a good idea of what it was like to fly a fighter jet.

“For an insight into what military aviation is like, nothing beats this,” he said.

Visitors to the open day could fly the simulated jet over Darwin, attempt combat manoeuvres and try to land without crashing.

Air Commodore Noddy Sawade, head of RAAF special events, said there would also be fighter jets on display.

Aircraft scheduled for display included Singapore’s F-15 Eagle, the RAAF’s Super Hornet and the Australian Army’s Tiger helicopter.

For more information visit raaaf.gov.au/ExPB14

FLYING HIGH

GATES open at 9am
ENTRY is free
PARKING is at the Darwin Showgrounds with free buses to the event.
DISABLED parking only is available at the RAAF base.

Flight Lieutenant James Clarke takes the controls of the jet simulator that the public can try at the Pitch Black Open Day

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Picture: KATRINA BRIDGEFORD