Personal Crime Falls in Yearly Comparison

The latest crime statistics show a 13% drop in the number of offences against the person across the Northern Territory in the June quarter this year compared to the same quarter last year.

There was also a 3% fall in offences against the person in the June 2008 quarter compared to the March 2008 quarter.

“This is the second consecutive quarterly fall in this category, and indicates a downward trend over the past 12 months,” Dr Burns said.

He said the decrease in the offences against the person in the June quarter 2008 was underpinned by a 5% reduction in the assault category.

“The figures are heartening and show the Government’s strategies to combat crime and anti-social behaviour are having an impact – but we realise there is still more work to do,” Dr Burns said.

The Crime and Justice statistics for the June 2008 quarter are based on offences recorded in the Territory police case management system PROMIS which follows the National Crime Recording Standard set by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Dr Burns said alcohol is still the cause of most assaults with 61% alcohol related and 52% involving domestic violence for the 12 months ending June 2008.

“Some of the rise in the DV figures can be traced back to the NT Police’s Violent Crime Reduction Strategy, and the work done by the Domestic and Personal Violence Protection units to proactively target repeat offenders and repeat victims,” Dr Burns said.

“To further tackle DV incidents, this government is taking the unprecedented step of introducing mandatory reporting of domestic violence and will invest $15 million to help turn around these appalling figures.

“We have a multi-pronged approach to tackling alcohol including public and private dry area legislation, restrictions on quantity and type of alcohol on sale, Alcohol Courts, increased rehabilitation places.

“We must continue to find ways to reduce the supply, the demand and the harm from alcohol misuse.”
Dr Burns said all major property offences were down across the Territory with a 6% reduction in the overall figure in the June quarter 2008 compared to the March quarter 2008.

**Darwin**

The number of overall offences against the person was static in the June quarter 2008 compared to the previous quarter.

Comparing the June quarter this year with the June quarter in 2007, shows a 22% reduction or 109 fewer offences compared to the same quarter last year.

Assaults were down slightly in the comparison from the March quarter to this quarter, with a downward trend over the past 12 months.

From June 2007 to June 2008 there has been a 23% reduction in assaults.

In Darwin, alcohol contributed to 49% of assaults and 26% were DV-related for the 12 months ending June 2008.

Property offences fell 8% in the June quarter 2008 compared to the preceding March quarter, largely dragged down by a 38% drop in house break-ins.

**Palmerston**

There was an additional three offences against the person in the June quarter 2008 compared to the previous quarter, representing a 4% increase.

This slight increase had little impact on the yearly quarterly comparisons, which showed an 18% reduction in the overall figure from June 2007 to June 2008. Two of the drivers for this fall were a 17% drop in assaults and 25% fall in sexual assaults.

Alcohol was involved in 49% of assaults and 46% had an element of domestic violence for the 12 months ending June 2008.

There was no material change from the March quarter 2008 to the June quarter 2008 in the percentage of property offences recorded.

**Alice Springs**

Alice Springs recorded 26 fewer offences against the person in the June quarter 2008 compared to the March quarter 2008. The reduction was helped along by 10% or 27 fewer assaults.

There was also a 17% reduction in the overall number of offences against the person in the June quarter 2008 compared to the same quarter in 2007.

For the 12 months ending June 2008, 72% of assaults were alcohol-related and 66% involved domestic violence.
“Alice Springs became a dry town in response to concerns over alcohol-related anti-social behaviour,” Dr Burns said.

“The latest figures show a 4% decrease in the supply of pure alcohol for the first six months of 2008 compared to the same period in 2007. This builds on a 10% decrease in the same period of 2007 compared to 2006.

“The measures in place to reduce alcohol consumption are being reviewed to determine if changes need to be made.”

The number of property offences remains unchanged from the March quarter 2008 to this quarter.

**Katherine**

There was an 11% reduction in the number of offences against the person in the June 2008 quarter compared to the March quarter. This drop was driven by a reduction in assaults, with a 10% decrease in the June quarter 2008 compared to the previous quarter and underpinned by reductions in murder, robbery and sexual assaults.

Comparing June 2008 with June 2007, showed a 5% reduction in the overall number of offences against the person.

Alcohol was involved in 74% of assaults and 60% were related to domestic violence for the 12 months ending June 2008.

“Alcohol is still the cause of most assaults. But the fact we now have fewer assaults indicates our focus on reducing alcohol abuse and harm is going in the right direction,” Dr Burns said.

“Since Katherine became a dry town in February, the overall supply of alcohol has decreased by 10% and sobering-up shelter and protective custody figures have fallen by 20%.

“This is a good start and the effects of the dry town on reducing alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour will continue to be monitored.”

The number of property crimes was down 61 or 21% in the comparison of the March quarter 2008 and this quarter.

**Tennant Creek**

Dr Burns said there is lots of good news for Tennant Creek.

The number of offences against the person was down 17% or 24 fewer offences in the June quarter 2008 compared to the preceding March quarter. The reduction was driven by 28 fewer or 22% less assaults.

Comparing the June 2008 quarter with the June 2007 quarter, shows a 6% reduction in the number of assaults, and a 1% fall in offences against the person.
Alcohol was involved in 82% of assaults and 71% were DV-related for the 12 months ending June 2008.

All categories of property crime except house break-ins contained significant falls, and contributed to a 36% drop in the total number of property crimes in the June 2008 quarter compared to the previous quarter.

The trend of falls continued with a 33% reduction in the overall number of property offences in the June 2008 quarter compared to the June 2007 quarter.

Nhulunbuy

There were eight more offences against the person in the June quarter 2008 compared to the March quarter 2008, representing a rise of 22%.

Assault offences were the largest contributor to this category, rising 25% or 8 offences.

There were an additional 11 offences against the person in the June 2008 quarter compared to the June 2007 – a rise of 32%.

Alcohol was a factor in 74% of assaults and 34% related to domestic violence for the 12 months ending June 2008.

Dr Burns said alcohol permits and alcohol restrictions were introduced to Gove earlier this year, and he hoped next quarter would reflect fewer assaults as a result.

Overall property offences were down 4% in the June quarter 2008 compared to the preceding March quarter and 10% in the June 2008 quarter compared to the June 2007 quarter.

The June 2008 quarter crime statistics are available at: