20 November 2002  
No specific threat to Darwin or Northern Territory

Chief Minister, Clare Martin, has again reassured Territorians that there is no known specific threat to Darwin or the Northern Territory and that appropriate security measures are in place, following yesterday’s security announcement by the Federal Government.

"Northern Territory police have been in constant contact with their Federal counterparts and ASIO, who have advised us that there is no specific information that Darwin or the NT is a target for a terrorist attack," she said.

"We have also been advised that if there had been a terrorist threat to Darwin we would have been informed immediately."

Ms Martin was speaking following a special meeting of Police and Government officials this morning to review current security arrangements.

"At this meeting it was reconfirmed that, while there is no specific threat to Darwin or the Northern Territory, we are taking reasonable and appropriate security measures," she said.

"Yesterday, the Federal Government advised us that they had received threats of a possible attack in Australia in coming months, however, there is no mention of Darwin or any other location as a target.

"However, it’s important that Territorians be vigilant of any possible threats, but at the same time continue their lives as normal."

Ms Martin said that it was important not to create unnecessary panic or scaremongering.

"The Bali attacks happened on our doorstep, in our backyard, which shows the need for us to be prepared – but we must temper this with the need to get on with life and not create unnecessary levels of fear."

The Chief Minister again stressed that a number of security measures have already been put in place across the Territory (see list below) and that others were being developed to provide the safest possible environment in the Territory.

Ms Martin also said that security levels at the Indonesian consulate had been put in place following the Bali bombings and were not upgraded as the result of any recent warning.

Measures in place include:

- Appointment of Supt Mike Stevens as full-time Counter Terrorism Security Coordinator role, to establish communication networks with holders of critical infrastructure, relevant sectors of the community and the Operational Commands of the Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services.

- Development of essential infrastructure protection plans for Northern Territory assets across Government, headed by Chief Minister's Department and police.

- Briefings of government agencies and the private sector (industry and business, tourism, manager of oil/gas platforms in the Timor Sea) are taking place to increase understanding of counter terrorism arrangements and issues and the changes occurring post Bali.

- A security scan is being conducted in all major centres to identify potential...
targets, and these facilities will be encouraged to develop security and response plans.

- Strong involvement in the national response with membership of the new National Counter-Terrorism Committee (NCTC), which has responsibility for developing comprehensive national counter-terrorist measures.

- The Territory Government through Police Minister Paul Henderson is pushing the Federal Government to include the Port of Darwin in its rollout of new x-ray technology to better investigate shipping containers as part of a national upgrade in customs control.


Ms Martin said it was important to have a strong and united response to the threat of terrorism.

"It is crucial at a national and local level to take the necessary precautions to protect the community from the threat of terrorism."