



4 April 2006

Sexual Assaults Fall Significantly in Katherine

The Office of Crime Prevention's latest figures show a dramatic drop in the year-to-year comparison of sexual assaults in Katherine.

The Crime and Justice statistics for the December 2005 quarter are based on offences recorded in the Territory police reporting system PROMIS.

The Justice Minister Peter Toyne said the figures showed a drop of 71 per cent or 27 fewer sexual assaults in 2005 compared to 2004.

"This is a terrific outcome. The statistics support a trend that has seen sexual assault numbers across the Territory drop about 5 per cent a year since 2001.

"The number of assaults, however, rose 48 per cent or 143 more offences to 442.

"Campaigns encouraging the reporting of domestic violence incidents seem to be responsible for much of the rise in these figures.

"The Government is very supportive of the police force's policy when investigating suspected domestic violence incidents."

The overall number of offences against the person was up 33 per cent to 463 in the year-to-year comparison.

"We know alcohol plays a major part in many of these incidents. That is why we took the tough approach and introduced anti-social behaviour legislation and alcohol courts," Dr Toyne said.

The overall figure for property offences was down 22 to 833 (3 per cent); house break-ins remained relatively unchanged at 83 offences, while significant drops were recorded in commercial break-ins (14 per cent) and property damage (15 per cent).

"While the Government's 5-year *Building Safer Communities* framework is reducing crime in some of the key categories, there are areas where more needs to be done," Dr Toyne said.

"The Government will continue to work towards initiatives to tackle the causes of crime."

Contact Andrea Adlam 0401 119467