

Renewed calls for rehab resources

The Darwin Regional Crime Prevention Council (DRCPC) has renewed calls for government to increase the resources available to treat people committing crimes while drunk.

According to Richard Bowman, Chair of the Crime Prevention Council, the DRCPC has previously raised a number of concerns about the Government's recent law and order approach.

"We expressed concerns last year at the removal of the patrolling service and at the inadequate resource which have been allocated to the Alcohol Court," Mr Bowman said.

Recent statistics released by the NT Office of Crime Prevention show that the level of alcohol-related crime has not decreased; in fact, it has grown significantly in some areas of the NT.

Mr Bowman said that greater focus needs to be placed on the causes of alcohol and substance abuse in order to break the cycle of offenders moving in and out of gaol.

"We're not saying that offenders should not be punished, we are just saying that they also need to have the chance to mend their ways."

"It is not in the interests of victims or the community if offenders are simply released from gaol



only to offend again."

The DRCPC has called on government at all levels to work together to find the resources necessary to rehabilitate offenders.

The Darwin Regional Crime Prevention Council is made up of community members, service providers and government representatives. The Council works towards making Darwin a safer community.

Territory becoming more violent

Assaults against Territorians were the highest recorded since the current Government came into office according to the Opposition.

The release of the December Quarter Crime Statistics has revealed an across the board increase in violence in the Territory.

"This is a very worrying trend," Opposition Leader Jodeen Carney said.

"This first role of Government is to provide a safe environment for the people who live in the Territory.

"The Government is presiding over assault figures that are just appalling.

"They have been quick to attack people who question their ability to make the Territory safe but when numbers like this come out there is no denying that they have a serious problem."

According to the Opposition, Alice Springs is currently faring particularly badly. A comparison

with the last two December quarters reveal a marked increase in criminal activity both in the area of offences against the person and offences against property.

In Alice Springs, offences against the person numbers for the last three December quarters have been: 231, 208 and 323 respectively. Offences against property in the last three December quarters have been: 586, 592 and 810 respectively.

"If you look at all of the major centres outside of Darwin and Palmerston the numbers are concerning as well," Ms Carney said.

"In spite of the Government's much vaunted Community Harmony Project and Return to Country project the urban drift that we have seen in Alice Springs has brought many social problems into the town.

"It is time for the Government to look beyond Darwin and see what is happening in our other major centres."