Safer Communities

Every Territorian has the right to feel safe and expect their homes, businesses and property to be secure. Budget 2017 tackles the causes of crime and provides additional resources to keep Territorians safe.

Keeping the Community Safe

The 2017 Budget delivers over $876 million to support our police and emergency services and strengthen law and order to make our community safer.

In 2017, Government will deliver:

- funding to commence a $44.9 million new information technology system to better equip our police and emergency services personnel and streamline service delivery and enable police to spend more time on the beat and less time on paperwork;
- $26 million to construct a new Palmerston police station including a watch house, regional emergency operations centre and a community hall;
- $8 million to construct a new Katherine Fire Station;
- $5 million in 2017-18, increasing to $15.75 million by 2019-20, for police resourcing and recruitment to work towards Government’s commitment for 120 more police officers on the beat;
- $2 million to expand and maintain the closed circuit television network;
- $1.5 million for the DriveSafe NT Remote program; and
- $1 million for additional court support services.

Youth Justice

Government is repairing a damaged youth justice system by providing $18.2 to overhaul services. This includes 52 additional youth diversion officers with a greater focus on victim support, and record funding for diversionary programs including boot camps. The funding includes:

- $8 million to support youth outreach and re-engagement;
- $5 million for youth diversion including boot camps; and
- $4.9 million for bail support programs.

Government is providing $22 million to undertake urgent rectification works at existing youth detention facilities and to establish youth bail support accommodation facilities including:

- $11.5 million for Alice Springs;
- $2.6 million to upgrade bail support facilities throughout the Territory; and
- $1.2 million to upgrade two facilities in Darwin.

Government’s decisive action has been validated by the findings of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory interim report, which identifies some of the work already undertaken by the Territory Government to address the cycle of crime.
Improving Correctional Services

Budget 2017 provides additional funding for correctional services, including:

- $2.1 million to reduce incarceration and re-offending rates through the expanded COMMIT program;
- $1.9 million to continue the Work Not Play program, which provides skill improvement opportunities to prisoners;
- $1.1 million for court and medical escorts;
- $500 000 for the Community Support Work program; and
- $500 000 increase to the Victims of Crime fund.

Bringing Back the Banned Drinkers Register

Budget 2017 provides $17.2 million to re-establish the Banned Drinker Register and other initiatives including specialist residential alcohol and drug assessment and withdrawal services, incentivised therapeutic support options for people with alcohol misuse issues, and an increased number of residential rehabilitation beds in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Consistent with the National Drug Strategy, this approach will focus on a reduction of both the supply and demand of alcohol, as well as a reduction in the harm caused by alcohol in the Territory.

This approach will provide:

- specialist assessment of a person’s immediate clinical, physical, psychological and social needs;
- withdrawal services, where an appropriate method is prescribed and may include taking medication at home or completing a residential care program at a specialised withdrawal facility; and
- treatment options including therapeutic programs to assist in changing behaviours, and reconnecting with family and the community to overcome their dependence.

Additionally, Budget 2017 provides $750 000 to support tackling substance misuse in remote communities through the delivery of diversion programs.

Keeping Families Safe

Budget 2017 acknowledges the cost to society of domestic and family violence and invests in strategies and infrastructure to help Territorians remain safe, through:

- $6.2 million to continue to implement the domestic and family violence reduction strategy;
- $6 million for the replacement of the Alice Springs women’s shelter;
- $3 million to create the Alice Springs Domestic Violence Court (within the Alice Springs local court) to improve the safety, experience and outcomes for people affected by domestic and family violence; and
- $1 million to establish a remote women’s safe house in Galiwin’ku.

Putting Children First

Budget 2017 also provides support to vulnerable children, through:

- $6 million to support and improve out of home care services; and
- $3 million to expand support services for vulnerable and at-risk families.