

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services:

Crime, Police Officers and Police Stations in Central Australia

1. How do you explain the unprecedented spike in crime in Alice Springs from 1 March 2016 to 29 February 2017 compared to 1 March 2015 to 28 February 2016?
2. Since coming to Government in 27 August 2016, what strategies have you implemented to address the escalating crime rate in Alice Springs?
3. As Minister responsible for Police will you be authorising, approving or sanctioning the winding back or ceasing of the Temporary Beat Locations (TBLs) or POS's (Police at Point of Sale) in Alice Springs in the future?
4. Please provide evidence to counter the claim the TBLs have been the single most successful strategy in reducing alcohol fuelled crime and anti-social behaviour in Alice Springs over the past 4-5 years and which would support winding back or ceasing this crucial and entirely successful service provided by the Northern Territory Police?
5. How many Police Officers are employed in Alice Springs, as of the June 2017?
6. How many vacant positions are there within the Central region of the Northern Territory Police?
7. Are there any Police stations in remote communities of Central Australia between 1 June 2016 to 31 May 2017 that have been:
 - (a) Closed 100% of the time? Provide detail of the exact Police Stations and when these changes occurred.
 - (b) Closed part of the time? Provide detail of the exact Police Stations and when these changes occurred.
 - (c) Closed temporarily? Provide detail of the exact Police Stations and when these changes occurred.

8. Could you provide details of:
- (a) Why have these Police Stations been closed all of the time or part of the time?
 - (b) How long have these Police Stations not been fully functional? Provide dates.
 - (c) What plans do you have to reopen these Police Stations full time or part time? Give details.
 - (d) What contingency plans have been put in place to ensure the communities effected by Police Stations being closed, are adequately serviced by the Police?

ANSWER:

1. Publically available crime statistics for the reporting period of 1 May 2016 to 30 April 2017 indicate an overall decrease in crime in the Alice Springs urban area. While crimes against property are up on the previous year at 8.5%, crimes against the person are down by 13.1%. (Refer below for current crime statistics).

OFFENCE STATISTICS			
SELECTED			
CRIME	01/05/2015 - 30/04/2016	01/05/2016 - 30/04/2017	% CHANGE
Assault	1745	1521	-12.8
<i>Domestic violence related assault</i>	1025	849	-17.2
<i>Alcohol related assault</i>	1079	968	-10.3
Sexual assault	88	70	-20.5
House break-ins	374	357	-4.5
Commercial break-ins	344	349	1.5
Motor vehicle theft	346	375	8.4
Property Damage	1601	1797	12.2
SUMMARY			
CRIME	01/05/2015 - 30/04/2016	01/05/2016 - 30/04/2017	% CHANGE
Crime against the person	1982	1722	-13.1
Crime against property	4075	4423	8.5

2. The introduction of Strike Force Winx in January 2017 saw a dedicated team of detectives specifically target property crimes such as unlawful entries, associated property damage and motor vehicle thefts, which resulted in the identification, prosecution and monitoring of numerous offenders and a significant decrease in rates of offending. Two extra positions have been allocated to the Strike Force to focus on youth crime.

Additionally, staffing within the Alice Springs Division Operational Support Unit was also bolstered to allow for increased proactive patrols. There has been an increase in proactive patrols from 13,300 to 20,000 over the past 12 months. Proactive patrols are integrated with other government and non-government agencies. These patrols are focused on proactive engagement of troubled youth and seek to address concerning behaviour through a wider inter-agency approach and the overall intent to disrupt criminal behaviour while addressing the welfare needs of vulnerable at risk youth.

To further support these activities the Northern Territory Police Force (NTPF) have also bolstered the Youth Diversion Unit in Alice Springs to increase capacity to facilitate early intervention diversion programs to prevent young people moving into the justice system.

- 3 & 4. Following the introduction of the Banned Drinkers Register on 1 September 2017, the NTPF will continue to provide a strategic approach to point of sale interventions (POSIs) at licensed premises.
5. There are currently 230 police officers working out of Alice Springs Police Station.
6. There are currently three vacancies as of this date.
7.
 - (a) No stations have been closed 100% of the time.
 - (b) No stations operate part-time. Some are serviced by neighbouring stations on a needs basis.
 - (c) No stations have been closed. Some have been serviced by neighbouring locations on a needs basis.
8.
 - (a) No stations have been closed. Numbers have simply been allocated according to busier locations to better meet organisational needs. Where the demand for resources has declined they have been redeployed where the need is greatest. This is monitored and adjusted as required
 - (b) Answered above.
 - (c) Answered above.
 - (d) Answered above.