

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

## WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms J Carney

to Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

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### Property Crime - Reporting Rates

1. What are the reporting rates for property crime and break and enter in the Territory?

### ANSWER

There is no overall measure of property crime reporting rates in the NT, only an approximate measure of the reporting rates for break-ins.

This approximate measure is the 2002 ABS Crime and Safety Survey which, among other measures, estimates the proportion of residential unlawful entries reported to police.

Because of the sample size, caution should be taken when interpreting the statistics for the Northern Territory. The summary results are subject to substantial sampling errors circa 25% to 50%. The survey is also limited to people living in private dwellings in major urban locations. The survey sample is not considered representative of the NT population generally.

It is important to note that the responses obtained in the survey are based on the respondent's perception of their having been the victim of the offence. The terms used in the ABS questionnaire may evoke in the respondent a different response, which may not necessarily correspond to the legal definitions which are used for offence(s) by police.

The 2002 survey reveals the reporting rate for 'break-in' was 72.8% (national average 75.1%). It should be noted that the only other two reporting rates for property crime (attempted break-in and motor vehicle theft) are considered by the ABS to be too unreliable for general use.

What can be said is that the reporting rate is relatively constant - authorities have always known there is a gap between crime and reported crime, however, the gap is relatively constant over time.