

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25



DIRECTOR
OF PUBLIC
PROSECUTIONS
NORTHERN TERRITORY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge that we live and work on the sacred country of the Traditional Owners throughout the Northern Territory. We pay our deepest respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and their continuing connection with the land and waters.



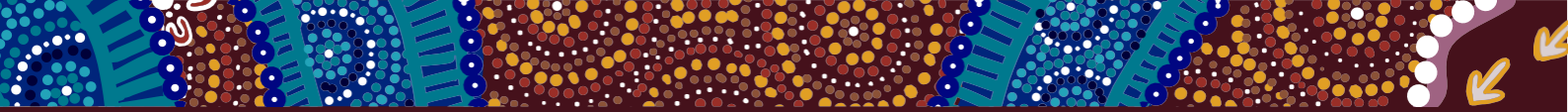


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LETTER OF TRANSMISSION



DIRECTOR
OF PUBLIC
PROSECUTIONS
NORTHERN TERRITORY

Director – Lloyd Babb SC

30 September 2025

Ms. Marie-Clare Boothby MLA
Attorney-General
Parliament House
State Square
Darwin NT 0800

Dear Attorney-General

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

In accordance with the requirements of section 33 of the *Director of Public Prosecutions Act 1990*.

I submit to you a report on the performance of the functions of the Director of Public Prosecutions for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Yours sincerely



LLOYD BABB SC

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DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS LLOYD BABB SC



I am very proud to present my fourth Annual Report, providing an outline on the functions and performance of my Office for the previous reporting year of 2024-25.

I begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land upon which the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) operates throughout the Northern Territory. I pay my deepest respects to Elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the rich culture of First Nations people and their profound connection to land and waters.

This marks my final report, as I will be concluding my time with the DPP on 30 September 2025. While it is difficult to farewell a chapter that has been both professionally rewarding and personally enriching, I leave with a deep sense of pride and gratitude for what we have achieved together.

I am truly thankful to every member of the DPP team for their unwavering commitment to justice, and for the dedication, professionalism, and teamwork they display. I also wish to acknowledge our legal and administrative support staff and witness assistance staff, whose daily contributions are indispensable to the work of our prosecutors and to the functioning of the Office.

ABORIGINAL ARTWORK – “JUSTICE”

In March 2025, I had the privilege of being presented with the powerful artwork, *Justice*, by local Aboriginal artist Rochelle Minberrignully Fejo-Tasker. This stunning piece holds deep meaning, blending law, culture, and community in a way that speaks directly to the heart of our work at the DPP.

The artwork reflects both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lore and Australian law, using vibrant colours and symbolism to honour First Nations traditions. The blue tones represent salt and freshwater tribes, while the brown tones reflect desert tribes. The three interconnected circles represent Darwin, Katherine, and Alice Springs - each distinct but united in the pursuit of justice.

The larger circle, with the ‘U’ symbol, signifies the collaboration between police and community law enforcers, with blue and orange representing both forces. Orange, as an inner-circle colour, conveys optimism and the power of collaboration. Nearby, the large ‘U’ represents Elders, while the smaller ‘u’ symbolises the next generation, emphasising our responsibility to guide and shape the future.

Rochelle’s inclusion of red and white hands signifies unhealed trauma and healing, while the kangaroo and emu tracks - unable to move backward - urge us to focus on progress and the future. Water surrounding the piece links the salt and freshwater tribes, and the three people linking hands reflect intergenerational support and unity. Rochelle’s artwork is not just a visual representation of law, but a tribute to culture, community, and shared journey.

We are humbled and thankful to Rochelle for this incredible artwork.



TARGETED INTERVENTION GROUP – EARLY RESOLUTIONS

In February 2025, the Targeted Intervention Group – Early Resolutions (TIG-ERs) pilot program was launched. TIG-ERs is a small, high-performing team established to ease growing pressure on the criminal justice system by identifying and resolving appropriate matters at the earliest opportunity. The overarching goal of TIG-ERs is to expedite the delivery of justice, while also improving the quality of service provided.

With remand rates reaching a record high and the increasing number of complex cases, TIG-ERs has been crucial in delivering smarter and faster outcomes. By engaging earlier and more meaningfully with defence, TIG-ERs hopes to achieve more appropriate outcomes and fewer contested hearings, ultimately resulting in notable cost-saving and increased efficiency in the system, and, in particular, reducing time spent on remand. In the first two months, the team reviewed and finalised nearly 200 outstanding case files. Of these, 72% were resolved through appropriate early guilty pleas or agreements.

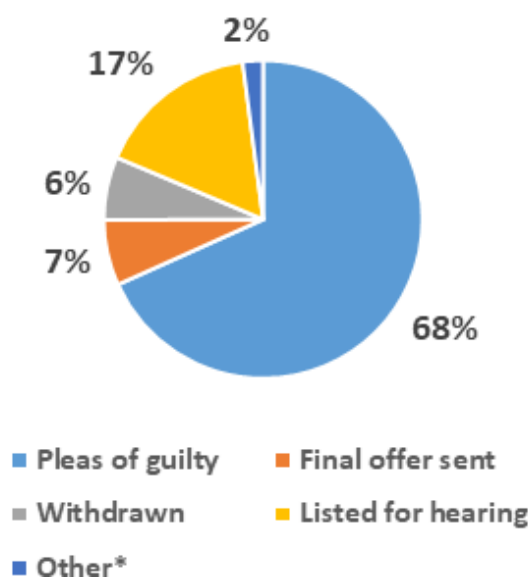
The great majority of criminal cases end with the defendant entering a guilty plea and a court then imposing a sentence. Securing appropriate guilty pleas early in criminal proceedings is desirable, and indeed necessary, for the effective and efficient operation of the criminal justice system. When a matter is to proceed by way of a guilty plea, obtaining the plea at an early stage is often beneficial. It can assist the defendant, reduce stress for victims and witnesses, and ensure resources are used more efficiently.

When the TIG-ERs initiative commenced in February 2025, the team were temporarily dedicated to solely reviewing and resolving matters which defence practitioners had identified as having potential scope for resolution (i.e. pending representations). However, as the outstanding number of pending representations is reduced, the TIG-ERs team will begin proactively identifying suitable matters for early intervention as well as responding to matters identified by defence.

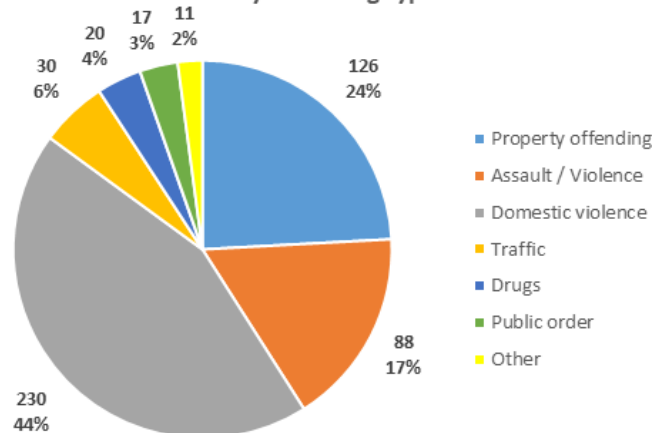
As at 30 June 2025, the following outcomes were achieved:

- Pleas of guilty: 247
- Final offer sent: 20
- Withdrawn: 23
- Listed for hearing: 53
- Other: 7

Outcomes of all files allocated to TIG-ER



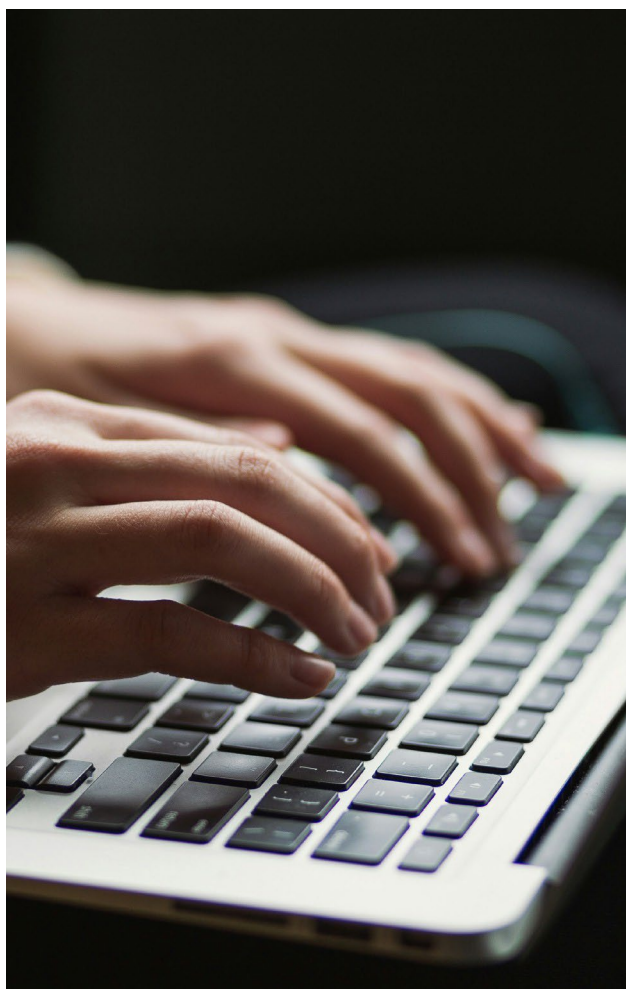
Primary Offending Type



BATJI CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Significant progress was made this year with the rollout of Resolve, or *Batji*, our new case management system. *Batji* will officially replace CaseNet on 1 July 2025 and will serve as the central platform for managing prosecution matters across the DPP, offering improved document workflows, complexity tracking, and diary scheduling.

Training and support has been delivered in-house by the project manager, with system enhancements to be ongoing based on user feedback.



BUILDING LEGAL CAPABILITY

The NT DPP continued to contribute to the nationwide DPP Building Legal Capability Working Group during this reporting period, with two continuing professional development (CPD) sessions being organised and facilitated by the DPPs across Australia.

In October 2024, we welcomed Ben Grimes, a distinguished lawyer and linguist with deep expertise in legal system communication. Drawing on his extensive experience as a criminal lawyer, community legal educator, and senior manager with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service, Ben shared both practical strategies and thought-provoking insights. In this session, Ben explored the challenges of communicating with non-native English speakers, unpacking concepts such as first language interference, how to craft more effective evidence-in-chief, and the legal mechanisms available to better support witnesses facing language barriers. His presentation sparked valuable discussion and provided tangible tools for prosecutors to integrate into their practice.

In January 2025, Detective Sergeant Frank Melhop of Northern Territory Police facilitated a CPD on Questioning and Conversation Techniques. Detective Sergeant Melhop has trained new recruits to seasoned detectives in the art of conducting effective interviews and investigations and has over 14 years of investigative experience. His expertise has shaped the Northern Territory Police's approach to interviewing, making him one of the most respected trainers in the field. In this session, Detective Sergeant Melhop guided DPP staff through techniques for managing first impressions and selecting appropriate question types. While his experience is rooted in the investigative sphere, his insights offered valuable parallels for conferences with, and questioning of, witnesses. The session provided practical strategies that staff can readily apply in their prosecutorial work.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In August 2024, the DPP hosted the Australian Association of Crown Prosecutors Conference in Darwin. The event, held from 7–9 August, featured a distinguished line-up of speakers including the Honourable Chief Justice Michael Grant AO, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory; the Honourable Justice Robert Beech-Jones, Justice of the High Court of Australia; the Honourable Chief Judge Elizabeth Morris, Chief Judge of the Northern Territory Local Court; and Assistant Commissioner Peter Kennon of the Northern Territory Police, among others.
- Empowering future leaders: In October 2024, the DPP welcomed a group of Aboriginal Year 12 students from the Girls Academy of the Stars Foundation. As part of their full day of learning, the students toured the Local Court and participated in a special session with Judge Greg Macdonald. Assistant Director Melinda Graczol also delivered an engaging presentation highlighting the value of reciprocity, seeking support, and building strong networks to create future opportunities. The Stars Foundation plays a vital role in supporting young women to complete their education and develop clear pathways for life beyond school.
- In May 2025, the DPP welcomed the announcement of additional funding to support our vital work. This investment has allowed the Office to convert all eligible staff on time-limited contracts to ongoing roles and to recruit additional prosecutors across all levels, acknowledging the significant contributions of both prosecution and support staff.
- In June 2025, the International Association of Prosecutors Global Training Academy hosted a webinar on “Putting Victims and Witnesses at the Heart of the Criminal Justice Process”. The webinar highlighted the vital role of victims and witnesses in the justice system and the growing emphasis on strengthening their engagement with law enforcement and prosecutors. The webinar presented practical insights from prosecutors and experts across the criminal justice system on the skills needed to ensure that victims and witnesses can take an active role in criminal proceedings, on some of the challenges that may be encountered, and on best practices to ensure that the appropriate balance is maintained between the need to support victims and witnesses and the need to uphold the rights of the accused to a fair trial.
- On 12 and 13 June 2025, I attended the Youth Justice and Child Protection Conference in Alice Springs with summary prosecutors Laura Burfitt and Dan Acuil from the youth team. The conference addressed recommendations that dealt with specialist training for legal practitioners and other stakeholders working in the jurisdictions of youth justice and the care and protection of children.
- Senior Crown Prosecutor Tami Grealy and Acting Witness Assistance Service Manager Caitlin Shepherd participated with me as panelists, alongside Kati Krazlan, Victims of Crime Commissioner for Western Australia, and a victim with lived experience in the criminal justice system.
- During this reporting period, preparations were finalised for the DPP’s Future Planning Forum scheduled for 2-3 July 2025. The two-day event will bring together staff from the Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs offices, providing an important opportunity for open discussion, strategic reflection, and collaborative planning to guide the future direction of the office.





OUR PEOPLE

- **Jenny Davie**, a dedicated and valued member of our Witness Assistance Service (WAS) team, retired in April 2025. Jenny had served the Northern Territory Government with unwavering commitment and compassion for nearly 40 years.

Jenny's journey with the NT Government began on 20 November 1985, when she first joined the Magistrates Court. In 2007, she transitioned to the DPP, where she spent the last 18 years as a WAS Officer. Throughout her career, Jenny was based in Darwin, but also serviced circuit courts in Katherine and Alice Springs as needed.

When asked about her reflections on her time with the DPP, Jenny shared, "I have found great fulfilment in helping people at one of the most challenging points in their lives. My work has been deeply rewarding and has allowed me to provide support to those in need, empowering them to navigate difficult times with confidence and strength."

Jenny's sense of privilege in being trusted with people's stories is a testament to her compassion and dedication to her role. As a people person, her professionalism, empathy, and genuine care for others has left a lasting impact on her colleagues and clients alike.

- We acknowledge with respect the late **Phillip (Phill) Edgar**. Phill was a dedicated and highly valued Witness Assistance Service Officer with the DPP, who worked tirelessly supporting victims and witnesses with the DPP for 13 years. Phill's enormous contribution to the WAS team will be long remembered, and he is dearly missed.
- In December 2024, we fondly farewelled **Melinda Graczol** who moved to Canberra to take up an exciting appointment as the Deputy Director of the Director of Public Prosecutions (Criminal Practice). Mel had been instrumental in the development of the TIG-ERs team and improving internal processes and procedures. **Melinda Listing** was appointed to the role in February 2025 and brings over a decade of experience in criminal prosecutions.
- During this reporting period, Senior Crown Prosecutors **Tamara Grealy** and **David Dalrymple** were recognised this year for 10 years of service to the Northern Territory Public Sector.
- Senior Crown Prosecutors **Rebecca Everitt** and **Neil Kumar** were appointed in the first half of 2025. Neil joined us from the Cayman Islands, where he was a prosecutor at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Rebecca Everitt has been with the DPP for nine years.
- The DPP remains committed to Aboriginal employment and we look forward to sponsoring attendance at the First Nations Gathering on 7-8 August 2025. The First Nations Gathering, hosted by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions South Australia, will be held on Kurna Country in *Tarntanyangga* (Adelaide), and will be a significant opportunity for our First Nations staff to come together to share insights, strengthen professional networks, and advance our commitment to justice, reconciliation and innovation within public prosecutions and legal fields.

NEXT PERIOD

As we look towards 2025-2026, our focus remains on the early resolution of appropriate matters, reducing the time to justice, and supporting victims and witnesses. It is hoped that expansion of the TIG-ERs team will also foster collaboration with police to encourage early disclosure to assist in meaningful discussions with our colleagues.

Staff will come together at the Future Planning Forum in July 2025 to workshop innovative ways of improving processes, effectiveness, and capability. I look forward to seeing the tangible results of this important and exciting event.

We will continue to emphasise wellbeing, with a strong focus on fostering resilience, promoting work-life balance, maintaining a positive and respectful workplace culture and supporting professional growth.





THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

MISSION

The mission of the Director of Public Prosecutions is to provide the Northern Territory community with an independent, professional and efficient criminal prosecutions service.

VISION

The vision of the Director of Public Prosecutions is to provide the highest quality of prosecution service to Territorians.

GOALS

Achieving the following goals is recognised as being fundamental to achieving our mission and vision:

- To operate with integrity;
- To deliver an independent, professional and efficient service;
- To operate as a committed and dedicated team of professionals;
- To provide a fair and just service to victims and the accused; and
- To be respectful to the needs of victims, witnesses and to the interest of the community.



FUNCTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The functions of the Director of Public Prosecutions (hereinafter referred to as the DPP) are set out in Part 3 of the *Director of Public Prosecutions Act 1990* (hereinafter referred to as the DPP Act). These functions are as follows:

- the preparation and conduct of all prosecutions in indictable offences;
- the preparation and conduct of committal proceedings;
- to bring and conduct proceedings for summary offences;
- the assumption, where desirable, of control of summary prosecutions;
- to institute and conduct prosecutions not on indictment for indictable offences including the summary trial of indictable offences;
- the power to institute and conduct or take over any appeal relating to a prosecution or to conduct a reference under s 414 of the *Criminal Code*;
- the right to appeal against sentences imposed at all levels of the court hierarchy;
- the power to grant immunity from prosecution;
- the power to secure extradition to the Northern Territory of appropriate persons;
- the power to participate in proceedings under the *Coroners Act 1993* and, with the concurrence of the Coroner, to assist the Coroner if the Director considers such participation or assistance is relevant to the performance of some other function of the Director and is justified by the circumstances of the case;
- the power to conduct proceedings under the *Criminal Property Forfeiture Act 2002* and if, as a result of the proceedings a person becomes liable to pay an amount to the Territory or property is forfeited to the Territory under a court order, it is a function of the Director to take any further proceedings that may be required to recover the amount or enforce the forfeiture or order;
- to provide assistance in the Territory to other State or Commonwealth Directors of Public Prosecutions;
- to institute, intervene in and conduct proceedings that are concerned with or arise out of any function of the Director, or to otherwise do anything that is incidental or conducive to the performance of the function of the Director;
- the power to furnish guidelines to Crown prosecutors and members of the police force related to the prosecution of offences; and
- to require information or to give directions limiting the power of other officials.

General Powers

The Director has power to do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for the purpose of performing the functions of the Director and may exercise a power, authority or direction relating to the investigation and prosecution of offences that is vested in the Attorney-General.

REPORT ON PROSECUTORIAL FUNCTIONS

Key Performance Indicators	Current Year	Previous Years		
	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
New Matters	9,824	8,812	9,060	7,658
Proportion of Supreme Court criminal matters finalised within 12 months	70%	79%	No Previous Data	
Proportion of Local Court criminal matters finalised within 12 months	82%	81%	No Previous Data	
Finalisations	650	675	463	No previous data
Appeals at all levels	49	54	42	51
Witness Assistance Service Clients	2,835	2,049	1,942	1,776

Joint trials with the Commonwealth DPP

The NT DPP, like other DPPs across Australia, has an arrangement in relation to the conduct of matters where an accused person has been charged with both Commonwealth and Territory offences. The purpose of the arrangement is to facilitate a single prosecution and prosecution agency. The arrangement requires consultation between the NT DPP and the Commonwealth DPP (CDPP) to determine the question of which agency should prosecute the offences.

This period, we met with our counterparts at the CDPP regularly to discuss common concerns and share knowledge. We also streamlined the consultation process to ensure quicker and sounder decisions.

In this reporting period, consultation took place on 27 occasions resulting in 12 cases where the NT DPP prosecuted matters on behalf of the CDPP, and 15 cases where the CDPP prosecuted matters on behalf of the NT DPP. There were no cases where the NT DPP and CDPP had joint carriage of a matter.

Appeals

It is a function of the Director of Public Prosecutions to:

- i. institute and conduct, or conduct as respondent, any appeal or further appeal relating to the prosecutions upon indictment in the Supreme Court
- ii. request and conduct a reference to the Court of Criminal Appeal under s.414(2) of the *Criminal Code*; and
- iii. institute and conduct, or to conduct as respondent, any appeal or further appeal relating to prosecutions not on indictment, for indictable offences, including the summary trial of indictable offences.

22 Court of Criminal Appeal matters, and 32 Local Court Appeal finalisations took place over the reporting period.

Case highlight: *R v Wilson* [2024] NTCCA 14

Mr Alphonse Wilson (“the respondent”) was charged with five offences committed during the period 17 to 21 January 2022. The indictable offences were sexual intercourse without consent (counts 1 and 3), damage property (count 2), and aggravated assault (count 4). There was also a summary charge of breaching a domestic violence order. The maximum penalties for those offences were life imprisonment (counts 1 and 3), imprisonment for 14 years (count 2), imprisonment for five years (count 4), and imprisonment for two years (breach domestic violence order).

On 15 May 2023, being the first day of the trial, the respondent pleaded guilty to counts 2 and 4, and entered pleas of not guilty to counts 1 and 3. The trial proceeded before Reeves J and a jury. On 19 May 2023, the jury returned guilty verdicts on both counts.

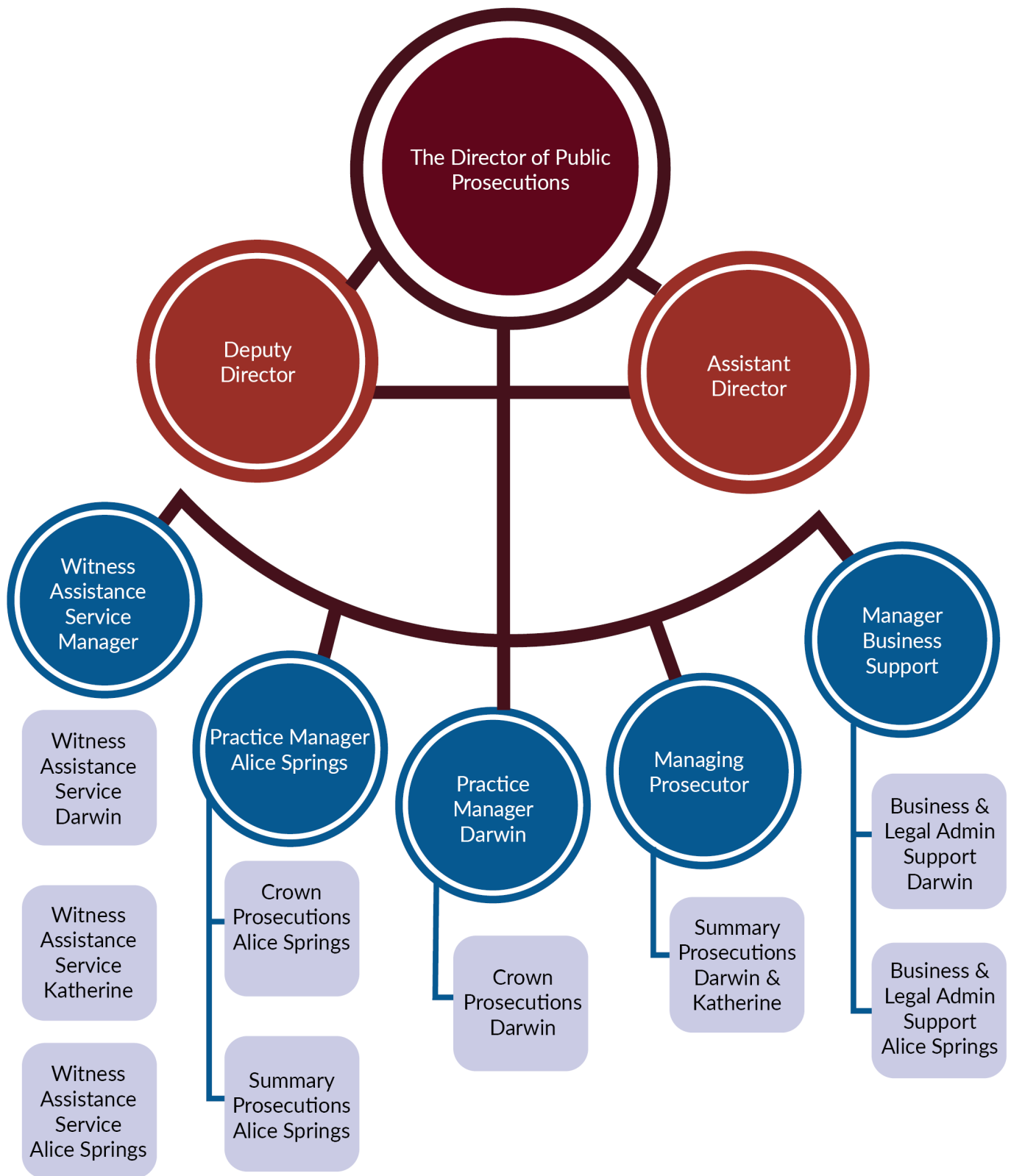
The offences of sexual intercourse without consent (counts 1 and 3) were committed in a very serious and ongoing context of domestic violence. The victim, with the assistance of police, had moved away from the respondent’s control and into a women’s shelter. A domestic violence order was in place. In breach of that order, the respondent manipulatively lured the victim to his residence. There, he forcibly injected her with crystal methamphetamine against her express protestations and had forcible sexual intercourse with her for a significant period of time, threatening to kill her if she refused (count 1). He then refused to let her leave for the four days that followed, threatening to cause her harm if she did. Two days later, he discovered that she had been trying to call police and smashed her phone (count 2). Two days after that, he again had forcible sexual intercourse with her (count 3). He had a significant and relevant criminal history. He had previously killed a pregnant partner for refusing to have sex with him, beating her to death by striking her with a didgeridoo some 10 to 11 times. He had no remorse nor insight. He was found to have “very poor” prospects of rehabilitation. It was found that he was “likely” to re-offend.

On 20 February 2024, Reeves J sentenced the respondent to a total effective sentence of imprisonment for nine years and two months, with a non-parole period of six years and five months. For counts 1 and 3, the Court imposed sentences of imprisonment for eight years and ordered that the sentences be served cumulatively to the extent of one year.

The Crown appealed to the Court of Criminal Appeal on two grounds: (1) that the individual sentences imposed on counts 1 and 3 were manifestly inadequate; and (2) that the total effective sentence and non-parole period imposed were manifestly inadequate. On 18 December 2024, the Court (Kelly, Huntingford and Burns JJ) allowed the appeal, re-sentenced the respondent to imprisonment for 12 years for each of counts 1 and 3, imposed a total effective sentence of imprisonment for 16 years, and a non-parole period of 11 years and three months.

This decision is significant as it assists in setting and maintaining appropriate sentences for serious examples of sexual violence committed within a domestic context.

DPP ORGANISATIONAL CHART



DPP OFFICE LOCATIONS

Darwin Office (Head Office)

Level 3, Old Admiralty Tower
68 The Esplanade
Darwin NT 0800
GPO Box 3321, Darwin NT 0801
Telephone: (08) 8935 7500

dpp.nt.gov.au

Freecall: 1800 659 449

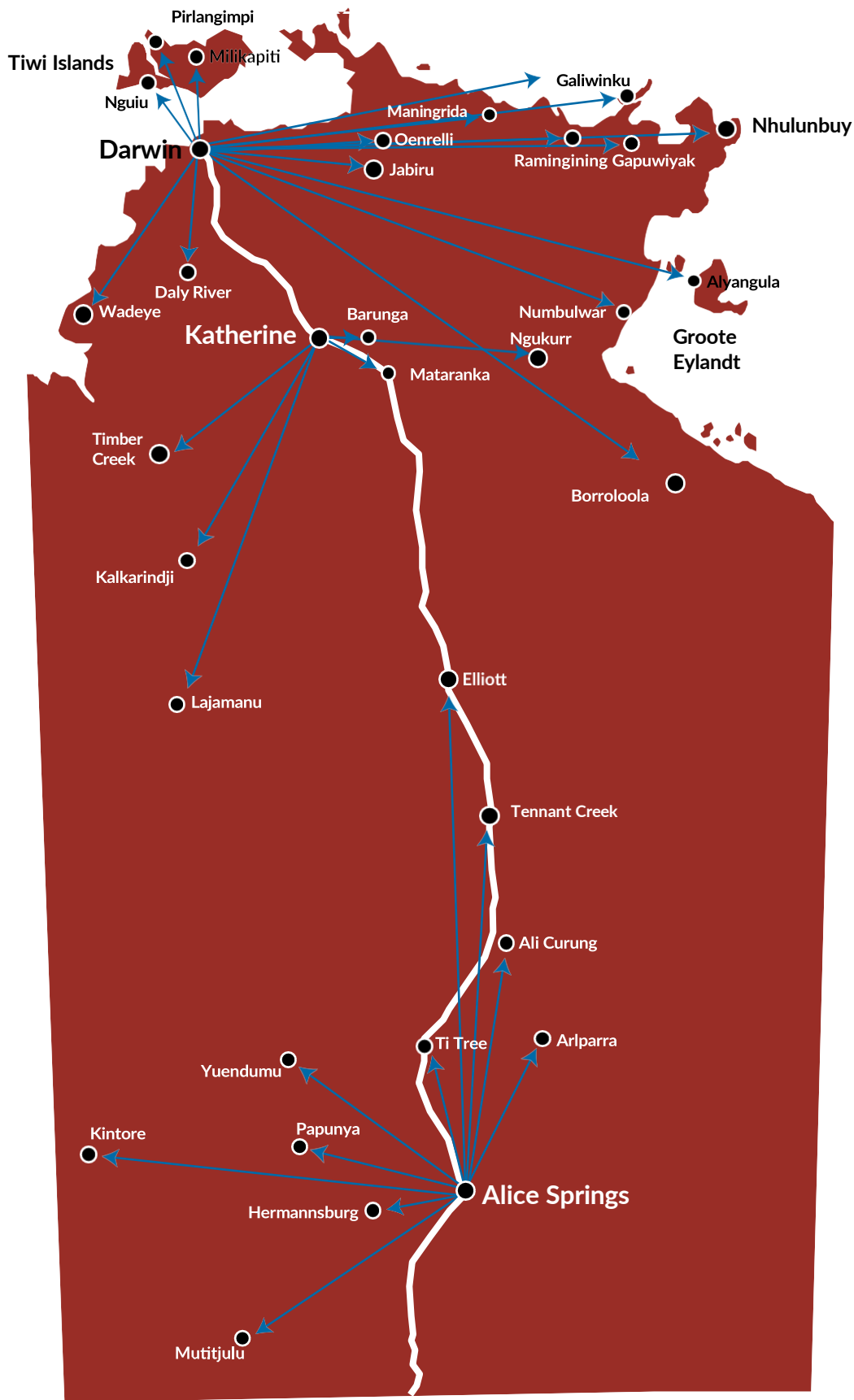
Katherine Office

Level 1, Big Rivers Government Centre
5 First Street
Katherine NT 0850
PO Box 1295, Katherine NT 0851
Telephone: (08) 8973 8813

Alice Springs Office

Level 1, Centrepont Building
Cnr Hartley Street and Gregory Terrace
Alice Springs NT 0870
PO Box 2185, Alice Springs NT 0871
Telephone: (08) 8951 5800

NT COURT LOCATIONS



CROWN PROSECUTIONS

The Crown Prosecutions unit of the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for conducting criminal prosecutions in the High Court, the Court of Criminal Appeal and the Supreme Court.

Over the 2024–25 reporting year, the Crown Prosecutions unit has managed and sustained a substantial workload, with a particularly high number of complex Supreme Court trials and appeals before the Court of Criminal Appeal.

Many of these matters have involved serious offences such as sexual offences, homicides, or other cases involving a death. The complexity of these trials is often heightened by the need to accommodate complainants and witnesses from remote communities, as well as navigate cultural and linguistic diversity.

Prosecutors in both Darwin and Alice Springs worked with exceptional commitment to maintain high standards of service to the Northern Territory community. Crown Prosecutions remains dedicated to delivering a first-class prosecutorial service, defined by excellence in advocacy and strong engagement with victims of crime.

Our key focus continues to be on the early resolution of charges where appropriate, together with thorough preparation of matters well in advance of trial. Professional development has been prioritised, with prosecutors participating in regular internal continuing professional development (CPD) sessions, as well as national conferences and advocacy workshops. Senior Crown Prosecutors have also provided external training to key justice partners, including the Northern Territory Police Force (for both recruit and detective training programs), Northern Territory Correctional Services, and the Sexual Assault Referral Centre.

In addition to their core work, prosecutors from both Darwin and Alice Springs have provided consistent support to the Summary Prosecutions team. This has included offering strategic guidance on hearings, advising on best practice in managing hearing lists, and delivering CPD sessions on topics such as bail and arrest preparation, the principles of *doli incapax* and Youth Justice Court procedures, strategies for assisting vulnerable witnesses, and the role and importance of representations.



SUMMARY PROSECUTIONS

The Summary Prosecutions team of the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for the conduct of prosecutions and prosecution-related activities in the Local Court and the Youth Justice Court across the Northern Territory.

Summary Prosecutions offices exist in three locations in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs. For Darwin matters, summary prosecutors appear in all criminal proceedings regardless of the seriousness of the offences, where charges are initiated by police. Prosecutors have conduct of the bail and arrest (B&A) list, directions hearing list, mental health list, and the hearing list for adult and youth matters.

In Katherine and Alice Springs, and at all the various Northern Territory circuit courts, police prosecutors appear in the initial stages of B&A and case management procedures of criminal matters. Summary prosecutors then assume responsibility for the matters once a matter is listed for directions hearing and hearing, or when they are requested to take carriage of complicated or sensitive plea hearings or applications.

Summary Prosecutions cover circuit courts over large geographical regions within the Northern Territory.

The circuit courts serviced by each section appear on the map at page 18 of this report.



Summary Prosecutors Adele Peluso and Abigail Gallagher.

TIG-ERs and Youth Justice Prosecutions Pilot

The Targeted Intervention Group – Early Resolutions (TIG-ERs) pilot program was launched in February 2025 to ease growing pressure on the criminal justice system by identifying and resolving appropriate matters at the earliest opportunity. Further information about the TIG-ERs team is included on page 7 of this report.

In 2025, the summary team also launched the Youth Justice Prosecutions Pilot, designed to enhance the management of youth matters within the Summary Prosecutions team and create exciting professional growth opportunities for summary prosecutors.

A key change is that the summary youth prosecutor who appeared in the Youth Justice Court will now work alongside the Crown prosecutor throughout the various stages of the case, including pleas, breaches, bail applications, and trials in the Supreme Court. By ensuring matters are carefully assessed at the summary level, we can reduce unnecessary Crown allocations and administrative work in the committals stream.



Elise Sibley, Lachlan Macdonald, Melanie Ralph, Lloyd Babb SC and Zara Gooden.

Summary Prosecutor training program

This reporting period also saw the launch of the 12-week induction training program in the Summary Prosecutions unit. The induction program is designed to provide new prosecutors with structured, hands-on experience across all key areas of Summary Prosecutions.

The program begins with an orientation to office systems, operational tools, and core guidelines, followed by early immersion in bail and arrest list preparation. New prosecutors shadow experienced prosecutors, practise endorsements, and make supervised first appearances, progressively building their capability and confidence.

From weeks 4 to 9, the program broadens into specialist court areas. Prosecutors rotate through the directions and hearing teams, gaining experience in managing representations, observing contested hearings, and working within bush circuit environments. Cultural awareness training supports effective work in regional matters. Exposure to the Mental Health and Youth Justice Court lists introduces specific legislation, procedures, and diversionary options, ensuring prosecutors are prepared for these sensitive jurisdictions.

The final weeks of the induction focus on practical readiness, with prosecutors allocated hearings and supported by mentors through their first contested matters. Circuit preparation is emphasised, ensuring participants are equipped to attend without direct supervision. By completion, graduates of the program have the knowledge, skills, and practical courtroom experience to manage a broad range of matters confidently and independently.

ALICE SPRINGS

The Alice Springs Summary Prosecutions team operates under the management of the Practice Manager for the southern region, with oversight from the Deputy Director. The team currently comprises six dedicated summary prosecutors, supported by professional legal assistants (PLAs) and Witness Assistance Service (WAS) officers. These support staff also collaborate closely with the Crown Prosecutions team based in Alice Springs, ensuring seamless coordination across prosecution functions.

The Summary Prosecutions team provides comprehensive services to the hearing courts at Alice Springs Local Court, managing an average of three to four hearings per court session. Workload is efficiently divided among team members to ensure thorough preparation and effective representation. In addition to servicing the Alice Springs courts, the team continues to support the southern bush circuits, including regular fortnightly sittings at Tennant Creek. The team also covers smaller circuits such as Yuendumu, Mutitjulu, Ti Tree, and Papunya, which convene less frequently but are vital to ensuring access to justice in remote communities.

Throughout the reporting period, there has been positive movement between the Crown and Summary teams, providing valuable professional development and broadening opportunities for staff. Summary prosecutors have gained experience instructing in Supreme Court trials and appearing in the Supreme Court for less complex breach matters and plea hearings, further enhancing their skills and contributing to the overall effectiveness of prosecution services in the region.

WORKING WITH POLICE

The DPP continues to work closely with the Northern Territory Police to ensure the effective progression of criminal matters through the justice system.

In 2025, prosecution liaison officers (PLOs) returned to the Summary Prosecutions unit to assist summary prosecutors with obtaining police views on the resolution of matters, ensuring disclosure of evidence, and assisting with locating witnesses and complainants. The PLOs have assisted the TIG-ERs team in the early resolution of appropriate matters and are an essential resource we hope will continue long into the future.

In 2025, the Prosecution Review Panel (PRP) was re-established with the goal of determining by review what actions or inactions may have contributed to unsuccessful prosecution matters. The PRP is made up of members from the DPP and NT Police, and will assess individual matters to determine whether additional education, training, procedural adjustments or referrals should be explored as a result of an unsuccessful prosecution. The PRP plays a critical role in improving justice outcomes by learning from matters where prosecutions have been unsuccessful.

The continued partnership between the DPP and NT Police is essential to achieving just outcomes, with the DPP relying on the quality of police investigations and police relying on the DPP's legal expertise to guide cases through the courts.





Case highlight: *Kirby v Kellie* [2025] NTSC 19

On 6 September 2024, following a contested hearing in the Local Court, the respondent was found guilty of five serious domestic violence offences relating to four separate instances of offending against the same victim. Those offences include choking/strangulation contrary to s 186AA(1) of the *Criminal Code* (Counts 1 and 4), aggravated assault contrary to s 188(1)-(2) of the *Criminal Code* (Counts 2 and 3), and recklessly endangering serious harm contrary to s 174D of the *Criminal Code* (Count 5). The maximum penalty for Count 5 was imprisonment for seven years; the maximum penalty for each of the other offences was imprisonment for five years. The judge sentenced the respondent to an aggregate term of imprisonment for nine months to be served by way of an Intensive Community Correction Order with four months home detention (although allowing him to leave his residence for work purposes).

The Crown appealed against the sentence on two grounds: (1) the learned sentencing judge erred in failing to prove adequate reasons; and (2) the learned sentencing judge erred in imposing a sentence that was manifestly inadequate in all the circumstances. The Supreme Court (Kelly J) allowed the appeal on both grounds.

As to the first ground, Kelly J found that his Honour had failed to meet the “minimum standard” required in providing reasons, and that they were “not sufficient to enable the reader/listener to understand the process of reasoning which led the trial judge to impose a sentence of nine months’ imprisonment to be served by way of an ICCO”. Significantly, as to the busy nature of Local Court lists, her Honour said: “And the offending, of course a lot could be said about that but I don’t have time.” If a judge does not have time to deliver reasons which achieve the minimum standard of enabling the parties and others to know the basis upon which the decision has been reached, the options are to adjourn to a date when the time is available, to adjourn another matter to make time available, or to deliver a decision with reasons to follow. (Obviously, the latter option is not practical in sentencing decisions in which the offender needs to understand the reasons for the sentence as it is pronounced.)

Justice Kelly resented the offender to a total effective term of imprisonment of three years and two months, to be wholly suspended, with an operational period of three years. In doing so, her Honour observed that the objective seriousness of the offending warranted a term of actual imprisonment not served in the community, but that given the passage of time since the original sentence, and so to not disrupt the offender’s rehabilitation and employment, it was appropriate to wholly suspend the sentence.



WITNESS ASSISTANCE SERVICE

The Witness Assistance Service (WAS) provides an individualised service to support victims, witnesses, and their families throughout their involvement in the criminal justice process. We believe that in all prosecutions, victims of crime should be treated with courtesy, respect, and dignity, and to have access to certain information about the case.

These rights are set out in the Guidelines of the Director of Public Prosecutions and in the Northern Territory Charter of Victim's Rights.

WAS staff are based in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs and provide specialist services in the Local and Supreme Courts, as well as regularly travelling to regional and remote court locations.

During this reporting period, WAS staff travelled to the following court locations:

- Barunga
- Mataranka
- Ngukurr
- Yarralin
- Timber Creek
- Lajamanu
- Kalkarindji
- Wadeye
- Galiwin'ku
- Wurrumiyanga
- Milingimbi
- Maningrida
- Nhulunbuy
- Jabiru
- Gapuwiyak
- Gunbalanya
- Borroloola
- Ramingining
- Pirlangimpi
- Tennant Creek

Recruitment action commenced in June 2025 to fill eight ongoing roles. When fully staffed, it is anticipated that the WAS team will include:

- A WAS manager based in Darwin;
- Four coordinators (Alice Springs, Katherine, Darwin (Summary) and Darwin (Crown)); and
- 14 WAS officers.

Interagency activities and networks

The WAS team continues to work and build working relationships with key stakeholders such as: Victims of Crime NT (VOCNT), Domestic Violence Legal Service (DVLS), Katherine Women's Information & Legal Service (KWILS), North Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Service (NAAFLS), Crime Victims Services Unit (CVSU), Katherine West Health Board, Women's Safety Services of Central Australia (WoSSCA), Tennant Creek Women's Shelter, Central Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Unit (CAAFLU), Central Australian Women's Legal Service (CAWLS), and Northern Territory Police to ensure victims are receiving an integrated and responsive service. The WAS team also ensures appropriate referrals are made to outside organisations: victims of crime counselling, sexual assault counselling, victims register etc.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

The Business Support team provide service and advice to executive management on the provision of corporate and business services, and the development and improvement of business capabilities and systems in DPP to staff.

These services include financial reporting, budgeting, corporate credit card and travel administration, human resource management, records management, procurement, recruitment, delegation administration, audit coordination, monthly processing and reconciliations, and systems support.

The Business Support team consists of four full-time equivalent staff: a manager business support, Darwin office manager, recruitment support officer, travel clerk and 0.5 full-time equivalent Alice Springs office manager. The office manager in Alice Springs also has responsibility for managing the Registry functions in the office.

ICT

The DPP's new case management system, *Batji*, will officially replace *CaseNet* on 1 July 2025, and will serve as the central platform for managing prosecution matters across the DPP, offering improved document workflows, complexity tracking, and diary scheduling. Decommissioning of *CaseNet* will commence from 1 July 2025, with full decommissioning scheduled for August 2025, marking the agency's transition to a more modern and integrated system.

Following the purchase of the agency's electric vehicle (EV) in 2023, the vehicle has been regularly used for metropolitan transport, contributing to the department's sustainability and fleet cost reduction goals. As of 30 June 2025, the EV has travelled approximately 2,971km, with positive feedback received from staff on its performance and reliability.

The EV charger installation project at Old Admiralty Tower and Heritage House is pending. The electrical engineer has completed their review, and the issues identified are currently being worked through and will be progressing through the design phase soon.

The compactus storage room on level 4 of Old Admiralty Tower was decommissioned in early 2025 to create additional office space, allowing for the installation of six workstations to accommodate growing staffing requirements.

A new lightweight Starlink device was acquired to support prosecutors working in remote locations. The device significantly improves internet connectivity in regional courts, enabling real-time access to key electronic systems such as Axon Justice, and Resolve, and enhancing communication during circuit travel.



Budget

Expenditure 30 June 2024

Rounded to dollars (\$)000

Budget	\$17,116
Revenue	\$851
Personnel	\$13,759
Operational	\$3,717
Variation	\$359

RECRUITMENT

Throughout the reporting period, we completed 105 separate recruitment actions to fill new positions and those vacant across our three offices. The effort from staff in addition to their usual duties is acknowledged and I am grateful.

A number of potential candidates continued to express their interest in working with the DPP, sending their expressions and qualifications through our bespoke DPP recruitment website.

The DPP remains committed to undertake proactive and timely recruitment, seeking to build a strong, diverse workforce that can respond to increasing demand, support professional development and ensure the effective administration of justice.



REGISTRY

Registry has welcomed the transition to electronic files in the Summary Prosecutions team, reporting marked improvements in efficiency and workflow management. By removing the time consuming processes of printing files and labels, the transition has freed staff to focus on higher-value tasks, while also greatly reducing the risk of misplaced or lost physical files.

The electronic systems in use from 1 July 2025 will provide immediate and secure access to case materials, improved matter tracking, and streamlined coordination across teams. This modernised approach not only aligns with the agency's commitment to environmental sustainability by significantly reducing paper usage, but also enhances the accuracy, security, and reliability of case management. The shift represents an important step in the DPP's broader digital transformation, ensuring that prosecutorial services remain efficient, responsive, and well-adapted to contemporary operational demands.

During the year, a live preliminary examination (PEM) register was also introduced to streamline the allocation and preparation of PEM matters. Each morning, a report is generated, identifying first-time matters that have been listed in the PEM stream requiring allocation. These matters are promptly added to the PEM register and assigned by the practice manager to the appropriate prosecutor. Once a matter is allocated, the PEM file is prepared as a priority to ensure compliance with brief service dates. The timely preparation and allocation of these files enables prosecutors to begin work without delay, often facilitating the early resolution of matters. This improved process enhances efficiency, ensures critical deadlines are met, and supports better case management outcomes for both the prosecution and the community.

FOCUS ON STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The DPP continued to focus its attention on staff health and wellbeing during the reporting period, with a number of initiatives introduced to promote resilience, encourage work-life balance and provide support services to staff.

R U OK? Day – a presentation by Jodi Truman

On 12 September 2024, staff came together as a workplace to mark *R U OK? Day* with an all-staff morning tea and an inspiring presentation by Jodi Truman, titled “Beyond R U Okay: *Creating Real Connections and Conversation.*” This national day is a reminder of the importance of checking in on the people around us, recognising that mental health challenges are often invisible and can affect anyone, regardless of role or circumstance.

Jodi, a former barrister who now works as a stress strategist and coach, brought both lived experience and professional insight to the conversation. She spoke candidly about the pressures of modern life, the stigma that can still surround mental health, and the barriers that often prevent people from seeking help.

Jodi encouraged us to take a mindful pause and reflect not only on our own wellbeing, but also on how we can be present for others. Drawing on the practical acronym “ALEC” – Ask, Listen, Encourage action, and Check in – Jodi showed us how small, intentional conversations can make a big difference. Her message was clear: by reaching out with genuine care, we can help break down isolation, foster resilience, and create a workplace culture where people feel supported and heard.





DPP Wellness Allowance Policy

The DPP is committed to providing a workplace that supports the health and wellbeing of all staff members. Our commitment to wellbeing reflects our belief that a healthy workplace is fundamental to our success as an organisation.

The DPP's Wellness Allowance Policy ("the wellness policy") provides financial support for staff engaging in wellness activities as a way to attain a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing, encompassing not just the absence of illness, but also the ability to lead a fulfilling life. By promoting a culture of wellness, we aim to enhance overall productivity, foster positive relationships, and empower our staff to thrive both personally and professionally. The policy applies to and is available for all staff, regardless of their employment status.

In this reporting year, 38 staff members across the Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs offices have accessed the wellness policy, with reimbursements being sought for a range of items such as: gym memberships; sports memberships such as netball and basketball; exercise equipment including sports attire and fitness devices; massages; and physiotherapy.

Mastering Workload Management: Overcoming Overwhelm & Procrastination - a presentation by Jodi Truman

Managing a demanding workload can be challenging, particularly in high-pressure environments that can often exist at the DPP. As a result, staff can experience overwhelm and procrastination, yet these challenges are often misunderstood or left unaddressed.

In June 2025, Jodi Truman delivered an all-staff training session on the nature and prevalence of overwhelm and procrastination with direct reference to the DPP setting. The session covered:

- Common underlying causes and why they frequently overlap;
- Practical strategies to mitigate and overcome these challenges; and
- Two evidence-based tools to enhance productivity and workload management.

This presentation was designed to provide clear, actionable strategies that can be immediately applied to improve focus, efficiency, and overall wellbeing in the workplace, all DPP staff were encouraged to attend and gain valuable insights into managing their workloads effectively.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The DPP is committed to providing opportunities for our staff to grow their knowledge and improve their skills to become more effective in the workplace and to increase job satisfaction.

This reporting year we proudly offered 28 training activities which were attended by staff across the office. Several diverse topics were covered, with many branches of learning and disciplines across both the legal and corporate space, with lawyers readily able to meet their continuing professional development (CPD) requirements.

Details of the training offered to staff during the reporting period is set out in the table below:

Course	Type	Date/s	Provider
Lexis+ Ai presentation	Corp	02/07/24	LexisNexis
Prosecuting in the Digital Age	Legal	12/07/24	DPP NSW
Parole Board information session	Legal	17/07/24	Parole Board of the NT
Domestic Violence Legal Service information session	Corp	01/08/24	Domestic Violence Legal Service
NT Police and DPP training day	Legal	06/08/24	DPP
“Positive Duty” information session	Corp	05/09/24	NT Anti-Discrimination Commissioner
R U OK? Day training	Corp	12/09/24	Jodi Truman
“It’s up to everyone to call it out” report launch	Corp	26/09/24	NT Children’s Commissioner
Community Court and Law & Justice Group	Legal	01/10/24	North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
Figtree training	Corp	02/10/24	Attorney-General’s Department
Self-represented presentation	Legal	24/10/24	DPP
Communicating effectively with witnesses who speak English as a second language	Legal	30/10/24	CDPP & ARDS
Getting the most out of police technology	Legal	06/11/24	DPP
Doli Incapax - Criminal Responsibilities & Juveniles	Legal	13/11/24	Professor Thomas Crofts
Victims Register	Legal	21/11/24	Crime Victims Services Unit
Questioning and conversation techniques	Legal	21/01/25	NT Police
Stress Mastery: resilience in practice	Legal	14/02/25	Law Society NT
myPerformance reviews online tool	Corp	17/02/25, 19/02/25	Attorney-General’s Department
Working effectively with defence	Legal	11/03/25	DPP NSW
Positive Workplace Culture	Corp	25/03/25, 27/03/25	Department of Corporate and Digital Development
Summary Prosecutions training sessions	Legal	28/03/25	DPP
Managing overwhelm and procrastination	Corp	28/03/25	Jodi Truman
Community Courts presentation	Legal	30/04/25	NT Local Court
<i>Bail and Youth Justice Amendment Act 2025</i>	Legal	02/05/25	Legal Policy, Attorney-General’s Department
Youth Justice and Child Protection NT Conference	Legal	12/06/25, 13/06/25	NT Local Court
Commencement of the <i>Domestic and Family Violence and Victims Legislation Amendment Act 2025</i> & <i>Attorney-General’s Legislation Amendment Act 2025</i>	Legal	20/06/25	Legal Policy, Attorney-General’s Department
Overwhelm and burnout – and taking care of YOU	Corp	25/06/25	Jodi Truman
Engaging and Supporting Teams	Corp	27/06/25	Healthy Minds



Case highlight: *Sullivan v The King* [2025] NTCCA 4

On 3 November 2023, Mr Roy Sullivan (“the appellant”) pleaded guilty to one count of causing damage to a conveyance by using fire contrary to s 243(1) of the *Criminal Code*. The maximum penalty for that offence was life imprisonment.

The appellant was 32 years of age. At around 11:40pm on 23 July 2023, he had an argument with the victim, a commercial fisherman, at Frances Bay. When police attended, he suggested that he would burn the victim’s Toyota LandCruiser and was told not to do so. At 1:53am on 24 July 2023, he sent a text message to an associate stating that he was going to “fire bomb” the victim’s car. At 3:56am, he entered a business on the dock, found a key to a forklift, drove to the victim’s LandCruiser, and flipped it on its side. He then took photographs of the LandCruiser before setting it on fire. After doing so, he returned to his boat where he filmed the fire and bragged about what he had done. He subsequently sent the videos to associates. The LandCruiser and its contents were completely destroyed, causing a loss of at least \$72,000.00.

Justice Barr sentenced the appellant to imprisonment for four years with a non-parole period of two years and six months. The appellant sought leave to appeal against his sentence alleging that it was “manifestly excessive”.

The Court (Southwood and Brownhill JJ, Riley AJ) dismissed the appeal.

Significantly, whilst the applicant had relied on “comparative” sentences in support of his contention, the Court observed (at [29]):

In considering those sentences it is necessary to also bear in mind the observations of this Court over a number of years indicating that sentences imposed for arson in the Northern Territory are too low and need to be increased. This view was expressed in *Ajax v The Queen* and, more recently, by this Court in *The King v Mamarika*. This Court respectfully agrees with those observations and, contrary to the submissions of the appellant, we note that they apply to all offences of arson. The maximum penalty for the offence is imprisonment for life, reflecting the seriousness with which the offence of arson is to be regarded.

The Court also rejected the appellant’s argument that the offending was less serious because the victim had insurance (at [24]), and the appellant’s argument that the motive of the appellant (which was revenge) was not a matter which could aggravate the offending (at [25]).

