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Photography

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This is Alice Springs: Special investigation from *7am*, hosted by award-winning writer and broadcaster Daniel James

Next week marks one year since the failed Voice referendum. To mark this moment, *7am* is publishing a three-part series hosted and reported by Yorta Yorta journalist Daniel James. The series will be published from Monday, October 14, 2024.

Alice Springs is the town where Peter Dutton killed the Voice. He made crime there a national obsession.

In August this year, the Country Liberal Party won the Northern Territory election in a landslide, promising to be tough on crime and lower the age of criminal responsibility to 10 years of age. This follows the Northern Territory government declaring an emergency situation in Alice Springs on March 27 as a response to an increase in youth crime.

Alice Springs has been subject to failed policy decisions for decades.

It is these factors, along with a recent apology by the NT police commissioner to First Nations Territorians, that compelled James to visit and find out for himself what life is like there.

“I came to Alice Springs determined not to be swayed by the media’s portrayal of a lawless and out-of-control town, a place where curfews have been the only way to arrest the havoc wreaked upon the streets by youth crime,” said James.

“I came expecting to hear those stories, but I also anticipated speaking to people who were willing to defend their patch, the place where they grew up and raised their family.



“What I heard and saw was despair, anger and distrust. The increase in crime – theft, aggravated burglaries, home invasions, assaults – goes a long way to explaining the tense atmosphere.”

The result of that trip is a three-part series to be aired on *7am* from October 14.

The series will explore how Alice Springs came to this point, what are the lasting effects of the NT intervention, whether the Territory police is able to truly reckon with and mend its relationship with Indigenous Territorians and what the path forward is for a town divided on racial lines and riven with disadvantage.

Schwartz Media’s head of audio, Sarah McVeigh, said she is looking forward to listeners hearing James’s insights on this complex issue.

“Daniel James’s reporting on Alice Springs is unlike anything you will hear elsewhere.

“He has a rare talent for connecting with people, whether it is a young person talking about their experience of being locked up or the woman tasked with fixing the police force.”

Schwartz Media’s editor-in-chief, Erik Jensen, said James is a vital new voice in journalism.

“Daniel approaches all his reporting with empathy and consideration. He is able to take listeners to places they would otherwise rarely go, to open up the real stories of this country.”

Daniel James is available for interviews.

Episodes will be released daily and will be available to listen on all major podcast platforms.