The Territory has recorded positive interstate migration for the first time since 1999, Treasurer Syd Stirling said today.

Mr Stirling said according to ABS data for the March quarter 2005, the Territory’s annual population growth rose to 1.3% - higher than national growth of 1.1% and the third highest in the country.

This is the seventh consecutive quarterly population increase for the Territory.

“Our population increased by 923 people in the quarter, with a total of 201,767 people now living in the Territory,” Mr Stirling said.

“Net interstate migration increased by 192 in the March quarter – the first increase since the December quarter 1999.

“Net overseas migration was also up by 85 people, while the natural increase (births minus deaths) was up 646.”

Mr Stirling said population growth was in line with the Territory’s growing economy.

“Prospects in the Territory are bright and people are recognising that and voting with their feet,” he said.

“This significant improvement in interstate migration reflects the Territory’s strengthening economy, particularly in the construction and tourism sectors.

“A growing population means more work for local business, more money in the economy and more jobs.

“Government will continue its efforts to attract more people to the Territory, particularly skilled labour, to keep the economy moving ahead.”

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