Correctional Services Minister Gerry McCarthy said a new steel mill at Darwin Correctional Centre will help prisoners gain new skills and get their lives back on track.

Mr McCarthy said the delivery and mobilisation of the FrameMaster F300 Cold Steel Frame Rolling Factory has signalled a new phase in vocational training for prisoners in the Territory.

“This Government’s new era in corrections has a strong focus on cutting the rate of reoffending and increased work skills learnt in prison will help us achieve this aim,” Mr McCarthy said.

“The factory will offer eligible prisoners construction industry training based on contracts obtained by BIITE to make steel wall frames, roof trusses, fame and truss fabrication and contracts to construct buildings.

“The partnership between NT Correctional Services and the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BITTE) last year won the Delivering Quality Education and Training Category in the NT Chief Minister’s Awards for Excellence in the Public Sector and I am sure this new factory will help the two organisations repeat this performance.

“The delivery of the hand rails along the new Howard Springs to Palmerston bike path is a great example of the opportunities this machine will bring to prisoners.

“It’s very positive to learn that 95% of the prisoners involved in the rolling mill project to date have gone on to work in the general community which is testimony to the hard work prisoners, training staff and prison officers are putting into this program to deliver successful outcomes.

“I look forward to hearing more success stories at our prisons as this Government continues to work towards cutting the reoffending rates so prisoners get a job as they build their new lives.”