The Territory’s first Information Commissioner is set from tomorrow to take up the task of rolling out perhaps the biggest legislative reform for government in recent times – the new freedom of information laws.

Mr Peter Shoyer, a former Assistant Information Commissioner in Queensland, will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Information Act across government, with the Act due to commence by July 1 this year.

"The commencement of the Information Commissioner is another significant milestone in the implementation of freedom of information laws, passed though the Territory parliament some twenty years after the laws were first introduced in Australia.

"Freedom of information laws for the Territory delivers on one of the Martin Government’s key election commitments and our promise of open and accountable government.

"Implementation of the Territory’s Information Act is well underway across Government agencies and the new Information Commissioner will take up overseeing that roll-out.

"I am confident that Mr Shoyer’s legal background and considerable experience in the implementation of freedom of information legislation will serve the Territory well."

The Information Commissioner’s responsibilities include:

- conducting independent reviews of agency decisions about access to government information,
- conducting independent reviews of agency decisions on amendments of personal information, and
- responding to complaints about breaches of information privacy principles.

Dr Toyne said the appointment of an independent Information Commissioner is fundamental to ensuring workability and integrity of the freedom of information and privacy laws.

The Territory’s Information Act, incorporating Freedom of Information, privacy principles and record keeping provisions, was passed in the Territory Parliament in October last year, following extensive public consultation.