The Territory’s job market remained relatively steady in March, according to the latest ABS Labour Force figures.

Treasurer Syd Stirling said the number of people employed in the Territory stayed the same from February to March 2003 at 98,800, however the March jobless rate rose slightly to 6% from the revised February figure of 5.8%.

"This is as a result of more people looking for work," Mr Stirling said.

"The Territory participation rate for March was 74% - the highest it’s been since May 2002.

"This is a sign that, despite a difficult time for the Territory economy, there is still a lot of confidence out there that things are on the improve and that more jobs will become available in the near future.

"It was always expected that there would be a slight drop off in jobs as the railway project drew to a close.

"The important thing is that employment will pick up again once the Wickham Point LNG Plant project gets underway and we experience the usual dry season boost in economic activity."