The government today welcomed positive signs that the jobs market in the Territory was about to turn around after a two-year decline.

Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said there was still a lot of hard work to be done, although the decline had levelled out.

The government was confident the jobs market would be heading into positive territory in coming months.

Mr Stirling highlighted the increase in employment in January over the previous month to 97,500, an increase of 400 during what is a normally quiet period in the jobs market.

While there were more people unemployed, the number of people working or seeking work as indicated by the participation rate continued to rise to be the highest in the nation at 74.5 per cent.

The trend unemployment rate remained steady at 8.3 per cent, the second highest in the nation behind Tasmania.

"The Territory’s jobless rate has been trending upwards for almost two years now," Mr Stirling said.

"Even the former CLP Government recognised it had a problem.

"Labor is on the task to fix that problem it inherited.

"This will not happen overnight but the signs are looking good. With the railway underway, good prospects for gas, and some substantial building projects under construction or in the pipeline, the government is confident that the worst is behind us and the jobs situation in the Territory is turning around."