Chief Minister, Clare Martin, today announced that she had asked her Chief of Staff, Dennis Bree, to head a taskforce to drive Indigenous Economic Development from the key role of Deputy Chief Executive of the Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs.

"This Government has inherited a serious economic development problem with one fifth of its resident adult population impoverished, structurally detached from the labour market and ill equipped to engage in it," she said.

"To achieve an employment rate equivalent to other Territorians, an extra 2000 jobs will need to be created for indigenous people each year for the next decade. Also, there are significant, and in the case of housing, almost overwhelming demands for infrastructure in communities.

"These demands must be met and this can only be done in cooperation with the Commonwealth Government - I have asked Dennis Bree to take on these tasks.

"Dennis has played a key role in our transition to government. He was a critical link between government and the public service, and government and business for the new administration.

"From the beginning, Dennis and I had seen it as a two year job after which he would resume his successful public service career. The opportunity for that to occur has now arisen.

"In his new job, he will be responsible for creating jobs in the bush and addressing the backlog of community infrastructure, and to do this by developing and implementing new initiatives with the Federal Government and indigenous communities and organisations.

"The Taskforce on Indigenous Economic Development will include representatives of the NT Government, industry, Commonwealth agencies, Land Councils and ATSIC.

"Providing jobs and higher living standards for indigenous communities is a core challenge of this government and placing Dennis in this role exemplifies our commitment.

"I want to take this opportunity to thank Dennis for his support over the last two years in a critical role, and I know he will continue to serve the Government and the Territory well in his new position."

Ms Martin said that Jamie Gallacher, Senior Advisor to Deputy Leader Syd Stirling, has been appointed to the role of Chief of Staff.