The Northern Territory Government is to retain the Darwin Port Corporation (DPC) as a Government Business Division (GBD).

The DPC owns and operates Darwin’s East Arm Wharf and other assets, and had been considered for Government Owned Corporation (GOC) status.

Transport and Infrastructure Minister Dr Chris Burns said the DPC had a pivotal role to play in the Government’s strategic development of the Australasia trade route.

“GOC status would require the DPC to focus predominantly on commercial outcomes,” Dr Burns said.

“With the port, railway and gas industries still in their infancy, it is vital that the DPC has the flexibility to work with the whole of government in contributing to the Territory’s long-term economic success.

“We will take another look at granting GOC status in three years time.”

East Arm Wharf was built at a cost of $170 million, and the Government has plans for further significant investment, including the construction of a bulk-loading facility.

“We want to build on the DPC’s achievements in improving its organisation and efficiency,” Dr Burns said.

“We will also streamline governance structures to facilitate communication between the board, the minister and the CEO.”

Key features that distinguish suitability for GOC status compared with GBD status are the size of the business, the source of its revenue and its strategic role in industry development.

A government business with a large turnover, and which generates most of its revenue from the provision of services to non-governmental clients, is likely to be suited to being a GOC.

DPC’s turnover from external clients is relatively small at this stage.

East Arm Wharf is a key government infrastructure asset due to the strategic link between the wharf and the railway and the role it plays in the vision of Darwin as an intermodal transport hub.