Justice Minister Dr Peter Toyne has today moved to ensure the Territory Prison Service remains within the public sector.

"Legislative changes passed today confirm the status of the prison service as part of the wider public sector," he said.

Dr Toyne said the CLP government moved to privatisate Territory prisons by stealth by permitting employment of private security guards as part of a claimed cost saving measure.

"This government committed to remove the provision allowing use of private security guards in Territory jails to reassure the community of our firm intention to keep prison management where it should be – in the hands of the public sector.

"We have seen many examples interstate of unsuccessful privatisation of prison management.

"The Territory Government is not about to allow a privatisation circus to occur in our jails.

"Prison management is a necessary and very important government responsibility and for that reason it will remain in the hands of the public sector," said Dr Toyne.

Dr Toyne said the CLP actions effectively vilified the professional prison officers managing our prisons.

"Their actions caused concern among prison officers and their Association with fears their career security and conditions of service would be undermined.

"This government is committed to supporting the public sector, including our prison officers who do a difficult and responsible job in managing our prisons," said Dr Toyne.