The Minister for Justice, Dr Peter Toyne, today announced the Government would instigate a staged Review of Custodial Services to address immediate issues and to provide future direction for the agency across the Territory.

"The review will provide some real steps forward for correctional services and a process to systematically address resourcing and management issues."

"The Government and the NT Prison Officers Association and Senior Prison Officers Association acknowledge there are problems within the system that we need to work through to address, and this assessment will do that in a systematic format and provide a solid framework for the future," Dr Toyne said.

"Preceding the review Chief Executive Officer Richard Coates will work with the Associations to address these immediate operational problems, including staffing levels, rostering, and work practices."

"There are some immediate steps we can take to ensure staffing rosters are satisfactorily covered such as increasing recruitment processes, looking at escort duties and rotating some off-line positions."

Dr Toyne said there are longer term and broader issues that will be considered in a comprehensive Correctional Services Custodial Arrangements Review.

These issues include

- the implementation and operation of the new Integrated Offender Management program
- the adequacy of rehabilitation programs,
- the operations and management of correctional institutions
- the adequacy and appropriateness of existing policies and work practices
- the future recruitment and training and development needs of staff
- prisoner management, employment and education

"We will now move to secure a consultant with experience in the correctional services field, and in particular with experience in the implementation of integrated offender management programs," Dr Toyne said.

The terms of reference of the Custodial Services Review will be...
developed in the immediate future in consultation with both Prison Officers Associations.