Jobs within the NT Public Sector rose by more than 560 in the 12 months to June 2004, Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said today.

Mr Stirling said the average NTPS staffing level for the June quarter 2004 was 15,103 compared to an average 14,538 in the June quarter 2003 – a boost of 565.

Comparing the June quarter 2004 to the March quarter 2004, there was an increase of 292 staff.

“The public sector workforce plays a crucial role in the development of the Territory and it is fantastic to see so many more job opportunities being created within the NTPS,” Mr Stirling said.

“Many of the new NTPS positions can be attributed to Government’s commitment to fund the employment of more police, more teachers and more nurses.

“As one of the Territory’s biggest employers, the Martin Government is committed to making the NTPS an attractive employer.

“We are injecting an extra $1.3 million a year to enhance living conditions and improve access to skills development for the Territory’s 1700 public sector workers based in remote locations.

“We have introduced 14 weeks’ maternity leave for public sector workers – the first Australian jurisdiction to do so – and removed the compulsory retirement age of 65 years.

“We have also developed comprehensive strategies aimed at increasing the number of Indigenous people and people with disabilities in the NTPS.

“Our $160 million Jobs Plan includes a commitment to employ an extra 200 apprentices in the NTPS over three years and we have delivered the biggest capital works budget the Territory has ever seen.

“Job creation in the public sector also has positive spin off benefits throughout the economy. The wages generated will provide a boost to consumption, and have other positive flow-through effects for local business.

“All of these initiatives are aimed at boosting jobs in the Territory – in both the public and private sector – and keeping the Territory moving ahead.”