Chief Minister Paul Henderson said today a package of legislation would be introduced to Parliament this week to make the current Government the most transparent, accountable and open in the Territory’s history.

Mr Henderson said the Government was introducing a members’ Code of Conduct, Whistleblowers legislation and modernising the law around Members disclosing their interests.

“This legislative package modernises the way the Parliament and Government operates. It builds on the work already done by this Government when we introduced Freedom of Information legislation, a new Estimates Committee and opened up the Parliament to closer public scrutiny.

“The Code of Conduct sets out enforceable principles of ethical conduct and standards of behaviour for Members of the Legislative Assembly. It goes to the principles of integrity, accountability, responsibility, and acting in the public interest.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct can lead to Members being taken before the Privileges Committee. That Committee has the power to take action up to and including recommending a Member be removed from the Assembly or jailed.

The Declaration of Members Interests Bill modernises old legislation, requiring Members to declare their interests more rapidly and clarifies what interests should be declared. Members must disclose the personal pecuniary interests, such as shareholdings and real estate. They must also disclose interests held by spouses, de facto partners and dependent children.

The Government is also introducing Whistleblowers legislation to the Parliament.

The Public Interest Disclosure Bill, or Whistleblowers’ Bill, will encourage the disclosure of information about serious misconduct or mismanagement in the public sector.

“Under the legislation, anyone who believes a public body or public officer has engaged in improper or criminal conduct will be able to raise their concerns without fear of reprisals or identification,” Mr Henderson said.

Under the legislation, public officers include members of Parliament and local government councils, members or employees of public bodies and public office holders appointed by the Administrator or a Minister.