The Bill protects people who make disclosures or who may suffer reprisals, and ensures any impropriety revealed is properly dealt with.

The Bill is not a response to any lack of professionalism but is a demonstration of Government’s support for open, accountable Government.

The Bill has involved a long and extensive consultation process that included a discussion paper and discussion Bill for public comment.

The Legislation has three main aims:

- protects people making disclosures from reprisals
- provides a mechanism for people to make disclosures
- provides for those disclosures to be investigated in relation to improper conduct of public servants and/or public bodies

Anyone can make a disclosure.

The information and identity of the complainant will be kept confidential. The complainant cannot be sued or dismissed for a disclosure.

Disclosures can be made for conduct that is criminal, including bribes, inappropriate bias, breach of trust, misuse of confidential information.

Disclosures can also be made for actions involving substantial misuse or mismanagement of public resources.

The Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner has the discretion not to investigate if satisfied the complaint is trivial, vexatious or contains misleading information.

To make a false or misleading disclosure is an offence carrying a maximum penalty of $44,000 or two years jail. This reflects the seriousness of a disclosure.

The Bill also makes it an offence carrying a maximum penalty of $44,000 or two years jail to take action or reprisals against a person involved in a complaint.
• The current Information Commissioner will take on the role of Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner (so she will have a dual role)

• The Commissioner is independent.

• The Bill covers public bodies to include public service agencies, local government councils, government-owned corporations, bodies established under legislation for a public purpose and other prescribed bodies supported through NT Government funding.

• 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.

• Protection for reporting improper conduct to the media is not part of any whistleblowers legislation in Australia

• The laws are transparent and will be made public in an annual report – much like the current Ombudsman’s report

• A report on any matter arising in relation to a disclosure can be presented to the Minister for tabling in Parliament