Police Minister Paul Henderson today welcomed the arrival of two Labradors — Scent and Monte — as part of the Territory’s first police dog drug unit.

“This is a great addition to the Territory Police Force’s capacity to detect drugs, from planes and barges servicing remote communities, to amphetamine laboratories in our major centres,” said Mr Henderson.

“They can detect cannabis, amphetamine, cocaine, ecstasy and heroin.

“Quite simply, Scent and Monte with their noses can do things and go places on four legs that our police officers can’t.

“It’s been funded from the $75 million Building Our Police Force Plan, and is part of the Martin Labor Government taking seriously the enormous damage that can occur from drug abuse — especially amongst younger Territorians.

Mr Henderson congratulated police dog handlers Senior Constable Richard O’Brien and Constable 1st Class Dave Young for filling the human side of the new police team.

“I know there was a lot of competition from their colleagues for getting to be the first members of the new unit, and it is a credit to their enthusiasm, skills and training that they achieved this historic first.

“The new unit reflects the very real commitment we have to making inroads into the problems of drug abuse.

“This includes:

- The enactment of drug house legislation, which has led to the seizure of over $600,000 worth of drugs and 67 arrests across the Territory
- The enhancement of legislation which allows the confiscation of property derived from the sale of drugs
- The establishment of the Remote Community Drug Desk within the Drug Enforcement Section.

“Our two newest recruits will be used throughout the Territory, and will be a great addition to the Force.”