A national plan promoting governments’ role in ensuring safety in the mining industry was launched today.

The plan, the Strategic Mine Safety Framework Realising a Safe and Healthy Mining Industry – the Contribution of Government, was launched at the inaugural Ministerial Council for Minerals and Petroleum Resources in Canberra today.

Minister for Business, Industry and Resource Development Paul Henderson expressed strong support for the plan.

“The Northern Territory mining industry has a good record in mine safety,” Mr Henderson said.

“For 2000/01 there were just 7.7 lost time injuries per million hours worked, which is lower than the national rate.

“Despite having a good record, the industry cannot rest on its laurels. It is primarily industry’s responsibility to ensure health and safety practices are maintained and improved on mining sites.

“The Northern Territory’s new Mining Management Act sets out the responsibilities for mine owners, operators and workers in relation to safety and health.

“It encourages industry to achieve best practice standards, not by setting minimum prescribed standards but by requiring each mine site to develop an auditable safety regime specific to that mine site.

“The Strategic Mine Safety Framework sets out in principle the role of governments in its contribution to realising a safe and healthy mining industry.

“The Territory Government acknowledges that role and fully supports the Framework.”