Parliament today passed new, simplified pool safety legislation said Local Government Minister John Ah Kit.

“The principle of safer pools is overwhelmingly supported by the community and the new, simplified Act has several important features for Territorians,” said Mr Ah Kit.

“A new Community Safety Standard which allows existing pool owners to take personal responsibility for looking after safety in their own back yards by making a simple declaration.

“The new Community Safety Standard is a more workable and practical solution to backyard safety.

“If people need any assistance with the new Community Safety Standard – or the modified Australian Standard – they can talk with a Pool Safety Advisor for free.

“Government will also encourage people to upgrade their pools sooner rather than later through a generous incentive scheme.

“For new pools, owners will be required to meet the modified Australian Standard.

“However, for both the new Community Safety Standard and the Modified Australian Standard standards a neighbouring property will no longer affect the compliance of a backyard pool or spa.

“While no one has appealed a decision of the Swimming Pool Authority yet importantly pool owners still have access to an independent Review Committee.

“I thank the members of the Review Committee, Mr Bob Beadman, Ms Sue Shearer of the Real Estate Institute of the NT and Ms Sue Parry of the Royal Life Saving Society for making themselves available if needed for Territorians.

“This Government took the hard decisions needed to improve the safety of our pools for young children. It hasn’t been easy to admit that we took the wrong path, but we did, and we have worked on a safe and sensible solution.

“That is something the Opposition were never capable of doing,” said Mr Ah Kit.