Police Minister Paul Henderson has this morning introduced into Parliament new legislation to further strengthen the Territory’s DNA laws.

Under amendments in the Police Administration Amendment Bill 2004, for the first time Police would be able to use the DNA database to assist in identifying missing people and victims of crime and tragedy.

“For families, the long wait of confirming if their loved ones are amongst those killed in natural disasters or tragic events such as the Bali bombings can add dramatically to their heartache,” Mr Henderson said.

“While the DNA database can currently only be used in criminal investigations, the amendments introduced today would allow police to use the information in this important area.”

The Bill would also improve clarity and certainty in the legislative basis for protecting voluntary DNA samples to be used in the investigation of serious crimes such as murder, terrorism and paedophilia.

“Northern Territory DNA legislation is already regarded as the most effective in Australia, and this Bill will further strengthen the use of DNA against crime,” said Mr Henderson.

The Police Administration Amendment Bill 2004 is expected to be passed in the October sittings.