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POWERFUL NEW TOOL TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

Northern Territory Police will now be better able to help protect children from convicted paedophiles with the official launch today of the Northern Territory’s Child Protection Register, Police Minister Paul Henderson said.

The Register is the central element of the Martin Government’s Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Registration) Bill 2004.

The new register encompasses anyone in prison or serving a supervised sentence for a sexual offence against a child, including sexual intercourse, gross indecency, indecent dealing and child pornography.

“Sexual offences against children are truly horrific and disturbing crimes, and this package of measures is another step in doing what we can to help protect our children,” Mr Henderson said.

“Any one convicted of a sexual offence against children will now be required to have their personal details entered onto this police database, giving police a powerful new intelligence tool in helping to protect our children from these horrific crimes by keeping track of known offenders.”

Depending on the seriousness of the offence for which the person was convicted they will have to stay on the database for up to 15 years, and for as long as a person is on the database they are banned from working in or even applying for a job that would bring them into close contact with children.

In a further strengthening their powers to help protect children, the legislation also allows police to apply for a court order banning a known offender from going to places or events where they pose a threat to kids.

“There is nothing more valuable than our children, and that is why the rate of recidivism amongst child sex offenders is truly alarming,” said Mr Henderson.

“This tough new package gives police added powers to help protect our children from these known predators.”

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