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PAEDOPHILE RESTRAINING ORDERS COME INTO FORCE

The Government's new laws to allow courts to prevent convicted paedophiles from using the internet to continue their evil practices will come into force today.

Attorney-General Michael Atkinson says the law will allow the courts, through the new Child Sex Offender Register, to prohibit a paedophile from using the internet and give police the authority to enter premises and seize any equipment to enforce the ban.

"We know that the old spectre of the paedophile hanging around outside schools and playgrounds to prey on children has developed into the virtual playgrounds on the internet," Mr Atkinson says.

"We know that paedophiles use the internet to download images to satisfy their perverted lifestyle.

"We also know that paedophiles use chat-rooms to pose as children to groom and lure children from the virtual world into the real world.

"These laws are designed to stop them from having the means to do that," the Attorney-General says.

Mr Atkinson says that while the Government is doing what it can to deny these offenders the opportunity to use technology to bypass traditional policing methods, a great deal of responsibility for children using the internet must lie with parents.

"Today many homes have more than one computer and perhaps some of these are in the bedrooms of children.

"Parents need to ensure that their children are using the internet safely.

"I would also urge parents to consider using one of the many filters available to restrict the access of sites that can be accessed through home computers," Mr Atkinson says.

The Attorney-General paid tribute to Family First MP Dennis Hood, who first brought the idea to the Parliament as a Private Members Bill.

The Government adopted the bill when it came to the House of Assembly and made a series of amendments to further strengthen its effect.

"I have always been prepared to listen to good ideas wherever they came from and this was an area that needed to be addressed.

"Together with Mr Hood we have developed a law that will make our children safer," Mr Atkinson says.