

Road Transport (General) Application of Road Transport Legislation Declaration 2023 (No 7)

Disallowable instrument DI2023-254

made under the

***Road Transport (General) Act 1999*, section 13 (Power to exclude vehicles, persons or animals from road transport legislation)**

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Section 13 (1) of the *Road Transport (General) Act 1999* (the Act) provides that the Minister may declare that the road transport legislation, or a provision of the road transport legislation, does not apply to a vehicle, person or animal in a place or circumstance stated in the declaration. Subsection 13 (3) of the Act makes such a declaration a disallowable instrument.

This declaration has been prepared to accommodate the Rally of Canberra 2023 (the event). The event has been scheduled to start on 16 November 2023, inclusive of the Testing stage, but may need to be rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances, such as inclement weather. Accordingly, the instrument expires on 17 December 2023 to allow the organisers reschedule the event if required due to the weather.

This instrument provides that certain parts of the road transport legislation do not apply to a designated vehicle or the driver of a designated vehicle, while participating in a special stage of the event while a special stage is ‘active’. These ‘special stages’ are conducted in a controlled environment that are closed to non-entrants.

The declaration is a disallowable instrument and must be presented to the Legislative Assembly within 6 sitting days after its notification pursuant to Section 61 of the *Legislation Act 2001*.

Human rights implications

During the development of this instrument, due regard was given to its effect and the operation of the rally in relation to the compatibility with human rights as set out in the *Human Rights Act 2004* (HRA).

Section 28 of the HRA provides that human rights may be subject only to reasonable limits set by laws that can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

Section 28 (2) of the HRA provides that in deciding whether a limit on a human right is reasonable, all relevant factors must be considered, including:

- a) the nature of the right affected
- b) the importance of the limitation
- c) the nature and extent of the limitation
- d) the relationship between the limitation and its purpose
- e) any less restrictive means reasonably available to achieve the purpose the limitation seeks to achieve.

Section 13 of the HRA provides a right for people to move freely within the ACT.

The declarations in this instrument do not of itself restrict a person's freedom of movement within the Territory, however the operation of the event in closing parts of the forest in which the event will be conducted to members of the public will restrict the free movement of people in that area of the Territory during the event. As parts of the road transport legislation are being disapplied for the event to operate as intended, vehicles will be travelling in parts of the forest in excess of the usual speed limits and in a manner not consistent with the road rules. As such, the restriction on the free movement of people in those parts of the forest at those times is considered reasonable and proportionate to ensure safety of non-participants and represents the least restrictive approach that enables the event to proceed.

Climate change implications

There are not considered to be any climate change implications arising from the instrument or the event it supports.

Clause notes

Clauses 1 and 2 of the instrument are formal provisions dealing with the name and commencement of the instrument.

Clause 3 provides that the *Motor Accident Injuries Act 2019* does not apply to a designated vehicle, or a motor vehicle involved in a motor accident with a designated vehicle, while being used to participate in a ‘special stage’ of the event for any period beginning on an event official declaring the special stage ‘active’ for a testing session, media event, corporate event day or rally competition and ending on an event official declaring the ‘special stage’ ‘inactive’.

The event is held under the auspices of Motorsport Australia. A Certificate reflecting currency of the policy up to 30 September 2024 provides up to \$100 million of public liability cover for any one occurrence, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the insurance policy. However, this policy does not operate where *Motor Accident Injuries Act 2019* insurance is in force, except where specifically excluded by law. For this reason, the *Motor Accident Injuries Act 2019* does not apply in the circumstances specified in the instrument.

Clause 4 provides that various road transport legislation dealing with vehicle registration and vehicle standards, driver licensing and road rules, do not apply to a designated vehicle or the driver of a designated vehicle while participating in a ‘special stage’ of the event beginning on an event official declaring that a special stage is ‘active’ and ending on an event official declaring the stage ‘inactive’. In practice an event official may ‘declare’ an event stage to be active in a variety of ways, for example by waving a flag, or making a hand signal, or using signal lights. The definition of designated vehicle extends to official or promotional vehicles being used for official purposes during the event.

Clause 5 contains definitions for the instrument.

Clause 6 explains that the declaration expires on 17 December 2023. This provides for circumstances where the scheduled date of the event needs to be changed due to unforeseen circumstances, such as inclement weather.

The Schedules provides maps that defines the road or road related areas where the instrument has effect.