



environment ACT
PART OF THE ACT GOVERNMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF URBAN SERVICES



MOTOR SPORTS NOISE

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION POLICY

Revised to include draft amendments October 2002



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT

MOTOR SPORTS NOISE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION POLICY

NOTE: This Environment Protection Policy (EPP) will be notified as an amendment to the Noise EPP and will form Schedule 1 to that EPP. An abridged Glossary of Terms for the Noise EPP has been attached to assist in reading this document. Terms used in the policy which are defined in the Act are in bold. Terms defined in the policy are underlined.

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1. Background and Application

Noise is intrinsic to motor sports. While a number of steps, such as use of more effective mufflers and, in favourable topographic situations, the erection of sound barriers can be taken to reduce the adverse impact of noise from motor sports, noise in excess of the **zone noise standard** is inevitable at existing ACT facilities.

This policy has been developed to balance the need to provide adequate protection to neighbouring residents from the noise with the rights of motor sports enthusiasts to participate in their sport in accordance with the objects of the *Environment Protection Act 1997* (the Act).

A number of motor sports facilities exist in the ACT and these impact to varying degrees on nearby residents. It is not economically practicable to relocate existing facilities in the foreseeable future.

This policy applies to facilities in existence on 1 June 1998. A separate policy will apply to any motor sports facility that may be developed in the future. That policy will reflect decisions made during the planning approval process for the facility.

In line with the Objects of the Act (specifically section 3(c)) and comments received from public consultation about the contents of this EPP, it is intended to require that motor sport facilities which are part of the Fairbairn Park Cluster work progressively to reduce their noise levels.

While the policy specifically covers **environmental authorisations** for motor sports facilities, authorisations issued for single motor sports events will be consistent with the policy. Note that separate arrangements apply to the Rally of Canberra which is a single event held at a number of facilities and Summernats which is authorised under an environmental authorisation covering a range of activities at Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC).

2. Existing Facilities

There is a number of facilities in the vicinity of Fairbairn Park which are being, or have been, used for motor sports. These facilities are Fairbairn Park, Sutton Park, the National Capital Motor Sports Facility and Kowen Forest. As these facilities impact on the same residential areas, they are treated as a cluster (the 'Fairbairn Park cluster') under this policy.

NOTE: The Fairbairn Park cluster concept is a mechanism by which the **EPA** allocates event credits to facilities. Separate authorisations are issued to each facility and the facilities can operate independently of one another. If an operator wants more event credits than are allocated to that facility by the **EPA**, the operator can appeal the decision to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

EPIC is primarily an events centre which occasionally holds motor sports events. The **environmental authorisation** for EPIC will be negotiated to cover all events and any motor sports events, including Summernats, held there will need to comply with the general requirements of that authorisation.

The other facilities used for motor sports are Stromlo Forest (including the Pipeline), Uriarra Forest and Pierces Creek Forest. Motor sports at Stromlo Forest impact on a separate residential area and will be treated separately under this policy. Motor sports at Uriarra Forest and Pierces Creek Forest do not impact on residential areas and so are not subject to any restrictions under this policy.

2.1. Rally of Canberra

The Rally of Canberra is a major international event which is held at a number of facilities in the ACT. The Rally will be the subject of a separate **environmental authorisation** because of the need for consistent requirements between facilities and an integrated approach to the management of this event.

3. Compliance Location

Existing motor sports facilities are generally unable to comply with **zone noise standards** at their lease boundaries.

The major adverse environmental impact from noise from motor sports is on residential areas located in the vicinity of the facility.

Recognising that the purpose of this policy is to limit the **environmental harm** caused by noise from motor sports, but in a way that takes due account of economic and social considerations, the **compliance location** is established for each facility in or near to existing residential areas most affected by the noise.

Environmental authorisations which permit motor sports events to emit noise in excess of the zone standard will specify the relevant **compliance location** and requirements relating to the noise the events generate at that location as conditions of the authorisation.

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The **compliance locations** for existing motor sports facilities are:

Facility	Compliance Location	Zone Noise Standard applying
Fairbairn Park cluster	Ridgeway, NSW— Latitude 35°19'59".57 S Longitude 149°15'02".07 E	45 dB(A)
Stromlo Forest (Blewitts)	'Kallenia Rivers'— Belconnen/Stromlo - Latitude 35°18'0" S Longitude 149°01'58" E and/or Latitude 35°16'59" S Longitude 149°02'22" E	45 dB(A) 45 dB(A)
Pipeline	Latitude 35°17'7" S Longitude 149°02'41" E and/or Latitude 35°16'59" S Longitude 149°02'22" E	45 dB(A) 45 dB(A)

4. Measures to Limit Adverse Environmental Impact

A number of factors contribute to the degree of adverse impact on residential areas from noise from motor sports events:

- the level of the noise;
- the number of events each year;
- the time at which the event takes place;
- the spread of events during the year; and
- the amount of warning ('prior notification') provided to residents about upcoming events.

The policies outlined below deal with each of these factors. The policies have been developed to provide as much certainty as is realistically practical both to people undertaking motor sports activities and to people affected by the noise from such activities. The conditions described below will be applied only to events which generate noise in excess of the **zone noise standard** at the **compliance location**. There

are no restrictions on events which do not exceed the **zone noise standard** at the **compliance location**.

Two other factors which do, to an extent, contribute to the adverse impact of noise from motor sports are not addressed in this policy:

- While a motor sports event may take place over a period of, for example, six hours, a number of races will be held during this time, with gaps in between the individual races. Thus, the period of **excessive noise** will be somewhat less than six hours in total. The races are, however, generally frequent enough to cause loss of amenity throughout the entire period of the event.
- The characteristics of the noise generated by different classes of vehicle varies. The complexity of attempting to differentiate between the different classes of vehicle in this policy is not warranted as the noise from all classes of vehicle is broadband.

4.1. Level of the Noise

Restrictions in this policy on the level of noise from motor sports at the **compliance location** are expressed as dB(A) above the **zone noise standard** applying at the **compliance location**.

In general, the greater the amount by which noise exceeds the **zone noise standard**, the greater the **environmental harm** caused. The policy permits noise levels which exceed the **zone noise standard** by varying amounts, but requires a reduction in the total number of events held if noisier events are to be held. This balancing of factors is achieved through the event credits scheme outlined in 4.2, below.

No event may exceed 65 dB(A) at the **compliance location** through the use of event credits.

4.2. Number of Events Each Year

A maximum number of events which generate noise up to 5 dB(A) above the **zone noise standard** is specified for each facility or cluster of facilities. The number of such events is controlled by fixing the maximum

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number of event credits which can be used at each facility in this policy.

Events generating noise above the zone standard at the **compliance location** are permitted according to the following table:

Maximum noise permitted above zone noise standard at the compliance location	Number of event credits required to stage the event
2.5 dB(A)	0.5
5 dB(A)	1
7.5 dB(A)	1.5
10 dB(A)	2
12.5 dB(A)	2.5
15 dB(A)	3
17.5 dB(A)	3.5
20 dB(A)	4 *

The maximum permitted noise level which can be obtained using event credits is 65 dB(A). At facilities where the **compliance location** has a **zone noise standard** of 45 dB(A), up to 4 event credits can be used for any one event.

Events which are not monitored directly for noise shall be assigned the highest noise level experienced from previous monitoring of a comparable event.

The number of event credits allocated to each facility annually is calculated to enable existing levels of activity to continue. The annual number of event credits allocated to each facility is:

Fairbairn Park Cluster	27
Stromlo Forest (including the Pipeline)	7

4.3. Time at Which the Event Takes Place

Events may be held during the day, between 9 am and 5 pm, or in the evenings, between 5 pm and 10 pm. The number of event credits needed to hold an event within one of these periods is calculated as indicated in section 4.2 of this policy. Events which commence before 5 pm and finish after 5 pm will be treated as two events for the purpose of calculating event credits. Thus, an event which generated noise 10 dB(A) above the **zone noise standard** which commences at 1 pm and finishes at 10 pm will require four event credits. However, if the event does not exceed 5 hours in total then overlapping time periods will be treated as one time period. Thus an event which generates noise at 10 dB(A) above the zone noise standard and which commences at 4 pm and finishes at 8 pm will require only two event credits.

An additional restriction applies to the Fairbairn Park cluster. Events held at facilities in the cluster may only be held during the day, i.e. between 9 am and 5 pm. This restriction continues the arrangements currently in place for these facilities.

4.4. Spread of Events During the Year

Authorisations will contain the following limits to ensure a reasonable spread of events at a facility:

- events may not be held on any more than two weekends in any month;
- events may not be held on any more than two consecutive weekends; and
- events may not be held on any more than 2 consecutive days.

Fairbairn Park Cluster authorisation holders are encouraged to plan events for the same day to minimise the number of events in a calendar year. Authorisation holders may share the use of event credits where events coincide.

4.5. Prior Notification

Prior notification of upcoming events assists residents affected by noise from motor sports to organise their activities to minimise the adverse impact of that noise.

Authorisation holders will be required to provide event details, namely proposed event dates and event credits and tracks to be used, to the **EPA** at least 10 weeks in advance of the event. The **EPA** will advertise the proposed event dates and event credits to be used in a daily newspaper circulated in the affected area at least 8 weeks in advance of the event. Alternatively, where there are only a very small number of **affected occupiers**, the **EPA** may provide for direct notice to these persons.

The authorisation holder may nominate an alternate date for the event if the original date of the event is cancelled because of rain. Should the original event be cancelled for this reason, an equivalent event can be held on the alternate date with no additional cost in event credits. The **EPA** must be satisfied that the cancellation was due to rain and will be satisfied of this:

- if the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts, within three days of the event, rain on the day of the event; or
- if rain on the day of the event made conditions unsuitable for the event to proceed.

Conditions covering the spread of events listed in section 4.4 of this policy will apply to rain dates.

Where an event is cancelled due to factors beyond the control of the authorisation holder, event credits are not used if the authorisation holder advertises the cancellation at least one week before the event was due to be held. The **EPA** must be advised within two working days of the placement of any advertisement notifying this type of cancellation.

4.6. Fairbairn Park Cluster Review

Within 3 years of the commencement of this amendment of the EPP, the Authority shall commence a review of the noise management by Fairbairn Park Cluster to determine if noise management actions are adequate or if this EPP needs to be further revised by adding further requirements (such as an annual

reduction of credits), to ensure adequate noise management at the site.

5. Reducing Noise Levels

In line with Section 3 (c) of the Objects of the Act it is intended that the amount of noise emitted from the Fairbairn Park Cluster will be managed to ensure the total noise load is limited to 27 noise credits per annum.

By 31 October 2005 the EPA will undertake a review of Fairbairn Park Cluster organisations to assess the adequacy of these organisations' efforts to limit the total noise load emanating from Fairbairn Park. The EPA will then decide whether a further modification of this policy is necessary to ensure that noise is being limited as required.

Among other matters the EPA will review:

- the organisations' efforts to schedule events on the same days thus reducing the number of days of noise exposure;
- efforts by the organisations to reduce vehicle noise; and
- the adequacy of noise monitoring programs.

6. Demonstrating Compliance

Authorisation holders will be required to demonstrate that the motor sports events they hold comply with the conditions of their authorisation by monitoring events and making the results available in a form and timeframe acceptable to the **EPA**. This should include the incorporation of conditions in authorisations to ensure that required information (including raw data) is reported on time so that it can be provided to other interested parties in a timely fashion.

Alternatives to monitoring at the **compliance location** may be acceptable where it can be shown that the alternative unambiguously demonstrates compliance at the **compliance location**. For example, trackside monitoring could be an acceptable alternative provided that it can be shown by modelling, backed up by some field tests, that a reproducible relationship exists

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between noise levels at trackside and, those at the **compliance location**.

7. Glossary Of Terms

The definitions of the terms listed in this Glossary are provided to assist in reading this EPP. For the formal legal definition of the terms marked with an asterisk (*), refer to Section 4 of the Act and for those marked with a ♦, refer to Regulation 3.

Term	Definition
affected occupier ♦	the occupier of land, including or any person lawfully on unleased or public land, which is subject to excessive noise
compliance location ♦	the location at which noise from an activity must not be excessive
dB(A)	db (decibels) is the logarithmic unit of measurement of sound pressure level. dB(A) is the measured sound pressure level obtained using a sound level meter incorporating an electrical filtering network which modifies the frequency response to approximate the frequency response of the human ear
EPA*	Environment Protection Authority—a statutory office established under Part II of the Act to administer the Act
environmental authorisation*	a form of licence to conduct an activity which has a significant potential to cause environmental harm
environmental harm*	any impact on the environment as a result of human activity that has the effect of degrading the environment (whether temporarily or permanently)
EPP*	Environment Protection Policy
event	with respect to Motor Sports, 'event' includes practice
event credit	a unit used in the motor sports policy to determine how many motor sports events under specified conditions can be held at a motor sports facility or facility cluster
excessive noise ♦	noise from an activity which exceeds the zone noise standard, or a different standard where that standard is specified in an environmental authorisation or approval, at the applicable compliance location
facility cluster	a group of motor sports facilities the noise from which impacts on the same residential area
Fairbairn Park cluster	Fairbairn Park, Sutton Park, National Capital Motor Sports Facility, Kowen Forest
noise zone ♦	a parcel of land determined by land use policies in the Territory Plan to which a single zone noise standard applies. Table 1 of Schedule 2 of the Regulations defines noise zones
zone noise standard ♦	the maximum level of noise as measured at the applicable compliance location which may be generated by an activity being undertaken in the relevant noise zone. Table 1 of Schedule 2 of the Regulations defines zone noise standards