

Australian Capital Territory

Major Events (2026 Winter Sports Season Events) Notice 2026

Disallowable instrument DI2026-15

made under the

Major Events Act 2014, section 9 (Important sporting event - notice)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Division 2.2 of the *Major Events Act 2014* (the Act) permits the Minister to give notice that an event is an important sporting event if satisfied on reasonable grounds that its making is necessary and appropriate for—

- (a) the safety of people attending the event; and
- (b) the avoidance of disruptions to the event.

The Minister is satisfied the events listed in the instrument meet this criteria.

This notice applies the provisions of the *Major Events Act 2014* (the Act) to the 19 matches at GIO Stadium from 6 March 2026 to 21 August 2026. These matches form the 2026 Winter Sports Season in the ACT. This notice is a disallowable instrument.

Sporting events hosted at GIO Stadium generally attract a family-oriented audience. Maintaining a safe and minimal risk environment is paramount to the ongoing viability of hosting major events in the ACT and is of particular importance to the Territory.

Terrorism and violent extremism continue to be threats at the national level, and there is an increased national focus on security arrangements for mass gatherings, including stadium sporting events. Protections such as these support a reduction and deterrent to that risk.

The expected attendance of these matches ranges from 6,000-9,000 persons for Super Rugby Pacific matches to 13,000-17,000 for NRL matches at GIO Stadium.

This event will include corporate hospitality and official functions which often include VIPS, Members of Parliament and the Legislative Assembly, and dignitaries. All matches played at GIO Stadium are broadcast and these events will attract national media attention.

Protecting playing areas and preventing unauthorised entry both during and in advance of each event is important part of hosting national matches and an increasing expectation from sporting bodies. Applying powers and offences under the Act prior to an event protects against those who may seek to disrupt the event before it occurs by damaging the playing surface.

The effect of this notice is to apply powers and offences under the Act, Part 3 (Crowd Management) to the event. The application of crowd management powers does not affect the rights and duties of venue operators and property holders that apply under ACT or Commonwealth laws or the common law.

Crowd management in Part 3 of the Act include offences in relation to the possession of prohibited items and interference with the event. Part 3 also provides crowd management powers including the power to search personal property, to conduct scanning searches and frisk searches.

Clarification has been provided under the Act that permission may be given by the event organiser or venue manager for a *prohibited item* under s 12 to be within an event venue. For example, alcohol is authorised by the venue manager to be sold by licensed vendors during events under this notice, but is prohibited from being brought into the event venue by attendees. Therefore, alcohol has not been excluded from being a prohibited item under this notice.