



Tara Cheyne MLA

Manager of Government Business

Attorney-General

Minister for Human Rights

Minister for City and Government Services

Minister for the Night-Time Economy

Member for Ginninderra

Our ref: PRO26/1422

Ms Chiaka Barry MLA
Chair, Standing Committee on Legal Affairs (Legislative Scrutiny Role)
Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
London Circuit
CANBERRA ACT 2601
By email: scrutiny@parliament.act.gov.au

14 April 2026

Dear Ms Barry

Chiaka

Thank you to the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs (Legislative Scrutiny Role) (the Committee) for its comments made on the Disallowable Instrument DI2026-15, Major Events (2026 Winter Sports Season Events) Notice 2026 in *Scrutiny Report 17*, dated 23 March 2026.

The *Major Events Act 2014* (ACT; the Act) empowers the Minister to declare a major event under section 6, or to give notice of an important sporting event under section 9. While these mechanisms operate differently, both engage and limit several rights under the *Human Rights Act 2004* (ACT; the HRA).

The Disallowable Instrument DI2026-3, Major Events (National Multicultural Festival 2026) Declaration 2026 was the first time the National Multicultural Festival (NMF) had been declared as a major event under the Act. The event was assessed in detail to ensure it satisfied the criteria established under section 6.

The 2026 NMF was held in Canberra's city centre from 6 to 8 February. The event was hosted in an open-air environment that impacted public thoroughfares and entrances to other locations such as private businesses or places of residence, affecting the rights of non-attendees. After extensive consultation with key stakeholders, including ACT Policing and the ACT Human Rights Commission, it was assessed that there had been a material change in the security environment since the 2025 NMF, following the Bondi terrorist attack in December 2025, that supported the public interest in the declaration for the 2026 NMF to support a safe and secure event for attendees. These factors justified the deeper consideration of human rights issues undertaken at the time.

I acknowledge that the Act engages and limits rights under the HRA regardless of whether the event is declared a major event or notified as an important sporting event and consequently, human rights issues should be comprehensively considered in all Explanatory Statements moving forward.

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ACT Legislative Assembly
London Circuit, GPO Box 1020,
Canberra ACT 2601

+61 2 6205 0100
cheyne@act.gov.au

 [taraforinninderra](https://www.facebook.com/taraforinninderra)
 [in_the_taratory](https://www.instagram.com/in_the_taratory)

A revised Explanatory Statement for Disallowable Instrument DI2026-15 Major Events (2026 Winter Sports Season Events) Notice 2026 is enclosed. I anticipate this will address the matters raised in the Committee's report.

To ensure consistency, future Explanatory Statements prepared for Disallowable Instruments made under the Act, including major event declarations and notices of important sporting events, will include detailed analysis of the relevant human rights issues.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tara Cheyne', with a stylized, flowing script.

Tara Cheyne MLA

Enclosed: Revised Explanatory Statement for Disallowable Instrument DI2026-15 Major Events (2026 Winter Sports Season Events) Notice 2026