

NORTHERN TERRITORY LIQUOR COMMISSION

DECISION NOTICE

MATTER: *LOOTLANDS NYE BLOCK PARTY LIQUOR LICENCE WITH MAJOR EVENT AUTHORITY* [2025] NTLiqComm 40

REFERENCE NUMBER: LC2025/047

APPLICANT: Tropics Holdings Pty Ltd

PREMISES: Nuttall Place
DARWIN CITY NT 0800

EVENT: Lootlands NYE Block Party

DATE OF EVENT: 31 December 2025

NOMINEE: Ms Frederica Ransom

LEGISLATION: Part 3 Division 4 of the *Liquor Act 2019* (NT)

DECISION: Mr Russell Goldflam (Delegate)

DATE OF DECISION: 11 December 2025

Decision

1. In accordance with section 48 of the *Liquor Act 2019* (**the Act**) and the delegation issued on 28 October 2019 authorising a single member of the Northern Territory Liquor Commission (**the Commission**) to issue a licence with a major event authority, the Commission has determined to issue a liquor licence with a major event authority to Tropics Holdings Pty Ltd (**the applicant**). The applicant will be issued with a licence authorising the sale, supply or service of liquor to patrons at the event known as the Lootlands NYE Block Party (**the event**) for consumption at Nuttall Place, Darwin City NT 0800 within the area (**the premises**) bounded in purple on the plan at Appendix One to this decision notice.¹
2. Subject to the conditions below, the sale, supply, service and consumption of liquor is authorised only on 31 December 2025 from 18:00 hours to 1 January 2026 at 05:00 hours.
3. The Commission approves Ms Frederica Ransom as the designated nominee.
4. In addition to the major event conditions set out in Part 4 Division 1 and Part 4 Division 12 of the *Liquor Regulations 2019* (**the Regulations**), the licence shall also be subject to the following additional conditions:

¹ The premises do **not** include the areas bounded in pink and green in Appendix One.

- a. A staggered decline of alcohol supplied and served on the premises must be implemented:
 - i. no more than two (2) alcoholic drinks may be supplied to any one person at any one time from 02:30 to 03:30 hours; and
 - ii. no more than one (1) alcoholic drink may be supplied to any one person at any one time from 03:30 to 04:30 hours with the supply and service of alcoholic drinks to cease at 04:30 hours.
- b. No provision of alcoholic drinks supplied and served on the premises that:
 - i. are designed to be consumed quickly and which are commonly referred to as a 'shot' or 'shooters';
 - ii. are a cocktail containing more than a 30ml nip of spirit or liquor (this does not include pre-mixed spirits known as Ready to Drink beverages (**RTDs**));
- c. Liquor and any other beverages must not be supplied or served on the premises in glass containers.
- d. If the licensee establishes a Designated Outdoor Smoking Area (**DOSA**) on the premises the licensee must supervise the DOSA to ensure that food and beverages are not consumed in the DOSA.
- e. The licensee must ensure that no more than 450 patrons are on the premises at any one time.
- f. The licensee must comply with the Northern Territory Fire & Rescue Service conditions set out in its email to the licensee on 5 June 2025 at 5:27 PM.
- g. The licensee must ensure that no liquor is brought onto or removed from the premises other than from or to the licensee's adjoining premises of Monsoons (liquor licence 80315790).
- h. The licensee must undertake the following noise mitigation measures:
 - i. Use fill speakers to distribute the sound more evenly;
 - ii. Engage a sound engineering team to be in attendance throughout the event to actively set levels and change frequencies as required;
 - iii. Within ten minutes of receiving a noise complaint, notify the complainant of the steps taken to address the complaint.
 - iv. Maintain a noise complaint register that must be produced to a Licensing Inspector on request;
 - v. Document any noise complaint received by telephone or in person, and place the documented record of the complaint and the response in the noise complaints register.

5. The issue of this licence is subject to the issue of an Event Permit by the City of Darwin.

Background

6. The applicant is the licensee of Monsoons, which describes itself as “Darwin’s most iconic party bar”,² and which trades with a public bar authority, an extended late night authority permitting it to trade until 04:00 every day, and an adult entertainment R-rated authority from its premises abutting Nuttall Place, a 70 metre long laneway in the Darwin CBD between Mitchell Street to the southwest and Shadforth Lane to the northeast. Another licensed premises, Bustard Town, is situated on the other side of Nuttall Place, on the corner with Shadforth Lane. The main entrance to the Rydges Darwin Central Hotel in Shadforth Lane looks directly onto Nuttall Place.
7. On New Years Eve 2024, Monsoons conducted a block party in Nuttall Place pursuant to liquor licence number FLL2641 and a permit issued by the City of Darwin to close off Nuttall Place for the duration of the event. The Commission infers that the liquor licence for that event was issued by the Director of Liquor Licensing (**the Director**), to whom the Commission has delegated the power to issue liquor licenses with a special event authority, and that the licence was issued with a special event authority.
8. Subsequently, the applicant conducted two more similar events in Nuttall Place, both of which were approved by the Liquor Commission, which issued a major event authority for an “Invasion Block Party” on 21 June 2025,³ and a “Street Safari Party” on 27 September 2025.⁴
9. Both of these matters were contentious, because of concerns from Rydges about the adverse impact of noise on their hotel guests. However, at a pre-hearing conference conducted by the Commission attended by the applicant and Rydges, Rydges informed the Commission that it would not object to a street party in Nuttall Place on New Years Eve, because Rydges would be closed over the Christmas/New Year’s break.

The application

10. On 30 October 2025 the applicant lodged an incomplete similar application with the Director, for a “Lootlands NYE Block Party”, a ticketed event promoted as “a pirate paradise where block party meets shipwreck fantasy” and featuring amplified music from 18:00 on Wednesday 31 December 2025 until 05:00 hours the following morning, including from an outdoor stage in Nuttall Place.
11. Although the applicant was well aware that both the Director and the Commission had previously classified Nuttall Place block parties as “major events” (as distinct

² Accessed at <https://monsoonsdarwin.com.au/>

³ *Invasion block party liquor licence with major event authority* [2025] NTLiqComm 24

⁴ *Street safari party liquor licence with major event authority* [2025] NTLiqComm 31

from a “special event”), the applicant persisted, without explanation, in applying for a special event authority. Of greater concern, despite having been admonished by the Commission for not lodging its previous similar application three months in advance of the event, as is required by the Director for major event authority applications,⁵ the applicant once again lodged its application late. If the applicant persists with this cavalier approach, it is readily foreseeable that on some future occasion it will spend a great deal of money to prepare for a block party, only to have its application for a liquor license refused because there isn't time to properly process the application. Indeed, that undesirable outcome could well have eventuated in the current matter, as will be seen.

12. A delegate of the Director, Mr Wood, initially referred the application to the Commission on 18 November 2025. However, on 27 November 2025, Mr Wood informed the Commission that the previous day the licensee of Bustard Town, had written to Licensing NT objecting to the application. On 1 December 2025, Mr Wood convened a meeting with the applicant and the objector with the aim of resolving the dispute. Fortunately, that meeting was successful, and on 2 December 2025 Mr Wood provided the Commission with an updated brief confirming that Bustard Town had withdrawn its opposition.
13. After 2 December 2025, it would have been difficult if not impracticable to convene a panel to conduct a public hearing of the application and deliver a decision before the Commission closed its office over the Christmas break. However, following the resolution of the above-mentioned controversy, I formed the opinion in accordance with s 21 of the Act that it was not appropriate to conduct a hearing. This in turn allowed me to determine this application under delegation as a single member of the Commission, on the papers.
14. Mr Wood initially requested the Commission to consider approving the issue of a licence for similar new years eve events in future years, in order to minimise the cost and inconvenience to all parties of having to repeatedly make and process substantially similar applications. That was a reasonable request. However, when Mr Wood re-submitted the referral to the Commission on 2 December 2025, he expressly abandoned this request. In the circumstances, I agree that this was the right call.
15. Noting that all three Nuttall Place block party major events presented by the applicant in 2025 have been affected by controversy, in my view it is preferable that any application by the applicant to issue a licence with a major event authority for repeated future similar Nuttall Place block parties be subject to public notification in accordance with s 57 of the Act, and be dealt with by way of a public hearing conducted by a panel of the Commission. Accordingly, I have confined consideration of this application to the proposed 2025 new years eve major event.

⁵ See *Street safari party liquor licence with major event authority* [2025] NTLiqComm 31, at [7] – [10]

The material

16. The updated brief received by the Commission included the following material:
- a. Monsoons liquor licence No. 80315790
 - b. Section 54 affidavit of David Noonan, 30 October 2025
 - c. Application for liquor licence with special event authority, 30 October 2025
 - d. Event management plan, including:
 - i. Site plan
 - ii. Pedestrian, crowd and security management
 - iii. Alcohol management
 - iv. Noise management
 - v. Operational management
 - vi. Risk management
 - vii. Emergency management
 - e. Traffic management plan
 - f. Applicant's notice of temporary road closure to stakeholders and neighbours, 3 November 2025
 - g. Plan of designated outdoor smoking area
 - h. Correspondence between Licensing NT, Bustard Town and applicant
 - i. Correspondence with stakeholders
 - i. Department of Health
 - ii. NT Police
 - iii. NT Fire & Rescue Service
 - iv. City of Darwin

Consideration

17. As required by s 3(4) of the Act, the Commission has had regard to the primary and secondary purposes of the Act in determining this application, and considers that its decision is consistent with those purposes.
18. The Commission has had regard to all of the matters set out in s 60 of the Act that it is required to consider regarding the suitability of the applicant, the proposed licence nominee and the premises. In doing so, the Commission notes that:
- a. The applicant and the proposed licence nominee are well-established as the operators of Monsoons, which the Director has informed the Commission has no adverse compliance history.
 - b. The premises have recently been used for a similar event, which was successfully operated.
 - c. None of the stakeholders who were consulted by Licensing NT (as is required by s 56(4) of the Act) were opposed to the application, although they proposed various conditions, all of which have been agreed to by the applicant or, where appropriate, incorporated into the Commission's decision.
19. The Commission has considered the ten public interest objectives set out at s

49(1) of the Act, and the ten community impact matters set out at s 49(2) of the Act. A particularly relevant s 49(2) matter is the risk of undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience to persons who reside or work in the vicinity of the proposed premises. That risk is real, but is substantially mitigated by the short duration of the licence, the fact that the two closest hospitality facilities, Rydges and Bustard Town, will be closed over the Christmas/New Year's period, and the notorious fact that New Year's Eve is a night on which public revelry until the small hours is traditionally tolerated.

20. Also of relevance is the location of the proposed event in the heart of the Darwin entertainment precinct, where there are numerous late night trading venues, including Monsoons itself, which is authorised to trade until 04:00 every night, and 05:00 on New Year's Day.
21. Having considered all these matters, the Commission is satisfied that it is in the public interest to approve the licence, and that it will not have a significant adverse impact on the community.

NOTICE OF RIGHTS

22. Section 31(1) read with s 60(3) of the Act provide that the decision set out in this decision notice is reviewable by the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal (**NTCAT**). Section 94(3) of the *NTCAT Act* provides that an application for review of a reviewable decision must be lodged within 28 days of the date of the decision.
23. In accordance with s 31(2) of the Act, the persons who may apply to NTCAT for a review of the decision are the Director and the applicant.



Russell Goldflam

Chairperson
Northern Territory Liquor Commission

11 December 2025

APPENDIX ONE

