

MAJOR EVENTS MANAGEMENT

In 2007 the Major Events Management Act came into force. Its aim is to protect unauthorised commercial exploitation at the expense of organisers or sponsors of major events, ensure the smooth running of major events and obtain maximum benefits for New Zealanders. It also protects and controls the use of words and emblems associated with Olympic and Commonwealth Games. So far the legislation has only been invoked for 4 sporting events but was primarily aimed at the Rugby World Cup event to take place next year.

The Act introduces prohibitions on “ambush marketing” both in advertising and intrusion protections. Ambush marketing involves representations that there is an association between the major event and brands of goods and services or someone who provides them. Ambush marketing by intrusion prohibits street trading, advertising or advertising which is clearly visible in the area of the event which would lead people to believe that there is an association between the event and the items which are being advertised or sold. There are rules about what areas are covered by the prohibitions and also the penalties for the infringement of the rules.

Ticket scalping has always been a hot potato for large occasions but under the act it is an offence to sell tickets for a higher amount than the original sale price of the ticket. A penalty or a fine not exceeding \$5,000.00 may be imposed on anyone found guilty of ticket scalping. Pitch invasion and throwing items onto the playing surface are also offences under the Act.

Anyone who is found guilty of running onto the playing surface or throwing items onto the playing surface is liable to a penalty of up to 3 months jail or a fine not exceeding \$5,000.00.

The Olympic and Commonwealth Games symbols are also “protected” by the legislation.

The legislation goes into detail about enforcement officers and intends to cover all eventualities.

The Rugby World Cup will be one of New Zealand's largest sporting events. Whether the Major Events Management Act will be effective in it aims remains to be seen.

The Partners and Staff at Ronald W. Angland & Son wish all readers a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

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odocs/BessieArtNov10