

Motor Vehicle Registry Information Bulletin

G7 – Information for Interstate and Overseas Visitors to the Northern Territory

Effective Date: 01 September 2007

Visitors to the Northern Territory

This information bulletin provides information relating to driver licences and vehicle registration for visitors to the Northern Territory. Examples of visitors are:

- Tourists visiting from interstate or overseas.
- Business people visiting from interstate or overseas.
- People studying in this country with the intention of returning to their home country on completion of their courses.
- Overseas Defence Force personnel.

When do I cease being a visitor and become a resident of the NT for registration and licence purposes?

You cease to be a visitor to the NT and become a resident of the NT when you;

- have resided in the Territory for a continuous period of 3 months; or
- when you transfer your interstate driver licence and are issued with a NT drivers licence; or
- transfer an interstate registered vehicle and are issued NT vehicle registration.
- apply for and are issued with a NT licence ; or
- apply for and are issued with NT vehicle registration.

If any of the above applies, you become a resident of the NT. If this is the case, it is very important that you read:

[Information Bulletin G06 – Information for New Residents to the NT](#)

Can I use my Interstate/Overseas Driver Licence to drive in the Northern Territory

Yes – you may use your Interstate/Overseas Driver Licence providing that you have not resided, or do not intend to reside in the Northern Territory for a continuous period of three (3) months.

ANY conditions or restrictions imposed on your driver licence must be adhered to **at all times**.

An **interstate** visitor is permitted to drive in the NT using his/her current Australian-issued driver licence for a continuous period of three (3) months. After three (3) months, the driver licence must be transferred to the NT (unless an Exemption from holding an NT driver licence has been applied for and granted).

An **overseas** visitor is permitted to drive in the NT using his/her current overseas licence, together with an International Driving Permit issued overseas (if the licence is in any language other than English). After three (3) months, the driver licence must be transferred to the NT (unless an Exemption from holding an NT driver licence has been applied for and granted).

What you should carry with you while driving

All drivers should carry his/her driver licence at all times whilst driving. **Overseas Visitors** should also carry their International Driving Permit at all times whilst driving.

What about Traffic Infringements and Demerit Points?

All Interstate/Overseas drivers are required to obey the Australian Road Rules which have been made law under the Northern Territory (NT) *Traffic Act* and *Regulations*. A Traffic Infringement Notice Scheme is in operation for certain road rule offences. This scheme is mainly enforced by NT Police and Transport Inspectors where notices are either handed to the offending driver or where only the vehicle is identified, they are sent to the registered owner or operator.

The NT maintains a Demerit Points Scheme (DPS) based on similar DPS's that already operate in all other Australian states and territories. Interstate/Overseas drivers that receive demerit points will have their offence details and points history recorded by the Motor Vehicle Registry. Interstate drivers will also have their demerit point offences sent to their home state or territory. Demerit point offences are only ever recorded by the MVR once the infringement notice has been finalised.

Interstate/Overseas drivers that exceed the NT's demerit point action trigger for their licence class may have their driving privileges in the NT withdrawn. For details on the NT DPS see [Information Bulletin L28 – NT DPS and how it affects you](#).

Can I drive my Interstate registered Motor Vehicle in the Northern Territory?

Yes – you may drive your interstate registered motor vehicle in the NT, providing that the vehicle is deemed to be a "visiting motor vehicle". A "visiting motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle under the NT Traffic Act - Section 3, which:

- is registered in another country, or in another State or Territory of the Commonwealth;
- has affixed a current registration label, and number plates required to be affixed by the law of that country, State or Territory; and
- is temporarily in the Northern Territory.

Interstate registered vehicles

A motor vehicle registered in another state or jurisdiction may be deemed to be not registered, regardless of whether or not it has current registration in another state or jurisdiction, if:

1. You, as the owner are a resident of the NT, and the vehicle has been in the NT continuously for 28 days from the date of the vehicle arriving in the NT;
2. You are a resident of the NT, and you purchase an interstate registered vehicle which has been in the NT continuously for 28 days;
3. You are an NT resident and you drive a vehicle registered interstate that has been in the NT for a continuous period of three (3) months (so the vehicle is no longer classed as a "visiting motor vehicle").
4. You hold an interstate driver licence, and you are driving a vehicle with interstate registration, which has been in the NT for a continuous period of three (3) months (so the vehicle is no longer classed as a "visiting motor vehicle").

If there is a genuine reason that the vehicle will remain in the NT longer than the periods above, you should apply for an Exemption from obtaining NT registration.

Can I drive my Overseas registered Motor Vehicle in the Northern Territory?

Yes – you may drive your overseas registered motor vehicle in the NT, providing that the vehicle is deemed a "visiting motor vehicle". A "visiting motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle under the NT Traffic Act - Section 3, which:

- is registered in another country, or in another State or Territory of the Commonwealth;
- has affixed a current registration label, and number plates required to be affixed by the law of that country; and
- is temporarily in the Northern Territory

See [Information Bulletin V48](#) for the requirements for temporary imports, special types of imports, and other imports such as Status of Armed Forces (SOFA) and diplomatic vehicles.

Overseas registered vehicles must be presented to a Motor Vehicle Registry – Vehicle Compliance Centre for a roadworthy inspection, registration and document checks, on entry (or soon as practicable afterwards) to the Northern Territory. See [Information Bulletin G05 – Motor Vehicle Registry Service Centres](#).

Where applicable, the following supporting documents (or certified copies of) should also accompany the application:

- Current Visa issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Provide a current Certificate of Registration from the country where the vehicle is registered, in the name of the applicant, for the vehicle.
- Provide a copy of carnet or Federal Office of Road Safety import approval, and any other customs document.

If there is a genuine reason that the vehicle will remain in the NT longer than the periods above, you should apply for an Exemption from obtaining NT registration.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Motor Accident Compensation insurance (Third Party Insurance) is compulsory in the NT.

You will need to provide proof of current Third Party (or equivalent) insurance issued in Australia (if applicable). If unavailable, you will be required to pay a Compulsory Third Party Insurance contribution to the NT insurance provider – Territory Insurance Office – through Motor Vehicle Registry.

Visiting for longer than 3 months?

The Northern Territory Traffic Act requires that a person who intends to be in the NT for longer than 3 months, but is not a permanent resident, apply for an Instrument of Exemption (under Section 8A of the Motor Vehicles Act) from the requirement to hold an NT Driver licence, or to transfer a vehicle registration to the NT.

Instruments of Exemption are not provided as a matter of course, and are assessed on a case-by-case basis, on application to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.

The Registrar of Motor Vehicles may grant an Instrument of Exemption from the requirement to hold an NT driver licence to a visiting overseas driver, or the requirement to register a vehicle in the Northern Territory where the Registrar is satisfied that:

In the case of a driver licence:

- the applicant is a genuine resident of another jurisdiction/country; and
- currently holds a valid driver licence in the jurisdiction/country of residence; and
- is not disqualified, from holding a licence anywhere; and
- has an International Driving Permit issued overseas (if the driver licence is in any other language other than English); and
- the requested exemption period does not extend beyond the expiry date of that licence.

Where an Instrument of Exemption has been granted, it will only be valid while the driver licence held remains current and the tourist or visitor status remains unchanged.

In the case of a vehicle:

- the applicant is a genuine resident of another jurisdiction/country; and
- the vehicle is currently registered in the jurisdiction/country of residence; and
- appropriate documentation for the importation of the vehicle is provided; and
- valid Compulsory Third Party Insurance recognised in Australia; and
- the requested exemption period does not extend beyond the expiry date of that vehicle registration.

Driver Licence - Applying for an Instrument of Exemption under Section 8A of the *Motor Vehicles Act*

Applications for an Instrument of Exemption must be in writing (in English), and detail:

- The full name of the applicant
- Date of birth
- Country of birth
- Driver Licence Number
- Country of issue
- The start and end dates for the period that the Exemption is requested.

Where applicable, the following supporting documents (or certified copies of) should also accompany the application:

- Photocopy of the Driver Licence
- International Driving Permit issued overseas (if the driver licence is in any other language other than English)
- Current Visa issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Vehicle Registration - Applying for an Instrument of Exemption under Section 8A of the *Motor Vehicles Act*

Applications for an Instrument of Exemption must be in writing (in English), and detail:

- The full name of the applicant
- Date of birth
- Country of birth
- Driver Licence Number
- Country of issue
- The start and end dates for the period that the Exemption is requested.

Where applicable, the following supporting documents (or certified copies of) should also accompany the application:

- Current Visa issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Provide a current Certificate of Registration from the country where the vehicle is registered, in the name of the applicant, for the vehicle.
- Provide a copy of carnet or Federal Office of Road Safety import approval, and any other customs document.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Motor Accident Compensation insurance (Third Party Insurance) is compulsory in the NT.

You will need to provide proof of current Third Party (or equivalent) insurance issued in Australia (if applicable). If unavailable, you will be required to pay a Compulsory Third Party Insurance contribution to the NT insurance provider – Territory Insurance Office – through Motor Vehicle Registry.

The Instrument of Exemption will not exceed registration period or period that you have identified in your application. Do not forget to include any reasonable time required, travelling into another State or Territory.

This Instrument must be kept with the vehicle at all times when on NT roads.

Further information is available by contacting Motor Vehicle Registry.

Contact Details	
Motor Vehicle Registry	
Telephone	1300 654 628
Facsimile	(08) 8999 3103
Email	mvr@nt.gov.au
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