

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Select Legislative Instrument 2008 No. 276

Issued by the Authority of the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development
and Local Government

National Transport Commission Act 2003

*National Transport Commission (Model Amendments Regulations: Australian Road
Rules– Package No. 6) Regulations 2008*

Section 52 of the *National Transport Commission Act 2003* (the Act) provides that the Governor-General may make regulations, not inconsistent with the Act, prescribing all matters required or permitted by the Act to be prescribed or necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to the Act.

The provisions of the Act are supported by the Inter-Governmental Agreement on Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport (IGA), which serves to formalise the cooperative arrangements between the Commonwealth, States and Territories and define the roles and responsibilities of the National Transport Commission, the Australian Transport Council and the jurisdictions. Clause 14 of the IGA requires the Commonwealth to submit model legislation for inclusion in schedules to regulations under the Act. The proposed Regulations would implement this commitment.

The Regulations provide Australian Road Rule provisions for nationally consistent implementation in each State and Territory. The Regulations are in model form to allow for implementation in each jurisdiction using the most convenient and effective regulatory manner available – for instance, the provisions may be incorporated into the law of a jurisdiction by way of amendment of existing legislation.

The objects of the Regulations are to:

- (a) reflect current needs, based on operational experience in all jurisdictions;
- (b) remove ambiguities that will facilitate the enforcement and administration of traffic law;
- (c) update the road rules to help achieve the desired changes to on-road behaviour;
- (d) simplify and clarify traffic laws to reduce confusion amongst road users and improve road safety; and
- (e) amend the Australian Road Rules with respect to bicycle storage areas, painted islands, hand-held stop signs and formatting.

The Australian Road Rules 6th Amendment Package Regulations were developed and refined through extensive consultations with the Commonwealth, State and Territory road safety, traffic, road transport and enforcement authorities. The Australian Road Rule maintenance process commenced in 2003 and continued in 2004 and 2005, during which a number of issues with the road rules were identified. Following face to face deliberations and discussions with the Australian Road Rules Maintenance Group, the NTC developed the 6th Amendment Package 2006 for consideration by Transport Agency Chief Executives (TACE) and the Australian Transport Council (ATC).

The model Regulations were circulated for public comment in October 2006 along with a draft Regulation Impact Statement (RIS). The RIS was assessed and approved by the Commonwealth Office of Regulation Review. The Regulations were approved by the Australian Transport Council (ATC) on 11 May 2007.

Section 7 of the Act provides that the regulations may set out model legislation, being legislation developed by the NTC in accordance with the IGA. Paragraph 7(2)(a) provides that model legislation does not have the force of law. The schedules to the regulations serve only as a repository for nationally agreed reforms, which may then be implemented by jurisdictions.

Item 44 of the table to subsection 44(2) of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003* together with item 7 of Schedule 2 to the *Legislative Instruments Regulations 2004* operate to provide that the proposed Regulation would not be subject to disallowance. In addition, item 51 of the table to subsection 54(2) of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003* together with item 4 of Schedule 3 to the *Legislative Instruments Regulations 2004* operate to provide that the proposed Regulation would not be subject to sunseting.