

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

TRESPASS ACT

As in force at 1 July 1996

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NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

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TRESPASS ACT

An Act to amend the law relating to trespass

1 Short title

This Act may be cited as the *Trespass Act*.

2 Commencement

- (1) Sections 1 and 2 shall come into operation on the day on which the Administrator's assent to this Act is declared.
- (2) The remaining provisions of this Act shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by the Administrator by notice in the *Gazette*.

3 Repeal

Sections 118 and 119 of the *Crown Lands Act* and sections 57(1)(n) and 91A of the *Summary Offences Act* are repealed.

4 Interpretation

- (1) In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears:

Crown land means all Crown land, including reserved or dedicated land, other than Crown land which has been leased or is occupied under a licence or an agreement.

enclosed premises means:

- (a) a building or structure whether permanent or temporary and whether fixed or capable of being moved;
- (b) a dwelling-place;
- (c) any part of an enclosed yard, garden or area; or
- (d) a vehicle (including a caravan), vessel, aircraft or hovercraft.

occupier, in relation to a place, means:

- (a) where the place is Crown land or land occupied by the Territory or the Commonwealth or a statutory corporation – a person in charge of the land; and
- (b) where the place is other than Crown land or land occupied by the Territory or the Commonwealth or a statutory corporation – a person in lawful occupation of the place,

and includes an employee or other person acting under the authority of a person in charge under paragraph (a) or in lawful occupation under paragraph (b).

place includes enclosed premises and land (including prohibited land and Crown land).

prohibited land means:

- (a) Crown land;
- (b) land occupied by the Territory or the Commonwealth; or
- (c) land occupied by a statutory corporation,

upon which is posted a notice in English to the effect that trespassing on the land is prohibited.

unlawful, in relation to a trespass, means without authorization, justification or excuse.

- (2) Where no person is the occupier of any place, the owner of that place shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to be the occupier.

5 Trespass on enclosed premises

A person who trespasses unlawfully on enclosed premises commits an offence.

Penalty: \$2,000 or imprisonment for 6 months.

6 Trespass on prohibited land

A person who trespasses unlawfully on prohibited land commits an offence.

Penalty: \$2,000

7 Trespass after direction to leave

- (1) A person who trespasses on any place and, after being directed to leave that place by an occupier or member of the Police Force acting at the request of the occupier, fails or refuses to do so forthwith or returns within 24 hours to that place, commits an offence.

Penalty: \$2,000.

- (2) A direction under subsection (1) may, where the trespass is on Crown land or land occupied by the Territory or the Commonwealth or a statutory corporation, be given by a member of the Police Force whether a request to act has been made by the occupier or not.

8 Trespass after warning to stay off

- (1) Where a person is trespassing or has trespassed on any place, an occupier of that place may, at the time of the trespass or within a reasonable time afterwards, warn that person to stay off that place.
- (2) Where an occupier of any place has reasonable cause to suspect that a person is likely to trespass on that place, the occupier may warn that person to stay off that place.
- (3) Where a person is convicted of an offence against this Act committed on or in respect of any place, the Court may warn that person to stay off that place.
- (4) A person who, being a person who has been warned under this section to stay off any place, trespasses on that place within one year after the giving of the warning, commits an offence.

Penalty: 20 penalty units.

9 Giving directions or warnings

- (1) A direction to leave under section 7 or a warning to stay off under section 8 shall be given to the individual person concerned either orally or by notice in writing delivered to that person or sent to that person by post.
- (2) Where the person concerned is a member of a group, it is a sufficient compliance with subsection (1) in relation to an oral direction to leave or a warning to stay off if the direction or warning is addressed to the group or members of it and it is clear that the person concerned is included among those persons addressed.

10 Power of removal

Where a person fails or refuses to leave a place after being directed to do so under section 7 or unlawfully trespasses on a place after being warned to stay off under section 8, a member of the Police Force may warn that person of the consequences of not leaving the place forthwith and, if the person fails to leave forthwith:

- (a) arrest the person without warrant to be further dealt with according to law; or
- (b) without arrest but by force if necessary, remove the person and the person's property (if any) from that place.

11 Offences

- (1) Offences under this Act are regulatory offences.
- (2) Proceedings for offences under this Act shall be taken only on the complaint of an occupier of the place concerned or a member of the Police Force, and shall be disposed of summarily.
- (3) Proceedings taken and a conviction entered in respect of an offence committed under one provision of this Act shall not be a bar to proceedings being taken and a conviction entered against the same defendant in respect of an offence committed under another provision of this Act in respect of a continuing course of events.

12 Evidence

The statement on oath of any person that:

- (a) the person is, or was at the relevant time, an occupier within the meaning of section 4 or a member of the Police Force; or
- (b) a direction to leave or a warning to stay off was given in accordance with section 9,

is sufficient evidence, until the contrary is proved, that that person is or was such an occupier or, as the case may be, member of the Police Force, or that the direction or warning was so given.

13 Defences

- (1) It is a defence to a charge of committing an offence against section 6 if the defendant proves that:
 - (a) the defendant did not see and could not reasonably be assumed to have seen the notice posted on the land; or

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- (b) the trespass was not wilful and was done while hunting or in the pursuit of game.
- (2) It is a defence to a charge of committing an offence against section 5 or 7 if the defendant proves that it was necessary to remain in or on the place concerned or to return to that place for the defendant's own protection or the protection of some other person, or because of some emergency involving the defendant's property or the property of some other person.
 - (3) It is a defence to a charge of committing an offence against section 8 if the defendant proves that:
 - (a) the person by whom or on whose behalf the warning concerned was given is no longer an occupier of the place concerned; or
 - (b) it was necessary for the defendant to commit the trespass for the defendant's own protection or for the protection of some other person, or because of some emergency involving the defendant's property or the property of some other person.

14 Relationships of Act to other laws and instruments

Nothing in this Act shall:

- (a) derogate from anything that a person is authorized to do by or under any other Act or law in force in the Territory; or
- (b) affect the provisions of:
 - (i) the *Tenancy Act*; or
 - (ii) an Act or instrument conferring a right of entry on land.

ENDNOTES

1 KEY

Key to abbreviations

amd = amended	od = order
app = appendix	om = omitted
bl = by-law	pt = Part
ch = Chapter	r = regulation/rule
cl = clause	rem = remainder
div = Division	renum = renumbered
exp = expires/expired	rep = repealed
f = forms	s = section
<i>Gaz</i> = <i>Gazette</i>	sch = Schedule
hdg = heading	sdiv = Subdivision
ins = inserted	SL = Subordinate Legislation
lt = long title	sub = substituted
nc = not commenced	

2 LIST OF LEGISLATION

Trespass Act 1987 (Act No. 7, 1987)

Assent date	27 May 1987
Commenced	1 July 1987 (<i>Gaz</i> G24, 17 June 1987, p 4)

Sentencing (Consequential Amendments) Act 1996 (Act No. 17, 1996)

Assent date	19 April 1996
Commenced	s 7: 19 April 1996; rem: 1 July 1996 (s 2, s 2 <i>Sentencing Act 1995</i> (Act No. 39, 1995) and <i>Gaz</i> S15, 13 June 1996)

3. LIST OF AMENDMENTS

s 8	amd No. 17, 1996, s 6
s 11	amd No. 17, 1996, s 6