Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders for Special Events
Introduction

The Road Traffic Regulation (Special Events) Act 1994 inserted sections 16A to C into the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and gave local traffic authorities powers to make orders to impose temporary restrictions on the highway for sporting events, social events or entertainment (collectively known as special events).

A traffic authority can impose temporary highway restrictions for a special event once, and for up to three days, in any calendar year (1 Jan to 31 Dec). Restrictions for special events beyond this that affect the same length of road require approval from the Secretary of State for Transport.

The following provides advice to traffic authorities that wish to apply for such approval. The requirements are not meant to discourage applications for temporary road restrictions to enable these events to take place. The Department values the contribution special events can make to social cohesion and community spirit.

Procedure for local traffic authorities

When making orders, traffic authorities should take account of the scale and nature of the event. Whilst event organisers should not be subjected to unnecessarily long or cumbersome procedures, any measure that could affect access to premises or property, or restrict parking in a particular area, should be subject to appropriate consultation and notification. This will minimise the impact on local businesses and residents and allow those affected to make arrangements accordingly.

Event promoters and traffic authorities should allow enough time for consultation, but the duration will vary depending on the nature of the event. Some are planned well in advance while others, such as parades to celebrate a sporting achievement, may take place at short notice.

It is for traffic authorities to make a judgement about what constitutes adequate consultation given the nature of the proposed event. If representations are received, traffic authorities should consider these and, if applicable, look at ways of mitigating the potential impact on movement without detracting unduly from the viability of the event and people's enjoyment of it.
Requests for the Secretary of State’s approval

Local traffic authorities are required to obtain the Secretary of State for Transport's approval to make a special event order where:

a) the order is to continue in force for more than three days; or
b) the affected length of road has already been subject to a section 16A order in the same calendar year.

Traffic authorities should seek approval a minimum of four weeks in advance of the proposed event. They are required to send the following to the National Transport Casework team at the Department for Transport:

- Completed application form (at www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-16-temporary-traffic-regulation-orders-for-special-events);
- Draft order;
- Public notice (draft or final) if available;
- Plan of the affected area; and
- Copies of any representations received and the traffic authority’s response.

If approval is sought less than four weeks before the event, reasons for this must be provided.

The Secretary of State’s considerations

The Secretary of State needs to be satisfied that in accordance with legislation, the event cannot be held other than on a road, that issues around alternative routes have been adequately considered and that pedestrian access will be maintained to affected premises - see RTRA requirements on the form. He will also confirm that the remaining questions on the application form have been adequately answered.

The Secretary of State will consider, for example, whether sufficient advance public notice has been provided and whether the issues raised in any representations have been properly considered. It is at this stage that he will take a view on the potential impact of the proposed restrictions. In deciding on whether any representations justify refusal, the Secretary of State will consider:

- any issues that require further investigation;
- the impact of the traffic restrictions; and
- the cumulative impact of the number of restrictions on a particular road in the calendar year to date.

His decisions will be published at www.gov.uk/dft