

Australian High Power Rocket Permit

Application Guidelines

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Disclaimer

Guidelines are not legally binding other than to the extent they refer to binding legislation, identified throughout.

These guidelines for the application of Australian high power rocket permits should be read in conjunction with the *Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018* (the Act), *Space (Launches and Returns) (High Power Rocket) Rules 2019* (the High Power Rocket Rules) and *Space (Launches and Returns) (Insurance) Rules 2019* (the Insurance Rules). These guidelines do not exclude, limit or replace the requirements of the Act, High Power Rocket Rules and Insurance Rules. If there is any ambiguity or inconsistency, the Act, High Power Rocket Rules and/or Insurance Rules have precedence.

This publication is not legal or professional advice. Persons rely upon this publication entirely at their own risk and must take responsibility for assessing the relevance and accuracy of the information in relation to their circumstances.

Version control

Version	Date	Details
1.0	December 2022	Initial issue.
1.1	February 2023	Revised issue.
1.2	August 2023	Updated to incorporate amendments to the <i>Space (Launches and Returns) (High Power Rocket) Rules 2019</i> as a consequence of the <i>Space (Launches and Returns) Legislation Amendment (Suitably Qualified Experts) Rules 2023</i> .
1.3	01 December 2023	Updated to reflect changes to application process, now managed through Regulatory Applications Hub.
1.4	16 October 2026	Amendments and additions to sections 2.4, 3, 4 and 6 to provide greater clarity on application requirements and process. Amendments to clarify the Minister's power to approve a Suitably Qualified expert New terms added to glossary.

Approved by the General Manager National Space Safety Office.

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1. Introduction

1.1 About the *Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018*

Australia is committed to ensuring a safe, stable and sustainable outer space environment by building a culture of safety and sustainability within the Australian space sector.

The [*Space \(Launches and Returns\) Act 2018*](#) (the Act) sets out a regime for the regulation of space activities in Australia or by Australians overseas. The objects of the Act include seeking to ensure a reasonable balance is achieved between:

- the removal of barriers to participation in space activities and the encouragement of innovation and entrepreneurship in the space industry
- the safety of space activities, and the risk of damage to persons or property as a result of space activities

The Act also implements certain Australian obligations under the United Nations space treaties. Australia is a founding member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and is State Party to all five United Nations space treaties.

The Act includes powers for the Minister to make rules by legislative instrument. The rules support effective operation of the Act. They are intended to provide clear information and a streamlined process relevant to the approval of an activity under the Act. There are currently three legislative instruments setting out rules under the Act (collectively the Rules):

- the [*Space \(Launches and Returns\) \(General\) Rules 2019*](#) (the General Rules) provides detail on the application requirements and additional criteria for approvals under the Act (other than high power rockets)
- the [*Space \(Launches and Returns\) \(High Power Rocket\) Rules 2019*](#) (the High Power Rocket Rules) provides detail on the application requirements and additional criteria for approval of Australian high power rocket permits; and
- the [*Space \(Launches and Returns\) \(Insurance\) Rules 2019*](#) (the Insurance Rules) provides detail relating to insurance and financial requirements applicable to certain approvals under the Act.

Other relevant documents referred to by the Rules are the [Flight Safety Code](#) and the Maximum Probable Loss Methodology ([MPL Methodology](#)).

1.2 About these guidelines

These guidelines explain the authorisation process for an Australian high power rocket permit.

The relevant legislation for an Australian high power rocket permit is the Act, the High Power Rocket Rules and the Insurance Rules.

These guidelines are not legally binding other than to the extent they refer to binding legislation. Therefore these guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Act, the High Power Rocket Rules and the Insurance Rules. Guidelines do not exclude, limit or replace the requirements of the legislation. If there is any ambiguity or inconsistency, the Act and/or High Power Rocket Rules and/or Insurance Rules have precedence.

You can find a glossary of terms used in these guidelines in section [9. Glossary](#).

1.3 Role of the applicant

An applicant (you/your) is responsible for applying for an Australian high power rocket permit where required and meeting all legislative obligations as required by the Act and High Power Rocket Rules, as well as any conditions placed on the permit.

1.4 Role of the Australian Space Agency

The Australian Space Agency (we/us/the Agency) is a division of the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the Department). The Department, through the Agency and its National Space Safety Office, is responsible for administering the Act and Rules, and publishes information to assist applicants navigate the application and assessment process for their activities.

1.5 Role of the Minister or their delegate

The Minister makes the decision whether to grant an Australian high power rocket permit, considering advice from the Agency, and only if they are satisfied that an application meets the criteria in the Act and High Power Rocket Rules (see [2.4 Criteria for granting an Australian high power rocket permit](#)).

The Minister may delegate to another person, or position, any or all of their powers under the Act (except the power to make rules under subsection 110(1) of the Act).

2. Australian high power rocket permit overview

2.1 Who should apply?

You will need an Australian high power rocket permit if you intend to launch a rocket, from Australia, that does not exceed an altitude of 100km above mean sea level and:

- that is propelled by a motor or motors with a combined total impulse greater than 889,600 Newton seconds, or
- that is propelled by a motor or motors with a combined total impulse greater than 40,960 Newton seconds and is fitted with a system or systems that allow active control of its trajectory

If you have any questions as to whether you need an Australian high power rocket permit, you can contact us (see [8. Contacting us](#)).

NOTE: if you intend for your rocket to reach beyond an altitude of 100km above mean sea level you will require an Australian launch permit, not an Australian high power rocket permit.

2.2 What is the purpose of an Australian high power rocket permit?

Australian high power rocket permits ensure that high power rocket launches in Australia are safe and are done in a manner such that the probability of causing substantial harm to public health or public safety, or substantial damage to property is as low as reasonably practicable.

High power rockets are regulated under the Act because they are powerful and potentially manoeuvrable enough that they could theoretically transition to being a space object. High power rocket launches present a high risk profile which, to ensure safety of such activities, require evaluation under the [Flight Safety Code](#) and the application of insurance requirements.

2.3 What does an Australian high power rocket permit authorise?

An Australian high power rocket permit authorises the launch of a high power rocket from a specified facility (whether fixed or mobile), or specified place, in Australia.

If you are not an Australian national (see [9. Glossary](#) for definition of Australian national) you may also need authorisation from your relevant foreign jurisdiction for the proposed launch, which you will need to provide as a part of your application.

2.4 Criteria for granting an Australian high power rocket permit

To grant an Australian high power rocket permit, the Minister or their delegate must be satisfied that you have met the relevant criteria in section 38 of the Act and section 6 of the High Power Rocket Rules. These criteria include:

- the person who is to carry out the rocket launch is competent to do so
- the insurance/financial requirements in Part 3 Division 7 of the Act will be satisfied for the rocket launch*
- the probability of the rocket launch causing substantial harm to public health or public safety or causing substantial damage to property is as low as is reasonably practicable
- there are no reasons relevant to the security, defence or international relations of Australia why the permit should not be granted
- the high power rocket is as effective and safe as is reasonably practicable for the purpose of the rocket launch
- the flight path for the rocket launch is as effective and safe as is reasonably practicable, taking into account the purpose of the rocket launch, the rocket's design and the launch safety standards in the [Flight Safety Code](#)
- the risk hazard analysis for the rocket launch is consistent with the [Flight Safety Code](#)
- there is adequate planning to address the environmental impacts of the rocket launch.

***NOTE:** The Act includes a criterion that the Minister must be satisfied that insurance/financial requirements have been satisfied for the rocket launch under the permit. The Act and Insurance Rules specify that the amount of insurance must be at least equal to the lesser of \$100 million or the amount determined using the Maximum Probable Loss (MPL) Methodology. As an alternative to holding insurance, you may show direct financial responsibility for an equivalent amount.

Addressing the criteria throughout your application:

When providing material to address the application requirements (see [4. Application Requirements](#)), you should clearly explain how your material addresses each of the above criteria, noting that it may be relevant to more than one criterion.

2.5 Permit conditions

Australian high power rocket permits are typically subject to standard conditions as detailed in section 40 of the Act and Part 3 Division 2 of the High Power Rocket Rules.

Your Australian high power rocket permit will typically include the following conditions:

- conduct the launch in a way that is not likely to cause substantial harm to public health or public safety or cause substantial damage to property
- satisfy the insurance/financial requirements
- give the Minister or their delegate any information that the Minister or their delegate asks for about the permit under section 60 of the Act
- at least 2 days before the rocket launch but not more than 10 days before:
 - confirm the day of the rocket launch and the rocket launch window on that day
 - confirm the planned trajectory of the rocket
 - provide information about any subsequent days, and the rocket launch window on those days, that the rocket launch may be attempted if it does not occur on the scheduled rocket launch day
- notify if the rocket launch does not occur on the scheduled day, and you intend to attempt the rocket launch on a subsequent day
- notify of any changes to payloads to be launched

- provide any changes to the assumptions and data used in the risk hazard analysis for the rocket launch, along with a statement from a suitably qualified expert (see [9. Glossary](#)) as to whether the risk hazard analysis continues to fall within the launch safety standards of the [Flight Safety Code](#)
- notify of any changes to the flight path for the rocket launch no less than 2 weeks before the launch period (unless agreed by the Agency)
- as far as is practicable, conduct the rocket launch consistently with the flight path information provided in your application or subsequently to the Minister or their delegate
- provide copies of any amendments to the launch management plan, flight safety plan or technology security plan for the rocket launch no less than 2 weeks before the launch period (unless agreed by the Agency). You must also ensure that the rocket launch is conducted in accordance with current versions of each of these plans
- your rocket launch must be conducted in accordance with the [Flight Safety Code](#) and that your high power rocket must not cross into the territory or airspace of a foreign country unless an arrangement for your activity is in place between Australia and the foreign country
- notify of any changes to your organisational structure, the identity of key personnel and/or changes of duties of key personnel
- give the Minister, as soon as practicable after the launch, a report on the compliance of your launch with the launch safety standards in the Flight Safety Code and with the assumptions and data used in the risk hazard analysis for your launch.

We may include other conditions on your permit. You may incur penalties if you do not comply with the conditions of your permit (see [2.6 Offences and civil penalties](#)).

2.6 Offences and civil penalties

The Criminal Code generally applies to all offences against the Act.

It is an offence to launch a high power rocket in Australia without appropriate approvals, including an Australian high power rocket permit or authorisation certificate covering the rocket launch. The penalty ranges from:

- for an individual, imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years or a fine not exceeding 5500 penalty units (see [9. Glossary](#)) or both
- for a body corporate, a fine not exceeding 100,000 penalty units

These matters are outlined in section 13 of the Act.

If you hold an Australian high power rocket permit and contravene a condition of the permit*, you may receive a penalty ranging from:

- for an individual, imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years, or a fine not exceeding 5500 penalty units or both
- for a body corporate, a fine not exceeding 100,000 penalty units

Contravening a permit condition may also attract a civil penalty of 1,000 penalty units.

These matters are outlined in section 41 of the Act.

***NOTE:** this only applies to breaches of the conditions in 40(a) or 40(b) of the Act, not all permit conditions. Civil penalties may apply to breaches of any of the permit conditions.

3. Application and authorisation process

3.1 Preparing an application

Before applying you should read and understand these guidelines.

If you are applying for your first Australian high power rocket permit, or if you are unsure of any aspect of the application process, you should engage with us early to discuss.

All application documents must be in writing and in English. If a required document is not in English, you must also include an English language translation.

3.2 Submitting evidence-based material

Our assessment is evidence-based. You should include materials to support your claims. Supporting materials should be robust, sufficiently detailed and appropriate for the scope and complexity of your proposed activity. We generally do not consider self-declared statements of compliance against the requirements in the Act and High Power Rocket Rules to be sufficient.

We provide guidance on the information and documents you must submit. It remains, however, your responsibility to obtain the evidence required in your application, including other government approvals. We will not prepare material for these approvals.

Submission of information as set out in these guidelines, and the provision of guidance by us as you prepare your application, does not guarantee that the Minister or delegate will be satisfied that all criteria have been met and decide to grant a permit.

You may contact us during the assessment period if you need to update or make amendments to your application, for example if information becomes outdated or incorrect, or you need to change launch plans. This ensures the Minister or delegate's consideration is based on current and accurate information.

3.3 Material relevant to multiple applications

If you are submitting more than one application, each application must stand alone in addressing the relevant requirements and criteria.

If you plan to conduct future activities, we encourage you to design your application material to optimise usability in future applications. This can be discussed as part of the application plan workshop, including approaches to incorporating ongoing iterations and feedback.

While you may elect to reuse material from previous applications, you should undertake a thorough review of any documentation proposed for resubmission. This review should ensure that all material is current, accurate, and reflects the environment in which the proposed activity will occur. Documentation should incorporate relevant feedback and lessons learned from previous applications and activities.

3.4 Document management

Good document management (including version control, consistency across documents, and updates to parent documents) is important during the application process and for subsequent or related applications, and will help to facilitate a smooth and efficient assessment process.

3.5 Application fees

There are no application fees for an Australian high power rocket permit under the Act.

3.6 Submitting an application

You submit your expression of interest for an Australian high power rocket permit and all subsequent documents to the Agency through the [Regulatory Application Hub](#). For further information or support submitting your expression of interest form, contact us for guidance (see section [8. Contacting us](#)).

An expression of interest form can be found on our [website](#).

Note: When you submit your documents via the Regulatory Application Hub, this will create an application record. You can use the application record for the life of the authorisation including post grant reporting.

You may wish to consider who in your company should create and manage the application record.

3.7 Application process

Steps in the application process:	
1. Expression of interest	<p>You download and complete an Australian high power rocket permit expression of interest form.</p> <p>You create an account in the Regulatory Applications Hub (if you don't already have an account).</p> <p>You initiate a New Application in the Regulatory Application Hub. You will be asked to provide some details about yourself, your organisation and the type of permit, licence or authorisation you are wanting to apply for.</p> <p>You can then add your expression of interest document, and any other documents you choose to provide at this time, to your corresponding application in the Regulatory Application Hub.</p> <p>We review your expression of interest against each of the requirements in the Act and the High Power Rocket Rules for an Australian high power rocket permit application (see 4. Application requirements).</p> <p>We will then contact you to discuss your application.</p> <p>NOTE: initiating your expression of interest is not an application submission, you will need to provide further documents.</p>
2. Application plan workshop	<p>We book an application plan workshop when your expression of interest provides sufficient information for the application process to proceed.</p> <p>During this workshop we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish the status of your application • develop a shared understanding of application requirements that need to be met • set and agree application and assessment timeframes • clarify roles and responsibilities • establish principles for how we engage throughout the application and assessment process

Steps in the application process:	
3. Assessment	<p>You provide completed documents in the agreed timeframes by adding them to your corresponding application in the Regulatory Application Hub.</p> <p>The Regulatory Application Hub accepts large file sizes and various file types, including zipped files. Contact us if you have issues submitting material.</p> <p>Your documents will be electronically transferred to us. We ask that you email NSSO@space.gov.au to advise us when you have uploaded new documents.</p> <p>We commence assessment upon receipt of your completed documents. We hold scheduled meetings with you to clarify information submitted and provide feedback on progress, including whether you have sufficiently addressed the relevant decision criteria throughout your application (see 2.4 Criteria for granting an Australian high power rocket permit).</p> <p>During the assessment process we will consult more widely within government to see if there is any reason, including relating to Australian security, defence or international relations, why an Australian high power rocket permit should not be granted.</p> <p>Once you have provided all required information in your application, we will finalise our assessment and make a recommendation to the Minister (or their delegate).</p>
4. Decision	<p>The Minister (or delegate) makes the decision on whether an Australian high power rocket permit should be granted, considering advice from the Agency. The Minister or delegate, through the Agency, may request further information or clarification to support their decision.</p>

3.8 Prioritising the submission of complex information

While you may submit completed material in any order, we encourage you to submit technically complex material earlier in the process, if possible. This will help minimise the risk of delays during the assessment process.

For an Australian high power rocket permit, technically complex material typically includes the risk hazard analysis, flight safety plan and information about the flight safety system.

3.9 Timing for assessment and decision

We estimate the time it will take to assess your application will be approximately 6 months from when you have submitted sufficient information to commence assessment. We will discuss assessment timeframes in more detail during your application plan workshop.

Timeframes may vary over the course of our assessment based on submission of required information, including if you make changes to material during the assessment process.

If we find key information is missing, inaccurate or not at an appropriate level of detail, we will request additional information and provide you with a reasonable amount of time to respond. If we do not receive information within agreed timeframes, we may pause assessment until we receive sufficient information to recommence.

3.10 Identifying and addressing application risks early

Effective management of application risks can minimise overall assessment timeframes.

We will ask you early in the application process to identify risks to being granted an Australian high power rocket permit. These may include factors related to the activity's technical and operational risk profile, your experience in operating within technical regulatory frameworks, or the complexity of stakeholder arrangements, including access to relevant technical data.

Certain aspects of your planned activity are more likely to increase the risk of assessment delays, including untested or unproven technologies, applicants unfamiliar with demonstrating compliance with technical regulation, flight near populated areas (including airspace and maritime) or flight near critical infrastructure.

Applications requiring technical information from more than one organisation may complicate the application process, particularly in the absence of established communication and information-sharing protocols, and where organisations have not previously worked together.

You should identify these risks early and manage their impact on the regulatory assessment process.

3.11 Other regulation you may need to meet

As part of your application, we will ask you to provide evidence of how you will meet other Commonwealth, state or territory regulation. For an Australian high power rocket permit, this may include:

- Civil aviation safety and airspace management
- Maritime rules and regulations
- Radiocommunications licensing
- International relations
- Environmental protection and biodiversity controls
- Native Title and cultural heritage protections
- Customs regulations and biosecurity laws
- Export of defence and strategic goods
- State and Territory regulations.

This list is not exhaustive.

These requirements apply to the mission as a whole, including rocket and payloads.

It is your responsibility to contact relevant agencies and understand the regulation your activity needs to meet. We recommend you enquire early to avoid delays, noting that lead times for approvals differ between agencies. We can support you to find the right point of contact at relevant agencies.

4. Application requirements

Application requirements describe the information required for an application under the High Power Rocket Rules. We use this information to assess whether you have met the criteria in the Act and the High Power Rocket Rules for granting an Australian high power rocket permit (see [section 2.4](#)). As you develop your application, you should be explicit about how the information and evidence you provide demonstrates your application meets these criteria. If a requirement is not yet met, explain how and when you will meet it.

We ask you for information about:

- you
- your company, and which persons or entities have ownership, control or direction over you
- your organisational structure and personnel
- the launch, flight path and high power rocket including history of kind of rocket
- launch facility (if applicable), payload (if applicable) and launch management plan
- your risk hazard analysis
- your flight safety plan
- your emergency plan
- environmental considerations, plan or approvals
- your technology security plan

- your insurance/financial requirements
- contracts, outstanding approvals and matters to be verified.

4.1 Information about the applicant

This information supports confirmation that you are an Australian national/responsible party as defined in the Act and the High Power Rocket Rules, and supports assessment of matters relevant to security, defence, and Australia's international relations.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 16

You must provide the following information:

- applicant name
- name, position and contact details of an individual who will act as the contact for the application
- Australian Business Number (ABN), if any
- Australian Company Number (ACN), if you are applying as a company registered under the *Corporations Act 2001*
- information about which persons or entities have ownership, control, or direction of the applicant, including the nationality of those persons or entities (this may include a corporation that your company is a subsidiary of, significant shareholders or the government administering your company).

4.2 Organisational structure and personnel

This information supports assessment of whether your organisation is competent to carry out the launch, including whether responsibilities and authority are clearly allocated, appropriate oversight is in place, and personnel with authority over critical aspects of launch are suitably qualified and experienced to safely execute their responsibilities.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 17

You must provide:

- a description of your organisational structure, including the chain of command
- duties and responsibilities of each position in the chain of command.

And for each of the following individuals (whether or not they are part of your organisational structure):

- your chief executive officer or equivalent
- and each individual in a position:
- that would have authority to direct:
 - the conduct of the launch, or
 - the operation of the high power rocket.
 - that has or would have any duties or functions directly connected with operating the high power rocket
 - within the organisational structure of the applicant that has or would have authority or oversight in relation to manufacture or maintenance of the high power rocket
 - that would have authority or oversight in relation to tracking or communicating with the launch vehicle
 - system or electronic system of the high power rocket functions correctly
 - preparing, implementing or monitoring the technology security plan
 - that, if the launch is to be conducted from a facility, would have authority to direct:
 - operation of the facility or a part of the facility, or
 - operation or maintenance of the grounds systems of the facility.

- that would have authority or oversight in relation to integration of a payload with the launch vehicle
- that has or would have authority or oversight in relation to:
 - installation of software in the launch vehicle, or
 - verification that the software functions correctly
- that has or would have authority or oversight in relation to verification that the structural system, propulsion system, fuel system, electrical system or electronic system of the launch vehicle functions correctly
- who had authority or oversight in relation to preparing the technology security plan included in the application (as required by section 29 of the High Power Rocket Rules)
- that would have a role in implementing or monitoring the technology security plan.

You must provide the following information:

- name, date of birth and place of birth
- address of usual place of residence
- relevant qualifications and experience
- how long the individual has occupied their current position.

4.3 Information about launch

This information establishes a clear, high-level understanding of your proposed launch, including the nature, scope and context of the activity. This supports assessment of the boundaries of your proposed activity and the assumptions that underpin subsequent application requirements, including those relating to flight path and safety. You should include details about how this launch fits into your broader launch plans – i.e. whether it is part of a test campaign, a launch development program, or an ongoing commercial operation.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 18

You must provide the following information for the proposed launch:

- description of the purpose of the launch
- the facility or place from which the launch of the rocket is proposed, including the latitude, longitude and elevation of the launch
- launch period and launch window (if the launch period extends over more than one day, you must also include an estimated launch day).

4.4 Information about flight path

This information is used to assess whether the flight path for the launch is as effective and safe as is reasonably practicable, having regard to the purpose and nature of the launch. The information you provide supports our assessment of risk to persons, property, critical infrastructure assets, the environment, and to airspace and maritime users.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 19

You must provide the following information for the proposed launch:

- a description of the flight path
- the name and location of any critical asset/s directly under the flight path or within an area where there is a reasonable probability debris (both scheduled and unscheduled) may land
 - if you have identified any such critical asset/s, you must also explain why you consider the flight path is appropriate and safe given the location of these assets
- the highest planned altitude of the flight and the high power rocket's potential maximum altitude
- the planned range of the flight
- the potential maximum range of the high power rocket

- the sequence of events in the flight and the overall duration of the flight.

4.5 Information about high power rocket

This information supports assessment of whether the high power rocket has been designed, manufactured, integrated and tested in a manner that supports operation as safe as reasonably practicable, having regard to the purpose and nature of the launch.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 20

You must provide the following information for the high power rocket, including:

- the type of rocket
- the name and address of the designer and of the manufacturer
- the country of manufacture
- a copy, or description, of the manufacturer's quality assurance system
- whether the manufacturer has quality assurance certification in accordance with a recognised standard
- whether the rocket has been manufactured in accordance with the designer's specifications and tested and inspected having regard to those specifications
- whether the rocket has received appropriate import approvals
- the rocket's technical specifications for each of the following:
 - the structural system
 - the propulsion system
 - the fuel system
 - the electrical system, including power supply and distribution
 - each of the electronic systems, including the guidance, communications, flight control, computer and data management systems
 - the flight safety system
- whether the rocket is or contains a nuclear weapon or weapon of mass destruction of any other kind
- whether the rocket contains a nuclear power source or any other hazardous materials (including radioactive materials), and if so, the amount of each hazardous material.

4.6 History of kind of rocket

This information provides the basis for assessing whether your high power rocket is effective and safe as reasonably practicable by drawing on available evidence of prior flight experience or testing of the rocket type. Information you provide supports assessment of the reliability and performance of the high power rocket, including failures and anomalies relevant to the planned activity.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 21

You must provide the following information on the kind of rocket:

- an outline of the publicly available information on the flight history for the rocket type for the previous 5 years
- the safety record of the kind of rocket
- if the safety record includes anomalies or failures – the measures taken to reduce the risk of future anomalies or failures

4.7 Information about facility (where applicable)

This information supports our assessment of whether the probability of the rocket launch causing substantial harm to public health or public safety or causing substantial damage to property is as low as is reasonably practicable.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 22

If you intend to conduct the launch from a facility, you must provide the following information about the facility:

- the facility's safety record
- if the safety record includes anomalies or failures, what was done to reduce the risk of future anomalies or failures
- the licensing or accreditation the facility has received
- the standards to which the facility was designed and built, and under which the facility operates.

4.8 Information about payload (if applicable)

We use this information to assess safety, security, and any relevant statutory and international obligations concerning the payload or payloads the rocket carries. Information you provide supports our assessment of whether risk to persons or property arising from the payload(s) are as low as reasonably practicable, whether the payload(s) contains prohibited items (including nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction), and whether any security, defence, or international relations considerations arise. We may give particular attention to payloads with foreign ownership or influence, first-of-kind technologies and payloads that gather information using sensors or devices.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 23

If you intend to include one or more payloads, you must provide the following information in relation to each payload on the rocket:

- payload description and purpose
- the owner of the payload
 - if the owner of the payload is a corporation – information about the corporation's significant shareholders
 - if the owner of the payload is an individual – their address, date and place of birth
- the manufacturer of each payload subsystem and country of manufacture
- the sensors and other information-gathering devices attached to the payload or powered by it
- whether the payload contains any hazardous materials (including radioactive materials), and if so the amount of each hazardous material
- if the owner of the payload is not an Australian national you must provide a copy of any authorisation or permit from the owner's country obtained in relation to the launch of the payload.

If you intend for your rocket to host payloads from foreign countries, you should contact us early.

4.9 Launch management plan

A launch management plan describes in detail how you propose to manage and conduct the launch in a manner that is safe as reasonably practicable. Your launch management plan supports our assessment of whether you have appropriate operational arrangements in place to plan, coordinate, and control launch activities appropriately.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 24

You must provide a launch management plan which includes:

- arrangements to ensure ground operation safety, as well as a statement identifying all hazardous ground operations associated with the launch and a description of the procedures to manage them
- procedures for identifying and responding to adverse weather for the launch
- procedures for launch countdown

- procedures to recover from any anomalies or failures during the launch.

Your launch management plan must also include:

- arrangements for reporting to the Minister on the launch
- arrangements to ensure launch personnel are properly prepared
- communications arrangements, including:
 - launch area communications
 - communications from drop zones to the launch area
 - telemetry communications (including the radio frequencies to be used)
 - emergency communications
- the system you will use for making and keeping records for operation of the high power rocket, and maintaining documentation such as manuals and procedures relating to operation of the rocket
- how you will maintain the high power rocket, and record scheduled and unscheduled maintenance
- a timeline for the launch and flight that identifies all safety-critical events.

4.10 Risk hazard analysis

A risk hazard analysis identifies, quantifies, and evaluates risks arising from a potential launch against the launch safety standards in the Flight Safety Code. This information allows us to assess whether the probability of the activity causing substantial harm to public health or public safety, or causing substantial damage to property, is as low as reasonably practicable. To support this assessment, your risk hazard analysis should provide evidence of the methods used to identify potential hazards during the launch, how you analysed the risks associated with these hazards, and the measures in place to minimise those risks and ensure that they remain within the established launch safety standards. Your risk hazard analysis includes describing the software used in your risk hazard analysis, which assists us to understand its reliability as software errors or user error may compromise its validity.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 25

You must provide a risk hazard analysis for the launch.

You must describe the methodology, assumptions and data used in the analysis.

The methodology must apply the launch vehicle probability of failure set out in the [Flight Safety Code](#) methodology.

If your methodology differs from the risk hazard analysis methodology in the Flight Safety Code in any other respect, you must:

- describe it in a way that can conveniently be assessed against the methodology in the Flight Safety Code
- set out the differences between the two methodologies, and demonstrate that despite the differences your methodology is technically sound.

Your application must also describe any software used to carry out the analysis including, for any software that is not a generally available commercial product, how the software operates to implement the methodology used.

You must include written confirmation by a suitably qualified expert that the risk hazard analysis and the methodology used in the analysis are technically sound.

4.11 Flight safety plan

A flight safety plan provides the basis for assessing whether the launch will be conducted consistently with the assumptions, inputs, and outputs of the risk hazard analysis, and in accordance with the launch safety standards set out in the [Flight Safety Code](#). Information you provide in your

flight safety plan supports assessment of whether the launch will be as safe as reasonably practicable.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 26

You must include a flight safety plan for the launch that includes:

- strategies and arrangements you will use to ensure that the launch will be conducted:
 - in a way that reduces the level of risk to third parties to as low as is reasonably practicable
 - within the launch safety standards set out in the [Flight Safety Code](#)
- arrangements for reporting to the Minister on the launch's compliance with the launch safety standards.

Your application must include written confirmation by a suitably qualified expert, who is approved by the Minister or their delegate, that the launch will fall within the launch safety standards if carried out according to the flight safety plan. This confirmation may come from the same person who gave written confirmation for the risk hazard analysis.

4.12 Emergency plan

You must demonstrate that you have adequate planning in place to respond to an accident, incident or emergency. Information provided in your emergency plan supports our assessment of your competency to conduct the launch, and of whether the probability of the launch causing substantial harm to public health or public safety, or cause substantial damage to property is as low as is reasonably practicable.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 27

You must include an emergency plan for responding to:

- accidents and incidents involving the high power rocket
- any other kind of emergency at or near the launch site

Your emergency plan must include:

- the actions responders will take in an accident, incident or other emergency
- a list of the authorities and persons who you will notify in an accident, incident or other emergency
- a description of how you will coordinate any actions to be taken in an accident, incident or other emergency with those authorities or persons
- evacuation procedures for an accident, incident or other emergency
- the procedures you will follow in the case of an accident to:
 - locate the high power rocket or its wreckage
 - recover and remove the high power rocket or its wreckage (in accordance with any necessary permission of the Minister or investigator under the Act)
- arrangements to ensure you would meet your obligations under any Commonwealth, State or Territory law in the event of an accident, incident or other emergency.

4.13 Environment

We use this information to understand whether you have adequate planning to address any environmental impacts related to the nature, location, and conduct of your proposed activities.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 28

You must provide one of the following for the launch:

- evidence that the environmental plan of the licensed launch facility from which the launch is proposed addresses the environmental impact of the launch

- information about environmental approvals required for the launch under any other law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory, or
- an assessment of the likely impact of the launch on the environment, and information on how any adverse effects on the environment are to be monitored and mitigated.

4.14 Technology security

Your technology security plan should demonstrate that you have appropriate measures in place to protect technology used in the launch from unauthorised access, interference, or compromise. This supports assessment of whether you have appropriately identified and managed risks arising from physical or electronic technology compromise, including risks that could affect public safety or property.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 29

You must provide a technology security plan for the launch that includes the following:

- arrangements and procedures for safeguarding the technology you will use in operating the rocket, including:
 - procedures to prevent unauthorised people from having access to the technology
 - your cybersecurity strategy, including a written assessment of the adequacy of the strategy by a person with suitable qualifications and experience
- if there is an agreement of any kind in force between Australia and another country relating to safeguarding all or part of your technology – information on how your plan ensures that Australia gives effect to its obligations under the agreement.

4.15 Insurance/financial requirements

This information supports assessment of compliance with insurance and financial responsibility requirements applicable to the launch. We use this information to assess whether adequate arrangements are in place to cover liability for damage caused by your activity, including liability that may be borne by the permit holder or the Commonwealth.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 30

You must provide evidence that you are either insured or have direct financial responsibility for any liability you (the permit holder) may incur under the Act to pay compensation for damage that your launch causes to third parties. The amount of insurance or financial responsibility must meet the minimum requirements described below.

Insurance

The minimum amount of insurance required is either \$100 million or the amount determined using the [Maximum Probable Loss Methodology](#) (MPL methodology), whichever is lower. If you intend to rely on the amount calculated under the MPL methodology, you must provide the calculations and the name of the person who made them.

Direct financial responsibility

You may alternatively show direct financial responsibility for the launch for an amount not less than the \$100 million or lesser amount determined by the MPL methodology. To do so you must provide evidence that:

- you have a sufficient amount of available assets that could be used to meet any liability that you might incur under the Act (for assets held wholly or partly by another person or body you must show that that person/body will make them available if required), or
- you are otherwise able to meet any liability that you might incur under the Act to pay compensation for any damage to third parties that the launch causes.

The Minister or delegate may request additional information to show that you have the assets or are otherwise able to meet the liabilities as you have claimed.

4.16 Contracts

We use this information to understand the contractual arrangements that exist between you and other parties involved in the launch. Information provided supports our assessment of whether responsibilities for activities and liabilities for potential damage are clearly defined and consistently reflected across the application.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 31

You must provide copies of any contracts entered, and information on any contracts that you propose to enter, for the purposes of your launch. This includes, but is not limited to:

- any contracts for use or lease of facilities
- any contracts for others to undertake activities connected with the launch
- any contracts for carrying payloads.

4.17 Outstanding approvals

This information provides the basis for assessing all relevant regulatory dependencies and arrangements you have in place to obtain required approvals prior to launch. You should identify all required approvals. If an approval is not required, confirm this and explain why.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 32

You must provide:

- a list of all activities in relation to your launch for which you need approval under any other Commonwealth law or law of a State or Territory, but have not yet obtained
- the arrangements (including the timeframe) for obtaining each of these approvals.

4.18 Matters to be verified

We use this information to understand any arrangements you have in place to complete verification or validation activities prior to launch, noting that such activities may occur later than the development of plans. You should provide evidence that you have properly identified all matters relating to the launch management plan and technology security arrangements that have not yet been verified or validated at the time of application.

High Power Rocket Rules, section 33

You must provide:

- a list of matters mentioned in your launch management plan or technology security plan yet to be verified or validated, (for example, verifying that communications and tracking equipment is installed onsite and operational)
- the arrangements (including the timeframe) for obtaining these verifications or validations.

4.19 Additional information

High Power Rocket Rules, section 34

You may include any other information relevant to demonstrating whether the criteria for granting an Australian high power rocket permit are met.

4.20 Application may be updated

High Power Rocket Rules, section 35

Before the Minister or delegate's decision whether to grant a high power rocket permit, you may update a part of the application (for example, to update information that is no longer correct or to change plans for conducting your proposed launch or launches and any connected return).

5. If you are granted a permit

If the Minister or delegate grants a permit:

- it will specify the day it comes into force and the period it remains in force (which may be a particular event instead of a specified time)
- it is granted subject to conditions
- the Minister or delegate can, by written notice, extend or further extend the period the permit remains in force.

5.1 Keeping us informed

If the information submitted in your application changes after you have been granted a permit, in many instances you must notify us. These include changes to:

- the assumptions and data used in your risk hazard analysis
- information about flight path
- your launch management plan
- your flight safety plan
- your technology security plan
- the payloads that you will launch
- your organisational structure
- the identity of individuals who have responsibilities and roles as described in section 4.2
- the duties or functions of individuals who have responsibilities or roles described in section 4.2.

Depending on the circumstances, your Australian high power rocket permit may need to be varied, transferred, suspended or revoked.

5.2 Varying, revoking, transferring or suspending an existing permit

You may apply for a variation to an Australian high power rocket permit, including:

- varying the launch facility or place
- conditions on the permit
- extending the period of the permit.

When applying for a variation you should include a description and reason for the variation, and any supporting material you believe will assist the Minister or delegate in making a decision.

The Minister or delegate may also vary, revoke or transfer a high power rocket on their own initiative. If the Minister or delegate considers there may be grounds to do this, they must:

- give you written notice of their opinion specifying the reasons for that opinion, and
- invite you to make a written submission about the matter within a reasonable period specified in the notice.

In deciding whether to vary, revoke or transfer the permit, the Minister or delegate must consider your written submission if you provide it within the period specified in the notice.

The Minister or delegate may suspend your permit:

- if you have contravened a permit condition
- if for reasons relevant to the security, defence or international relations of Australia, the permit should be suspended
- if an incident involving the high power rocket covered by the permit occurs during the liability period for the launch of the rocket.

The Minister or delegate must give notice of the suspension to you in writing, specifying when it takes effect.

NOTE: under section 95 of the Act, if an accident occurs a permit is immediately taken to be suspended until the Minister or delegate revokes the suspension.

5.3 Transferring an Australian high power rocket permit

Your Australian high power rocket permit may be transferred on application by the transferee. You will need to provide a statement with the transfer application explaining why the transfer is being sought.

The transfer application must include all material required for an Australian high power rocket permit application. This may include any information or materials from your original application if that information or material is still correct. If you are seeking to transfer a permit, please contact the Agency.

6. Feedback, complaints and appeals

6.1 Feedback and complaints

We welcome your feedback, which assists us to continually improve.

We treat all complaints seriously and will handle your complaint in a professional and confidential manner.

To give feedback or make a complaint, complete the [Feedback and complaint](#) form on the Department of Industry, Science and Resources website.

To help us best respond to you:

- be clear about the issues
- provide details about the issue including any steps taken to try and resolve the issue
- provide any supporting evidence or documentation
- let us know your desired outcome or resolution
- get back to us as soon as you can
- treat our staff with courtesy and respect.

When we receive your complaint we:

- acknowledge we've received your complaint within 5 business days
- forward it to the relevant area who will respond and keep you informed
- resolve issues within 20 business days where possible

At the end of the process, you will receive the decision in writing.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you can:

- contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)
- write to [our ministers](#) or your [local member of Parliament](#).

6.2 Administrative Review Tribunal

You may make an application to the [Administrative Review Tribunal](#) for review of any decision of the Minister or their delegate under section 61 of the Act, including imposing particular conditions on your permit.

We recommend you contact the Administrative Review Tribunal as soon as possible to discuss any applicable time limits for your application for review.

7. How we use your information

7.1 Confidential information

We collect information:

- to assess applications to conduct space activities
- to monitor a permit, licence or certificate holder's compliance with their obligations under the Act, the relevant rules and the conditions of their permit, licence or certificate.

We will treat the information you give us as confidential if it meets all the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential at the time you provide the information
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

Unless the information you provide to us is identified as confidential information, we may share your information with other government agencies or third parties for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- the administration and assessment of your application
- to ascertain if there is any reason why a licence or permit should not be granted
- to third parties for the purposes of conducting a technical review of your application, under a deed of confidentiality.

We may disclose confidential information:

- to our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us to assess your application
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to the Prime Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if:

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

7.2 Personal information

We must treat your personal information according to the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) (APPs) and the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Cth). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

You can read the [Privacy Policy](#) on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

7.3 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (Cth) (FOI Act). The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

8. Contacting us

We encourage you to contact us early in planning for any space activity that requires authorisation under the Act. Early engagement may help to resolve questions specific to your activity.

Email NSSO@space.gov.au

Phone 1800 487 182 (within Australia)
 +61 2 6276 1166 (outside Australia)

Head office: Lot 14, McEwin Building, North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000

Post: National Space Safety Office
 Australian Space Agency
 GPO Box 2013
 Canberra ACT 2601

9. Glossary

Term	Definition
Accident	<p>Section 85 of the Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018 states an accident involving a space object or high power rocket occurs if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a person dies or suffers serious injury as a result of the operation of the space object, or b) the space object or high power rocket is destroyed or seriously damaged or causes damage to other property (other than in the circumstances prescribed in the rules). <p>Section 121 of the General Rules sets out exceptions for the purposes of paragraph 85(b).</p>
Act	The Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018
Australian launch permit	<p>An Australian launch permit authorises the launch of one or more space objects, or a series of launches of space objects, from a specified launch facility in Australia, a specified Australian aircraft that is in flight or a specified foreign aircraft that is in the airspace over Australian territory.</p> <p>A launch permit may also authorise one or more space objects to be returned, in connection with the launch or launches, to a specified place or area in Australia.</p>
Australian national	<p>Any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an Australian citizen • an Australian resident • a body incorporated by or under a law of the Commonwealth, of a State or of a Territory • the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory.
Australian resident	An individual who resides in Australia and is the holder (within the meaning of the Migration Act 1958) of a permanent visa (within the meaning of that Act).
Australian Space Agency	A division of the Department. The Agency, through the National Space Safety Office, is responsible for administering the Act, Rules and related framework.
Authorisation certificate	A certificate issued by the Minister to cover conduct that would otherwise be prevented under the Act. We would consider an authorisation certificate where there isn't an existing approval process.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science and Resources.

Term	Definition
Flight Safety Code	<p>The Flight Safety Code provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the methodology to assess that certain launch and return activities are safe under the Act and associated legislative instruments a quantitative approach to ensuring that the risks associated with certain civil space and high power rocket activities in Australia are as low as reasonably practicable methods through risk hazard analysis to identify potential hazards during launches or returns that may cause harm to public health and safety, analyse the risks associated with these hazards, and develop measures to minimise those risks and ensure that they remain below the established launch safety standards.
General Rules	The Space (Launches and Returns) (General) Rules 2019
High power rocket	<p>An object of a kind prescribed by the <i>Space (Launches and Returns) (High Power Rocket) Rules 2019</i>; that is, a rocket propelled by a motor or motors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> with a combined total impulse greater than 889,600 Newton seconds, or with a combined total impulse greater than 40,960 Newton seconds and is fitted with a system or systems that allow active control of its trajectory <p>The rocket must not go beyond an altitude of 100km above mean sea level.</p>
High Power Rocket Rules	The Space (Launches and Returns) (High Power Rocket) Rules 2019
Incident	An incident is defined under section 86 of the Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018 as an occurrence associated with the operation of a space object or high power rocket that affects or could affect the safety or the operation of the space object or high power rocket or that involves circumstances indicating that an accident nearly occurred.
Insurance Rules	The Space (Launches and Returns) (Insurance) Rules 2019
Launch facility	A facility (whether fixed or mobile) or a place specifically designed or constructed as a facility or place from which space objects can be launched, including all other facilities or place that are necessary to launch.
Liability Convention	The Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects

Term	Definition
Liability period	<p>The Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018 provides the following definition of liability period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) for the launch of a space object—the period of 30 days beginning when the launch takes place, or such other period as is specified in the rules, and b) for the return of a space object—the period beginning when the relevant re-entry manoeuvre is begun and ending when the object has come to rest on Earth, or such other period as is specified in the rules, and c) for the launch of a high power rocket—the period of 30 days beginning when the launch takes place, or such other period as is specified in the rules.
Maximum Probable Loss Methodology (MPL Methodology)	<p>The MPL Methodology sets out the method that can be used to calculate the maximum probable loss that might occur due to certain space activities. You can use the methodology to determine the insured amount defined in the Act and specified in the Insurance Rules.</p>
Minister	<p>The Commonwealth Minister responsible for the <i>Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018</i>.</p> <p>The Minister may delegate any or all of his or her powers under the Act (except the power under subsection 110(1)).</p>
Payload	<p>Payload can commonly refer to an entire satellite, a satellite bus, or anything the bus carries. It also captures any object that the launch or return vehicle carries, but which may not leave the vehicle.</p>
Penalty unit	<p>A standard amount of money used to determine the maximum penalty for a breach of law. As at 20 August 2026, the value of a Commonwealth penalty unit is \$364 for offences committed on or after 1 July 2026. Penalty units are automatically indexed on 1 July every three years in line with the All Groups Consumer Price Index (CPI).</p>
Personal information	<p>Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is:</p> <p>Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the information or opinion is true or not, and • whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
Space object	<p>The meaning is defined in the Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an object the whole or a part of which is to go into or come back from an area beyond the distance of 100km above mean sea level • any part of such an object, even if the part is to go only some of the way towards or back from an area beyond the distance of 100km above mean sea level.

Term	Definition
Suitably Qualified Expert (SQE)	<p>A suitably qualified expert (SQE) performs flight safety assurance functions for civil launch and return activities carried out from or to Australia. These functions give assurance the launch and/or return activity falls within Australia launch safety standards.</p> <p>SQE functions are distinct from individuals, companies or organisations with suitable qualifications and experience who provide a written assessment of the adequacy of an environmental plan or cybersecurity strategy.</p> <p>For the purposes of an Australian high power rocket permit application, an SQE, who is approved by the Minister or delegate, is required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide written confirmation that the launch will fall within the launch safety standards if carried out in accordance with the flight safety plan. <p>There are other functions that can be performed by an SQE who does not need Minister or delegate approval.</p>
United Nations space treaties	<p>The meaning is defined in the Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018:</p> <p>The United Nations space treaties means the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Liability Convention the Registration Convention the Outer Space Treaty the Moon and other Celestial Bodies Agreement, and the Astronauts and Objects Agreement.