

COT RECCE



APRIL 2019



COT UPDATE

EVENT DIRECTOR, PHILIP BERNADOU

Firstly I do apologise for the lack of communication since the end of the very successful 2018 COT event conducted in Alice Springs.

The response to the recent survey demonstrated the desire from respondents to conduct another COT in 2020. It showed that over \$2 million was spent over the 10 days of the event. However there are two major conditions that must be overcome in order for the event to progress.

1. Obtaining permissions from three major properties to allow the event to again be conducted on their property tracks.
2. Obtaining Funding support.

PROPERTIES

The three properties concerned allowed the event to use their many road and tracks in 2016 which involved 14 special stages (out of a total of 33 stages) that formed the competition and the property owners were very satisfied with the event. However, because they have issues with the NT government, they denied us access for the 2018 event and this necessitated in over-utilising the use of crown land close to Alice Springs to provide sufficient competition.

David Officer and Bruce Garland spent a few days in the Alice discussing the situation with some property owners and a positive dialogue was continuing.

After several discussions with NT Tourism and other stakeholders a submission to the government was developed and presented to the Minister for Tourism.

Louise and I flew to Alice Springs during the middle of November and we had the pleasure of attending the Annual General Meeting of the Tourism Central Australia, conducted in the grounds of the Alice Springs Desert Park. A very informative meeting, and it was a great opportunity to meet the many movers and shakers that make up the tourist industry. The majority of those in attendance were aware of the COT and the value it brought to the Alice Springs economy.

We then flew to Darwin to make a presentation to the Minister for Tourism for funding assistance to ensure the running of the COT in 2020.

Prior to the meeting we attended the Tourism NT International Managers Meeting. Again a valuable insight into the workings of the NT Tourism industry.

Unfortunately due to an extended cabinet meeting I did not get to meet the Tourism Minister, Lauren Moss, however, I met with her assistant Suzanne Morgan whom I had met back in 2014 when first appraising the likelihood of conducting the COT in Alice Springs. Back then Suzanne was heading up Tourism NT so she was well aware of the COT and has been of great assistance.

Following the meeting at Parliament House, I had a meeting with Major Events. They have assisted with funding and other assistance for the '16 and '18 events.

However the end result was an offer from the NT Government of \$70,000 short of what was needed to make the 2020 event viable.

So it is time to move on.

I take this opportunity to thank the many people, pastoralists and organisations that made the 2 events in Alice Springs such a huge success. Without the assistance of the many property owners the event would/could not have happened. The assistance from the NT Government, Major Events, NT Police and the Alice Springs Town Council made organising the event one of the easiest to put together.

The staff and management of Crown Plaza Lasseters and the Alice Springs Convention Centre also made the event run smoothly and the financial assistance in being the naming rights sponsorship decreased the event loss.

The 70 plus officials also make organising an event of this magnitude so much easier. The knowledge and experience they have has been a major reason the events run so smoothly.

Finally the Central Australian Rally Sports Club (C.A.R.S.) made all the survey trips much easier and I know I speak for Steve Hollowood and David Officer, that we have formed some great long term friendships.

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SO WHERE TO FROM HERE?

A couple of weeks ago, for the first time in at least 30 years, I competed(?) in an event sitting in the navigator's seat. Firstly I don't think I will ever be invited back and more importantly I would NEVER want to do it again. I will stick to the organising side.

However the Black Stump rally, conducted by David Johnstone and some other deviants, was run around Parkes in outback central New South Wales. I was approached by

several competitors who had all previously run in COT events suggesting that the next COT should be run in this area.

After lots of telephone conversations with Councils, Tourism, forestry and property owners in the area, and in order to convince myself, and more importantly Louise, to conduct the event in 2020 we are inviting expressions of interest from you.

Under consideration are Classic, Modern,

Regularity and Tagalong Tour events.

Great shire roads, plenty of fantastic forestry and farm tracks. Great scenery for the regularity and Tagalong tours is a must as the area hosts some spectacular country. The road conditions will be a lot easier on cars as the majority of stages would be conducted in state forests. Not as smooth as New Zealand but not as rough as AS.



THE 2018 COT BOOK

What an exercise this has turned out to be!! With an extra 100 pages more than the 2016 book and over 20,000 photos to sort, it is taking a lot longer than we expected. Included with the COT event are sections on the ERCA Regularity and the Tagalong tour. As you can appreciate, perfection takes time.

A definite time for distribution has yet to be determined but I will keep you updated to its progress.

ROUGH PLANS

Parkes, August 2020

- Wednesday set up
- Thursday - Documentation and scrutiny
- Friday - Documentation and scrutiny
- Saturday AM - Documentation, scrutiny and evening welcome function
- Sunday - 1st day of competition
- Monday - 2nd day of competition
- Tuesday move to Dubbo - 3rd day of competition
- Wednesday - 4th day of competition
- Thursday move to Bathurst - 5th day of competition
- Friday - 6th day of competition
- Saturday - 7th day of competition - followed by evening presentation dinner



In taking a very hard look at the budget, we are obviously making some great savings moving from AS, \$22,000 on airfares for a start, but we are losing sponsorship and government assistance of \$100,000. In trying to encourage more entries we will be

reducing the entry fee for the COT to \$7,500 from \$9000 with an early bird saving of \$1,500, making the fee \$6000.

It's now over to you. [Click on this link to start the survey](#), we would be pleased to receive this A.S.A.P.