Australian Government
Major Projects Facilitation Agency

Fact sheet

# Narcotic Drugs Act 1967

If your project involves the cultivation, production or manufacture of cannabis for medicinal or scientific purposes, or the manufacture of any other narcotic drug, you must obtain an appropriate licence and associated permits in accordance with this Act.

## 1. What approvals do I need?

A licence and permit is required to engage in certain medicinal cannabis activities, or to manufacture narcotic drugs, under the *Narcotic Drugs Act 1967* (the Act).

A medicinal cannabis licence and permit is required prior to undertaking any of the following for medicinal or scientific purposes:

- cultivating cannabis plants for the production of cannabis or cannabis resin
- producing cannabis or cannabis resin
- manufacturing a cannabis drug for permitted supply including use in research, trials or testing, or in accordance with a relevant approval or authorisation
- activities relating to such cultivation, production, or manufacture.

A separate licencing and permit scheme applies to the manufacture of narcotic drugs other than cannabis. This includes substances listed within the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol[PDF] and the Narcotic Drugs Regulation 2016.

A narcotic drug manufacture licence and permit is required prior to undertaking any of the following:

- obtaining a narcotic substance from a plant – for example, extraction of the opium poppy
- obtaining a narcotic from a synthetic process
- transforming a substance into a narcotic drug, including from one narcotic to another – for example, morphine into codeine.

Limits on the product types and quantities permitted for manufacture, or cultivation or production (in the case of medicinal cannabis) will be specified within a permit. All licences are subject to conditions, which may impose additional requirements on licence holders.

## 2. Who provides the approvals?

The Department of Health and Aged Care administers the Act. Within the Department, the Office of Drug Control (ODC) grants medicinal cannabis and narcotic drug licences and permits in accordance with the Act.

If your project involves the manufacture of medicinal cannabis or narcotic drugs, additional approvals may be required from the Therapeutic Goods Administration within the Department of Health and Aged Care. Specific manufacturing standards and labelling requirements apply for medicinal cannabis under the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*. Some narcotic drugs are subject to general requirements for medicine manufacturing, as well as labelling and packaging.

Additionally, other approvals may be required in accordance with applicable State or Territory legislation.

## 3. How do I apply for the approvals?

Applications for medicinal cannabis licences and permits are made through the ODC's website.

For details on the application process, please refer to the guidance document available on the ODC website.

To apply for a licence and permit to manufacture a narcotic drug other than cannabis, you must contact the Narcotics Control Section within the ODC providing your contact details and an outline of your proposal. The Section will provide advice on application requirements.

## 4. More information

**Office of Drug Control**

Further information on the regulation of medicinal cannabis and other narcotic drugs in Australia is available on the medicinal cannabis and narcotic and psychotropic drugs sections of the ODC website.

The ODC's Medicinal Cannabis Section can be contacted by email at MCS.Application@health.gov.au.

The ODC's Narcotics Control Section can be contacted by email at NCS@health.gov.au.

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If you would like assistance to identify potential Australian Government regulatory approvals required for your project, please refer to the Major projects help tool self-assessment.

The MPFA team can be contacted by email at MPFA@industry.gov.au.