

Hanmer Rally Decision 2019

Following a lengthy de-brief of the Lone Star Rally of Canterbury and the ensuing discussion on the Royce Watson Memorial Hanmer Rally it is with regret that the organisers' have decided not to run the latter event scheduled for 31 August this year.

It was a unanimous decision brought about by two main factors, not the least the pending coronial enquiry over the fatality involving legendary photographer and motorsport fan, Kevin Corin. Whilst this is pending there is only a slim chance of gaining permission to use the forest for rallying. Until such time as the forest owners (Rayonier/Matariki) see some corrective action it is very unlikely any application to use their workplace for such activities would be granted. Consequently, the committee felt it better not to approach Rayonier/Matariki this year in the hope that a Hanmer Rally in 2020 may have more chance of gaining approval.

Another major contributing factor is the pending hearing by the National Court of Appeal into the actions of an official during the running of the 2018 event. Once again until Rayonier/Matariki see the outcome of the hearing by the sport's governing body the impression is there has been no corrective action taken. In any work environment this is a requirement under Occupational Safety and Health and obviously the forest is a work environment. The committee is in the unenviable position of waiting for a resolution to this matter and obviously feels it better to refrain from putting Rayonier/Matariki in the position of having to decline an application to run this year's rally.

The Autosport rally organising committee runs two rallies each year and has done so for many years with few new members so a break may also allow us to bring in some new blood to ease the workload.

The committee regrets having to make this decision and apologises for the loss of a round of the Mainland Rally Series but at the same time believe it may be beneficial for forest rallying in the future not just in Canterbury but throughout New Zealand.

Leigh Marston
Chairman – Rally Organising Committee