

SACC WAY FORWARD GROUP – Update - November 2014

The Group is heavily involved in all the issues brought about by the happenings on the Jim Clark Rally in May, and their consequences. These have mostly manifested themselves in the Scottish Government's Motorsport Safety Review Group, set up primarily to look at Spectator safety in all motor sport disciplines, although we know that Special Stage Rallying has to be the first, and most obvious target. The Review Group's interim Report was published prior to the Mull Rally, and we have been able to introduce certain of the initial recommendations on Mull, and on the Galloway Hills.

This intense focus has led to a significant concern over the standards of competence of our volunteer army of marshals and officials, and it is fair to say that significant changes lie ahead, particularly in terms of Training, and of Standardisation of procedures and paperwork. In general, this scrutiny has shown that most events, particularly in the major championships, are extremely well put together by competent and expert organisers. Unfortunately that is no longer going to be sufficient, and we are now faced with the need to prove that all concerned are properly trained, and up to date with clearly defined standards and qualifications. We need more people, capable of being properly trained.

It will also be necessary as we go forward to Standardise all our procedures, and in particular, Safety Plans. The Championships will have to take responsibility for procedural issues of Standardisation, but the Association must lead on the issue of Training. To that end, we are already slightly ahead of the game in that we are almost there with the Marshal Registration and Recognition project, in that we are about to appoint a contractor to carry out the work with a target completion date of the turn of the year. We must get our plans properly sorted, before we find ourselves being told what to do by officials who do not fully understand our sport.

It is clear that whatever changes will flow from the Government's Safety Review will have an impact on the whole of the UK, and we have been in discussion with the MSA as to the implications. We have been assured of their support in our efforts at this stage – I guess we are really guinea pigs – but whatever we are able to roll out in response to these issues should benefit to our colleagues in the rest of the UK.

In an effort to find new blood to help us going forward, we are looking at a major GoMotorsport event, perhaps close to a major city, and perhaps able to be rolled out as a Regional Roadshow, This will enable us to showcase all aspects and disciplines, hopefully to new folk, with the opportunity for local Clubs to find new members through demonstrations, and even taster events. Jess Fack at the MSA, and Alison Clark are already involved and working with Rory Bryant to take this initiative forward. To make it a success, it will be vital to get local Clubs involved to a significant level, otherwise, we will be wasting an valuable opportunity.

On a domestic note, SACC Meetings are becoming much more efficient since most Reports are being sent to the Secretary in time to be circulated prior to Meetings. We are still not there yet, and Reports being handed out at the meeting does not solve the problem. We are also looking at the potential use of Social Media as a means of communication with not just Clubs, but their members too.

BRUCE LYLE – Chairman, SACC Way Forward Group.