

Notes from MSA Regional Committee Meeting held 15 February 2017

Attended by Peter Weall & Lock Horsburgh

In his introduction, the chairman drew attention to the busy year ahead for the MSA as the organisation absorbed and reacted to the ongoing strategic review. He went on to commend the great response from the sport to the 2016 MSA awards with 30 clubs and 70 volunteers being nominated. He said that it was not too early to start thinking about nominations for the 2017 awards. The GoMotorsport area at the Autosport Show was again a success with over 1,000 passenger rides given. He reminded clubs of the importance of following up on the contacts made at any of these type of events.

Chief Executive, Rob Jones, was unable to attend the meeting and his part was covered by General Secretary, Simon Blunt. He too said that 2017 would be busy as the MSA worked on the 10 pillars highlighted by the strategy review. While much of what it covered was 'business as usual', some of the topics are not. In particular, there is a particular focus on the Governance Structure. See the MSA 2017 Annual Report for more detail. He also stressed that safety across all aspects of the sport remain paramount. May 2017 will see the new IT system being implemented. This will improve the way that the organisation is able to interact with its customers. Most of the work is in the background and there will not be any 'big bang' change. The MSA is aware of the need for some internal processes to be improved. There will be a new user interface which should lead to a better experience when dealing with the MSA online.

Of particular interest to us in Scotland, Simon mentioned the Fatal Accident Enquiry due to start in July and run for 6–8 weeks. The resource commitment from the MSA is big and Simon mentioned that the MSA insurers are covering the cost of at least 6 law firms for various parties involved. The expectation is that there will not be any findings published until at least the end of 2017.

Simon went on to speak about the Vnuk case. This is covered in other MSA publications and refers to the decision of the European Court to change UK law in relation to the 'Motor Insurance Directive'. There was a Europe wide initiative to exclude motor sport from the ruling but this collapsed in mid-2016. As it stands, the UK Government is at risk for not having implemented the change but is still not prepared to do so and is in the middle of a more in depth review, including a public consultation. The MSA is preparing a response and this will be shared with clubs in due course. In the meantime, clubs and individual competitor are asked to make their own views known to their MEP.

Finally, Simon spoke about the Closed Road proposals which are now at the stage of having secondary legislation drafted. This is a routine UK governmental process whereby the draft is circulated round relevant Government departments and unless there are objections at that final stage, it will go on to the statute book as new law. The MSA is setting up a process to deal with applications in anticipation. He did say however that the Scottish Government have made it clear that this will not happen north of the border until the findings of the FAI are known.

Development Director, Johnathan Day, started by introducing Suze Endean who has been appointed as Development Manager to replace Jess Fack. The RDOs will continue as before with some improvements to how they work based on the growing base of experience. Much of the focus will be on strengthening clubs and thus developing the sport through them. Working is ongoing to prepare a series of 'how to' guides to replace the outdated Club Manual. Clubs are again encouraged to consider applications to the development fund and the RDOs can give guidance on what is allowed.

On marshals, distribution of over 10,000 marshal recognition packs continues has generally been well received. Over 6,800 rally marshals have at least started the online accreditation and more than 6,000 have completed it. For 2017, there are 4,270 rally marshals registered. On Safeguarding, the MSA is close to completing a full review of their own policy and making available to clubs a simple 2 page template that is believed to be fully compliant with all relevant requirements. A 3 hour workshop for Safeguarding Officers will roll out during 2017.

Ian Davis gave an update on Rally Future saying that 27 of the 29 recommendations were completed. One of the two outstanding related to marshals and will be resolved with the new system mentioned by Simon. This leaves rally car tracking. The favoured solution continues to be worked on but coverage is still not good enough with some significant gaps in places like Kielder. Testing is ongoing with plans for full on event tests in the 2nd half of 2017 with roll out in 2018. Events will be given sufficient notice of it becoming mandatory (suggested minimum 6 months). An update to the rally Safety Requirements is being worked on but this is an evolution of what is there already based on feedback and learning. It is not expected to have any major changes and again, events will be given at least 2 months notice.