

Executive Summary – AIMSS Review

ABOUT THE REVIEW

The Australian Institute of Motor Sport Safety (AIMSS) has completed the widest ranging review ever of the sport of rallying in Australia.

Commissioned by the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport (CAMS) Board, this detailed investigation is a key component of the ongoing improvement in motor sport.

AIMSS undertook the review, looking at a number of competition related incidents that were reported to CAMS between 2006 and beyond. The review was prepared in conjunction with CAMS, the Australian Rally Commission (ARCom) and the FIA Institute for Motor Sport Safety and Sustainability (FIAI).

To conduct the review, AIMSS created a Review Committee comprising:

- Bob Glindemann – AIMSS and Rally Review Chairman
- Dr Michael Henderson – AIMSS Board Member
- Garry Connelly – AIMSS Board Member, Deputy President FIA Institute for Motor Sport Safety
- Mark Larkham – AIMSS Board Member
- Adam Perry – AIMSS General Manager (former)
- Dr Michelle Gatton

Competitors, event organisers and other rallying stakeholders were widely consulted, providing valuable feedback about their experiences in the sport and the incidents they may have been involved with while competing.

The review will guide major improvements to rallying to ensure that competitors, officials, spectators and indeed the sport itself, are protected now and into the future.

The core focus of the AIMSS review has been to look into, consider and report on:

- The current engineering, management and safety response requirements available to all forms of rallying in Australia
- Existing or new developments and technologies applicable to rallying
- The feasibility of introducing them to rallying at each of its levels, from first timers and club competitors to Australian Rally Championship and Tarmac Rally entrants

Rallying is one of the foundation stones of motor sport. It provides exciting, economical enjoyment to club members, is an entry to national and international competition and at the elite level is a spectacle which is entertaining and inspiring.

Some key numbers regarding rally in Australia:

- There are more than 16,600 entries in rally events each year
- 160 rally clubs and private promoters conduct about 250 separate rallies
- There are 2520 rally participants who hold a valid CAMS rally licence
- Rally in Australia contributes about \$250 million annually in direct industry output, with approximately 1500 people permanently employed in rally jobs, according to Ernst and Young

HOW THE FINDINGS WERE MADE

The AIMSS review was conducted over a long period and included feedback from a significant number of stakeholders involved in the sport.

Data from 2006 onwards was assessed in the production of the review.

Competitors were asked about their attitudes to safety, as well as questions on incidents they may have been involved in to help the authors of the AIMSS review understand where there may have been problem areas.

A total of 648 rallyists participated in the survey. A number of other relevant key stakeholders were also asked to submit their feedback, including event organisers, medical experts and highly experienced competitors.

Participants providing feedback for the review were asked to comment on issues in four main categories: the competition vehicle, competitors and crew, rally stages and courses, and operational and organisational issues.

These results helped outline changes that would help make the sport safer for everyone involved, allowing AIMSS to provide a number of recommendations.

CHANGES TO THE SPORT

Rallying needs to keep pace with the reduction in serious incidents that has been achieved in other branches of motor sport – particularly circuit based activities.

As part of this review, the current CAMS Australian rally regulations across all categories were compared with regulations in the FIA World Rally Championship, universally considered best practice.

It is no longer acceptable for competitors to take the attitude that “it is my life and I will take whatever risks I judge to be acceptable to me”. That attitude also ignores the fact that a serious incident may involve injury to others (co-drivers, spectators) as well as undermine the entire sport if changes are not made to improve safety for all involved in rally.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations from the AIMSS review will begin to be implemented from 2018 onwards, including, but certainly not limited to:

- Improving side impact and intrusion protection through policy, regulation, awareness and culture
- Ongoing facilitation of rally road registration
- Enhanced use of safety cage protective padding
- Changes to competitor licensing structure, introducing a staged licence system
- Creation of a CAMS national rally manual
- Appointment of a highly qualified course checker under the authority of CAMS
- Introducing and enhanced pre-stage warning system for Targa events
- Wider use of artificial chicanes, course and warning boards

As discussions continue with a range of key stakeholders, further information on any changes to rally regulations and safety requirements will be communicated directly to competitors and made publicly available to all via CAMS' website and appropriate publications.