

# **Safety Cars & Their Duties**

At the request of the MSA Rallies Committee, this advisory paper has been jointly created and edited by members Iain Urquhart of Inverness & The Snowman Rally, together with Gary Milligan of Omagh & the Ulster International Rally.

Additionally, contributions have been provided by members of the Rallies Committee and others, for which the editors were very grateful.

The MSA and the Rallies Committee are indebted to Iain and Gary for their diligence in producing this document, which is intended to be of assistance to all stage rally organisers and officials.

This is a living document and any comments, observations or proposals will be gratefully received.

These should be addressed to the Rallies Committee, through the secretariat at the MSA, Colnbrook.

John Richardson  
Chairman  
MSA Rallies Committee

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## Overview

Adopting FIA terminology, Course Cars should now be referred to as Safety Cars

There have been several instances recently where Safety Cars have been involved in accidents and many reports of Safety Car personnel not performing their duties correctly.

The purpose of this document is to establish some basic guidelines that should be adopted as best practice at all special stage events under the control of the Motor Sport Association (MSA).

Different organisers set up stages at different times. Factors influencing this are weather conditions, time of year, event timetable and most importantly, manpower. Different types of event have different Safety car requirements and it is recognised that not all events will be able to comply with all of these guidelines.

This document has been prepared to generate discussion and receive feedback from event officials and organisers.

It is intended for this document to become a live advisory document to be updated with any future amendments or instructions which may result from changes in regulations.

## Golden Rules

The following job descriptions have intentionally been restricted to one page in the belief that officials, marshals, etc. will take the time to read a single page job description, as opposed to lengthy extracts from the Blue Book.

Without exception, the following Golden Rules should be applied to every Safety Car;

- All Safety cars should bear clear identification and all Safety car officials should wear clear identification.
- Where practicable all officials should complete the full route and wherever possible maintain a completed timecard.
- Each crew should have a means of communication with each Safety Car and with the main rally control.
- All Safety Cars should proceed through special stages at a speed suitable to the vehicle being driven and to the prevailing stage condition. At no time should a Safety car be driven in a manner that puts the occupants, stage officials or members of the public at risk.
- Safety Cars should not be used to entertain sponsors or to give "stars" a free run in order to boost event publicity.
- Safety Car officials should remember that marshals are volunteers and as such, be courteous to them at all times. It may be the case that marshals require reassurance and brief training on their duties.
- Safety Cars should always keep to their pre determined time schedule as the closer an event can keep to running on time, the safer it becomes.
- It is essential that all crews have a "*see it sort it*" attitude for anything they see pertaining to the rally.
- At least one crew member of a Zero Car should be a member of the Event Organising Committee.
- The driver of a Zero Car should either be an existing Stage Rally competition licence holder or should have previously held a Stage Rally competition licence.

## **Equipment Officer**

The Equipment Officer (EO) is responsible for ensuring that the stage is set up in a condition ready to run. There should be no alterations required to anything on the special stage after it has been checked by the EO.

Not all events run an EO at the front of the field but those who do should take the following into consideration:

The EO and any other members who are part of the EO's crew should always ensure that they have signed on as an event official. The EO should run approx. 90 mins before the due time of the first car. Should the event be delayed there is no need to re-schedule the timing of the EO. The EO should have an in depth knowledge of the complete route (both stage and road sections) and as far as reasonably practicable, should know all the permutations of special stages being used.

The EO should be driven round the route by a competent person, thus allowing them to concentrate on the stage furniture etc. and ensure it is all set up as per the road book which they are working from. They should carry as a minimum a complete set of stage start and finish boards along with barrier tape, stakes, arrows, and a staple gun. They should also have a direct method of contact with the chief timekeeper, chief marshal and the clerk of the course. Wherever possible they should inform the radio controllers that they are about to enter a stage and also ensure that the radio controller also knows when they have exited the stage, this information should be passed on to Rally HQ. As with all Safety Cars it is essential that they maintain the "if you see it, you sort it" attitude to any problems which they may encounter.

When the EO has passed through all stages they should remain in a location central to the event, in order to co-ordinate any equipment requirements that may arise.

## **Chief Timekeeper**

The Chief Timekeeper (CT) should run just in front of the Chief Marshal (this can be anything from 60 to 90 minutes before the due time of the first car depending on the structure of the event). They should have a record of the serial numbers of each clock being used in the event. The CT must liaise with the Chief Marshal as to whom to expect at each control. The CT should liaise with rally control when they arrive at each stage arrival control area and they should ensure that they have an official time card completed at each control.

Prior to entering any stage they should obtain permission from rally control to proceed into the stage. They should also confirm if there are any other vehicles in the stage at this time. The CT should ensure that any marshal that is to use a clock knows exactly what they are doing and if necessary spend time reassuring the marshal on the operation of the clock as required, bearing in mind that the first few cars which the marshals are likely to encounter will more often than not contain the eventual winner.

At the end of each stage the CT should verify that there is a workable system of communication between the Flying Finish and the Stop Line and that a backup system exists in the event of failure.

The CT should be driven by a competent person and should have a knowledge of the complete route. They should carry a spare set of control boards and they should check all control area signage when traversing the route and ensure that it ties in with the supplied road book/route information. It is also essential that they visit each service area and regroup area to ensure everyone in these areas knows what they are doing.

The CT must visit all Time Controls, but not necessarily traverse the complete route.

## **Chief Marshal and/or Event Safety Officer**

The Chief Marshal (CM) has one of the most difficult jobs of any of the organising crew. The more work the CM puts in prior to the event the easier it is for him to carry out his duties on the day.

It is recognised that at some events the CM may not travel through the stages, or may travel along with the Event Safety Officer. Where the CM does not travel through the stages the ESO should assume the following duties.

The CM should ensure that there are sufficient persons available to man the start area and that they have suitable control boards and equipment.

Where practicable the CM should complete the route in full as is laid down in the road book or any other official route information. On arrival at each control the CM should lead by example and always wear an official tabard and identification. They should ensure that every marshal at each post they visit has a clear and concise understanding of what duties they are expected to perform and that all stage personnel are wearing tabbards. By the time the CM reaches each control all stage/control furniture should be in place and they should check off each item on the road book. They should always have their time card completed and run through the complete stage start procedure that will be implemented for each competing car.

As with all Safety Cars the CM should be driven by a competent person. They should have communication links with all other Safety cars as well as the main rally control. As well as stopping at time controls they should stop at each point that has been advertised or details published of it being a spectator access point, ensuring that all spectator control marshals are in position and that there are sufficient spectator control marshals in place.

At the end of each stage they should radio back to the stage start and inform the stage commander that they are satisfied the stage is in a complete and safe condition to run. Only when this message has been confirmed should they proceed to the next stage/control point.

In the event of delays the CM should keep in constant communication with rally control in case there is an adjustment to their time schedule. If the CM is aware of any delay they should cascade this information to the marshals out in the field.

The CM should always have a complete set of spare stage furniture together with a hammer, barrier tape and a staple gun in their vehicle. They should also have spare official signing on sheets and wherever possible, they should ensure that each marshal has signed on. The CM should also ensure that all doctors, rescue, recovery and radio crews are in position along the route. If any of these officials are not in position, the CM should investigate and deal with appropriately, while keeping rally control advised of any actions taken.

## **Spectator Control**

The Spectator Control (SC) vehicle should always have suitable identification as well as a PA system and warning lighting. It should be driven by a competent person and the SC official should have an in depth knowledge of the route.

Where practicable the SC vehicle should visit every control and should have their time card completed. They should have means of communication with all other Safety Cars and Rally HQ. It is usual for the SC vehicle to be running between 15 to 30 mins in front of the Zero car(s) but their time schedule should make allowance for them to be clear of each stage before the first Zero car enters.

On arrival at each stage start the SC should liaise with the stage commander and find out if there are any spectator control issues within the stage. They should contact the main rally control and confirm their due time into each stage (the rally control may require the SC to wait at stage starts if there has been a delay in any other section of the route). When given clearance the SC will proceed through the stage making sure all spectators and marshals are in a safe position and that the SC marshals have any crowd issues in hand.

The SC should be prepared to stop at any spectator problem area and adopt a see it, sort it policy using all resources at his/her disposal. The SC should make rally control aware of any such problem and it's potential to delay the FCD start time.

Wherever possible the SC vehicle will announce when the due time of the first car is expected and provide any results available. At the end of each stage they must liaise with the Stage commander (or Deputy Stage Commander where appropriate) and report that they are satisfied all spectators are in as safe an area as is reasonably practicable and that there are sufficient SC marshals in place.

While this unit is running very close to the Zero Car(s), it should carry spare stage equipment as well as equipment for cordoning off spectator areas.

While it is very important that the SC vehicle maintains its pre-determined time schedule it is vital that they are satisfied the stage is in a safe condition to run. If ensuring the stage is safe means delays then this cannot be avoided.

## **Double Zero Car (00)**

It is recognised that many events may deem the use of a 00 car unnecessary, while other events will use the 00 car as a back-up to a 0 car should the 0 car be unable to complete the full route.

If the 00 car is a rally prepared vehicle then it should be presented for scrutineering in the same manner as any other competition vehicle, and the crew must at all times abide by the same rules as all other competitors, i.e. they must wear harnesses, approved overalls and helmets.

Only experienced crews should be utilised and at least one member of the crew should be a member of the Event Organising Committee. The driver of a 00 Car should either be an existing Stage Rally competition licence holder or should have previously held a Stage Rally competition licence.

Where practicable the 00 car must follow the complete route and should ensure they have a completed time card for each control that they visit. It is essential that the 00 car complies with the pre determined time schedule to enable the event to run on time. The 00 car should have a method of communication with all other Safety Cars and rally main control.

At each special stage arrival they should liaise with the stage commander and should ensure that where practicable all other Safety Cars are out of the stage before they enter (the Clerk of the Course should structure the Safety Car's time schedule to allow for this. This may mean the 00 car having a shorter time in any service/re-group area than competitors).

The 00 car should only use road books and other printed information supplied by the event organisers. (They should not have access to or be using any subjective route notes/pace notes)

The 00 crew should carry out a final check on stage furniture, marshalling and spectator safety.

At the end of each stage they should confirm to the Stage commander (or Deputy Stage Commander where appropriate) that the stage is in a safe condition to run. They should also ensure that this message is passed to Rally control and thus enable them to modify the time schedule should this be required.

## **Zero Car (0)**

If the 0 car is a rally prepared vehicle then it should be presented for scrutineering in the same manner as any other competition vehicle, and the crew must at all times abide by the same rules as all other competitors, i.e. they must wear harnesses, approved overalls and helmets.

Only experienced crews should be utilised and at least one member of the crew should be a member of the Event Organising Committee. The driver of a Zero Car should either be an existing Stage Rally competition licence holder or should have previously held a Stage Rally competition licence.

Where practicable the 0 car must follow the complete route and should ensure they have a completed time card for each control that they visit. It is essential that the 0 car complies with the pre determined time schedule to enable the event to run on time. The 0 car should have a method of communication with all other Safety Cars and rally main control.

At each special stage arrival they should liaise with the stage commander and should ensure that where practicable all other Safety Cars are out of the stage before they enter (the Clerk of the Course should structure the Safety Car's time schedule to allow for this. This may mean the 0 car having a shorter time in any service/re-group area than competitors).

The 0 car should only use road books and other printed information supplied by the event organisers. (They should not have access to or be using any subjective route notes/pace notes)

At the end of each stage they should confirm to the Stage commander (or Deputy Stage Commander where appropriate) that the stage is in a safe condition to run. They should also ensure that this message is passed to rally control and thus enable them to modify the time schedule should this be required.

## **Closing Car / Sweeper (CLC)**

Quite often in events the crew running the Closing car (CLC) or Sweeper, double up and operate the first control. Some events may also have more than one closing car, however where this is the case only one Closing car should traverse each stage.

On closed public road events where the road is re-opened by a separate road opening vehicle, the Closing Car may carry a competition number rather than CLC identification. This is to give residents along the route the impression that the competitive element of the stage has not yet finished and discourage them from entering the stage before the road opening car has passed.

The CLC should follow the complete route, including road sections. At each arrival control they must report to the stage commander who will be able to provide the following information:

the no. of cars that have entered the stage,  
no. of cars that have exited the stage,  
accurate reports as to where any cars that have failed to complete the stage are,  
the time the last competitor left the stage start control

Using their pre determined time schedule the CLC will enter the stage and when required take any time clocks from the arrival control and start line marshals (completing a log of each clock which has been gathered, this has usually been supplied by the chief timekeeper).

The crew in the CLC should have an in depth knowledge of how the event timing system operates and should where possible, stop at each vehicle that has exceeded its maximum lateness and gather their time cards along with their damage declaration form.

If a CLC is delayed they should advise rally control.

The CLC should get a suitable time recorded on their time card by the stop line marshal and gather in time clocks at the stop control area. Once they are satisfied all crews have been accounted for then, and only then, will they stand down the doctors and rescue crews involved in the running of that stage. It is also essential that they gather all completed check sheets, together with officials signing on sheets from each stage.

It is essential that the Closing Car liaises with Rally Control at all times in order to verify when a competitor is OTL and hence is no longer eligible to continue in the event

Official	Crew Members	Vehicle Identification	Specification of Vehicle.	Additional Event Equipment	Recommended time to enter stage	Purpose
<b>Equipment Officer</b>	2	EO	Standard Road Use. Consideration should be given to use of a 4 x 4	Stage Furniture. Safety & Medical Radio. Event Management radio (if applicable)	1 hour 30 minutes before FCD	To check that each control / Special Stage is in it's correct position and is set out according to the event road book and MSA Year Book requirements.
<b>Chief Timekeeper</b>	2	CT	Standard Road Use. Consideration should be given to use of a 4 X 4	Clocks. Stage Furniture. Time cards. Safety & Medical Radio. Event Management radio (if applicable) Flashing Beacons	1 hour 15 minutes before FCD	To check the clocks at all the appropriate locations. Ensure that those who are to use them understand how to do so and what they should do if they encounter difficulties. Additionally they should ensure that the timekeepers at each location understand the time card and how it should be filled in. They should also check that all Passage Controls are in the correct location and all means of communication they require to carry out their duties are operational.
<b>Chief Marshal / Event Safety Officer</b>	Driver +2	CM / ESO	Standard Road Use Consideration should be given to use of a 4 X 4	Stage furniture / spare event paperwork. Safety & Medical Radio. Event Management radio (if applicable) Flashing Beacons. P.A.System	1 hour before FCD	Working as a pair the Chief Marshal and Event Safety Officer should check that each location is adequately staffed. The Chief Marshals responsibilities are to the controls, stage management and marshalling force whilst the Event Safety Officer will check the Rescue, Recovery, Doctor and Paramedic are in attendance.
<b>Spectator Control</b>	2	Spec. Control	Standard Road Use Consideration should be given to use of a 4 X 4	Stage furniture. Spare event paperwork Entry lists Public address system. Safety & Medical Radio. Event Management radio (if applicable) Flashing Beacons P.A. System	15 to 30 minutes before FCD	To advise on spectator problems through the special stages. Where required, to manage these problems, on scene, along with the stage personnel. If the event is running late for any reason they should maintain the gap of between 15 to 30 minutes before FCD.

Official	Crew	Vehicle Identification	Spec. of vehicle	Additional Event Equip.	Recommended time to enter stage	Purpose
<b>Safety Car (00)</b>	2	00	Standard Road Use (or Prepared Rally car)	Stage furniture. Spare event paperwork Entry lists Public address system. Safety & Medical Radio. Event Management Radio (if applicable) Flashing Beacons P.A. System	10 to 20 minutes before FCD (dependent upon length of stage)	To carry out a final check on the validity of the stage from stage furniture, marshalling and spectator safety. It is essential that at least one member of the crew has a full and detailed knowledge of each stage (including re-route options). (Route notes produced by third parties should not be used)
<b>Safety Car / Zero Car (0)</b>	2	0	Prepared Rally Car (If driven at near to competitive speed : 80% or more.)	Safety & Medical Radio. Event Management Radio (if applicable)	5 to 10 minutes (max) before FCD	To provide a final check for the stage timing crews and a wake up call for in stage personnel and spectators. It is recommended that course cars only use paperwork issued by the event organisers (Route notes produced by third parties should not be used)
<b>Closing Car</b>	Driver +2	Chequered Flag	Standard Road Use. Consideration should be given to use of a 4 X 4.	Safety & Medical Radio. Event Management Radio (if applicable) Flashing Beacons. P.A. System	1 minute after last competing car to enter stage.	To run as close as possible to the last competing car throughout the event. To collect event paperwork and clocks from controls. Collect time cards and damage declarations from retired competitors encountered en-route. On some events there is a requirement to run more than one closing car and use a <i>leap frog</i> system, it is essential that if this system is used the vehicles have good means of communication between themselves and rally control

These notes are meant to be supplementary guidance notes and should be read in conjunction with sections C and K and all other relevant sections of the current MSA Year Book