

Competitions Authorisation Office

Guide to Navigational Scatters

Navigational Scatters are a fun type event where competitors can learn about map reading and are one of the first stepping stones to other motor sport events. There is no given route to a scatter, competitors are given a random selection of locations to visit. Competitors make their own way to a maximum of 75% of these locations then travel to the finish.

Scatters must comply with Regulation 5(b) of the Motor Vehicles (Competitions and Trials) Regulations 1969.

“An event in which no merit is attached to completing the event with the lowest mileage and in which, as respects such part of the event as is held on a public highway, there are no performance tests and no route and competitors are not timed or required to visit the same places; except that they may be required to finish at the same place by a specified time”

If the event does not comply with this and you have over 12 vehicles you will have to apply for Route Authorisation.

To summarise the regulation.

- You must not record the mileage.
- There are no tests.
- There is no route.
- There is no timing.
- Competitors are not required to visit all the same places.
- You may specify a finish time.

Basically, competitors start in one location and they have to visit a percentage of clue points or locations given. Competitors answer questions or record proof of visiting locations. When the competitors have visited on a maximum of 75% of the locations they then proceed to the finish by the specified time.

You will require some sort of instructions or Supplementary Regulations to give to competitors so they know what they are doing. Include a brief outline of the event, how many locations competitors have to find and give a start and finish time. For example, locations are given out at 9am - 9:30am and finish 10:30am - 11:00am. Remember to include an emergency telephone contact number should anyone not make it to the finish.

Remind competitors it is not a race and to abide by the highway code and all the traffic regulations, they will also need to check their car insurance will cover them for the event. There is no limit to the number of competitors you can have on a Scatter, subject to RLO approval.

Scatters can be organised as a fun club social event or as a complex navigational type event. We will consider the fun social type of event first: -

- 1) Plan your event, choose the area, date, time, what type of clue points or locations you are going to use and who you are inviting to take part. Consider how long the event will take to complete, for a social event 2-3 hours would be fine. You will need to select start and finish venues- these can be car parks. Regulations or instructions, answer sheets and awards will all be required. Ensure you give competitors sufficient time to realistically visit 75% of the locations. The points have to be randomly distributed over an area; you cannot have them giving an obvious route.
- 2) If you are a Motorsport UK registered club you will need to first notify the RLO of your intention to organise an event, confirming the area you are using and the type of event. He will be able to check you are not clashing with other events and warn you of any problem areas. * Motorsport UK registered clubs will then need to apply for a Clubmans Permit.
- 3) Choose start/finish locations that will accommodate your entry and not disturb anyone. Competitors may need to park up to work out where they are going and which locations to visit before they start off.
- 4) Decide on what type of location points you are going to choose. These can be specific grid references from an OS Map or place names (i.e. a village) or areas. For instance, a grid reference could be given for a post-box, where competitors record the times of collection or the number of a telegraph pole. Motor clubs tend to use hidden code boards. If a place/name location is given competitors would drive to the location, then collect 'Clues' at the location. Always try to choose locations where there is somewhere safe to pull off the highway and you are not going to disturb anyone. It may be wise to seek permission first if you are using church car parks etc. When you have finalised everything, ask someone else to check for errors.
- 5) The majority of the points should not be readily accessible without leaving the car and the car shall be an incidental means of transport between the various points. When competitors have visited their maximum number of locations they must proceed to the finish. There must be no merit in visiting more than 75% of locations.

If you decide to organise a more complex navigational event, the principles are the same but instead of giving the location, you have to work out the navigation on the map first to find the location point. So for instance, the instructions you are given are a grid reference then you have navigational instructions to follow which may be, "Turn Left TL, Turn Right TR, Straight On SO" etc, then "400yds code board on fence post", in its simplest form.

So, for each Code Board you will have a set of instructions, competitors must try and answer as many as they can. They then record the locations on the map in pencil then calculate which locations to go to (not exceeding the maximum 75%) in the given time allowing sufficient time to arrive at the finish by the specified time.

You might have 30 locations: 10 easy navigation, 10 medium and 10 difficult so the event is appealing to all levels of experience.

When competitors arrive at the location they record the code board on the answer sheet and move on to the next location. At these motor club navigational type events the plotting of the locations tends to require more accuracy, so competitors would be expected to plot to one side of the road or the other. This is challenging when the answer sheet states that the code board is on a tree and you are in a forest. The positioning of the code board also adds to the fun as organisers find intriguing places to hide them!