

History of Governance

The spirit of the early British motor clubs continues to drive motorsport organisation and regulation today, with over seven hundred clubs sharing agreed codes of practice under the umbrella of Motorsport UK.

Any successful sport requires sound processes, rules and codes of practice to govern its operation. For motorsport, the history of this governance can be traced back to the turn of the last century when the development of the motor car led to the early formation of a number of motor clubs.

Early history

Prominent amongst these was The Automobile Club of Great Britain & Ireland (later renamed The Royal Automobile Club) which in subsequent years emerged as the leading organisation representing motorists' interests and organising motorsport events. Until the early 1970s motorsport was organised by affiliated clubs overseen by the RAC's Competitions Committee – a body of volunteers who ensured that the sport was conducted safely and to a common set of rules.

These rules were agreed between participating clubs and competitors and ensured that competition was fair. The framework of a judicial system had also by then been put in place and over subsequent years this has evolved into the system in use today (see Part 2: The regulations).

The late 1970s saw a re-structuring of the governance of the sport. In 1975 the Competitions Committee was replaced by a new RAC Motor Sports Council and four years later the RAC Motor Sports Association was formed to look after the day-to-day running of the sport.

Today, the Motor Sports Council informs and advises the Board on key issues, represents the full spectrum of UK motorsport and provides a conduit of information from the market to the governing body, Motorsport UK. The Council's role is also to develop strategic thinking in relation to key issues in the sport and provide direction to the Board as a result.

It is supported by:

- seventeen specialist motorsport committees;
- seven specialist motorsport sub-committees and;
- seven advisory groups.

The role of Motorsport UK

Motorsport UK is the ultimate decision-making body responsible for the governance of UK

motorsport. It is represented by a Board of directors; professionals who are drawn from both the sport and external disciplines with the required skills and expertise. Its role includes:

- providing strategic leadership of the organisation;
- promoting the long-term success and sustainability of all four-wheel motorsport in the UK, ensuring the sport continues to thrive from thrives and is supported from all continues to be conducted in a fair and safe manner;
- training of Marshals, Officials and Scrutineers;
- overseeing and implementing changes to National Competition Rules and Regulations;
- supporting the rule making and judicial process, ensuring the sport continues to be conducted in a fair and safe manner.

Today over seven hundred motor clubs are registered with Motorsport UK and represent the whole range of motorsport activity, from the grass root amateur to the professional elite.

These activities include circuit car and kart racing, rallying, rallycross, trials, autotests and a number of other disciplines all operating under the Motorsport UK umbrella to ensure fairness, safety and consistency.

At an International level, Motorsport UK is affiliated to the world governing body for four or more wheeled motorsport – the Fédération Internationale de L'Automobile (FIA) – which recognises it as the National Sporting Authority (ASN) in Britain.

International events are regulated under the auspices of the FIA's International Sporting Code which is published in the FIA Yearbook of Automobile Sport.

Motorsport UK itself is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, investing any surplus revenue after tax back into the sport. Its main income is generated by issuing competition licences for participants and permits for motorsport events and Championships. It is based in a purpose built office at Bicester Heritage in the "motorsport valley" corridor, where some 70 full time staff are employed in all aspects of running motorsport in this country.

In addition to licensing in the region of 50,000



Competitors (many of whom will have attended approved driver training schools), Motorsport UK has in the region of 4,000 licensed Officials and 10,000 registered Marshals on its database. It currently issues permits for some 4,700 events each year, carries out safety inspections of around 100 motorsport venues and supports training of an army of volunteer officials.

Nearly 6,000 Marshals and volunteer officials received training last year, funded by the British Motorsport Trust, a registered charity for which Motorsport UK provides Trustees and administration.

Motorsport UK is also a statutory body, authorising the routes of motorsport events on the highway in England and Wales, The Motor Vehicles (Competitions and Trials) Regulations, motorsport events in public places in England, Wales and Scotland, the Motor Vehicles (Off Road Events) Regulations and for motorsport events on closed public roads in England, Wales and Scotland, The Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 12(1A)

The National Court

The National Court is independent of Motorsport UK as the ASN. Its administration is overseen by an external independent lawyer and it has 5 permanent Chairs, 1 of whom is a retired lawyer, 2 who are practising barristers and 1 King's Counsel. The role of the Court includes its status as the

National Court of Appeal under the Code and to exercise judicial powers by applying and interpreting the National Competition Rules (and where appropriate the Code), the National Court Judicial Rules and practice directions.

The British Championships

The British Championships are run annually for each of the motorsport disciplines. These are governed by Motorsport UK Regulations and involve a series of events which take place throughout the year, all under the control of Motorsport UK registered clubs. They culminate in the award of a British Championship Trophy for each discipline, and details of current winners are contained in this book.

The Championships promote and develop excellence in motorsport and enable the best British competitors to reach international competitive standards.

Commercial activities

Motorsport UK undertakes a range of commercial activities to sustain championships and disciplines and develop third party revenue streams to help sustain and grow the sport. These primarily relate to the organisation of championships and events including the British Karting Championships, the British Rally Championship, British Formula 4 and the organisation of the Formula 1 British Grand Prix among other events.