



# / RALLY NEWSLETTER

Dear Rally family, dear friends,

Welcome to the first edition of the FIA Rally Newsletter.

Following the meeting of the World Motor Sport Council on 14 June, we aim to communicate our vision and plan for rally and the key decisions that were approved last week to help shape the future of the sport.

A number of changes to the World Rally Championship will include a new generation of WRC cars in 2022, creating a 'Road to WRC' concept that is set to bridge the gap between grassroots rallying and the sport's top class, as well as allowing R4 Kits (to be renamed Rally 2 Kits in 2020) into the championship – with competitiveness and cost-effectiveness remaining key considerations.

The main changes to the Regional Rally Championships relate to the renaming of the car groups for 2020, the evolutions brought to the format and event characteristics of the FIA African Rally Championship and a few minor modifications to the technical and homologation regulations.

Furthermore, a clarification of the procedure following an incident on a special stage has been made in order to reinforce the competitors' safety and now applies to all FIA rally championships.

In Cross-Country, the FIA will issue a tender for the promotion of the World Cup for Cross-Country Rallies in the coming weeks.

We hope this newsletter will provide valuable insights into ongoing and upcoming developments in rally and look forward to your valued feedback.

With best wishes,

**Yves Matton, FIA Rally Director**

WRC

**Hybrid power makes the leap in 2022**



While the 2019 World Rally Championship is delivering one of its most thrilling seasons, with an incredible three-way title fight at the top, the FIA has confirmed **key changes for the next era of the competition, which include hybrid technology.**

In 2022 the new-generation WRC vehicles will have a **five-year homologation cycle** and will give manufacturers more flexibility in relation to the model on which they will base their rally car.

The OEMs will have an **option to use a production-based bodyshell or a prototype tubular structure**, in both cases maintaining the current WRC size guidelines. A system of scaling will allow them to base their rally cars on larger production models that do not fit the current dimension targets, with no change to the minimum length of 3.9m of current WRC cars.

**The FIA is set to define key visual elements that will be carried over from production models** in order that the WRC cars resemble their road-going counterparts.

The cars will also feature a **supplementary hybrid system**, which will be comprised of common electric components - motors, batteries - and software for the first three years, with more technical freedom allowed after 2024.

The target is to make the cars capable of running in the cities on electric power only and give them an electric power boost that could be deployed on special stages.

**The vehicles are expected to stay within the same performance parameters** as the current generation of WRC cars, with a 1600cc Turbo engine as per current WRC regulations, and provide the same level of safety.

The complete technical definition of the 2022 rules is expected to be released at the end of the current year, with manufacturers required to submit their entry in the second quarter of the 2020 season.

## Road to WRC: supporting entry-level drivers to the top of the motor sport ladder



Building on the work from recent years, the FIA has consolidated its efforts to offer a clear route to WRC and give talented young champions the chance to move up to the next level.

It has been agreed that **the Junior WRC programme will continue in its current format for the next two seasons.** This decision shows the strong commitment of all the parties involved in the project to leverage the existing 'arrive and drive' concept initiated in 2011, which encourages equal competition through equal cars and support.

Furthermore, **M-Sport, in conjunction with Pirelli, has developed a national 'feeder' programme across several European countries,** including Estonia, Finland, Italy and the United Kingdom. The winners of these one-make championships will receive a scholarship of €60k that will allow them to step up onto the world stage the following season within the Junior WRC programme.

In addition to the prize of a brand new Ford Fiesta R5 to own, **the winner of the Junior WRC series will be awarded a full support package to compete in WRC 2,** comprising a set of 200 Pirelli tyres, free registration to the category and five entries from event organisers.

Contingent upon then winning the WRC 2 Championship, the Junior WRC title-winner would have the opportunity to compete in two WRC outings in an M-Sport run car, **completing the 'Road to WRC', something that has never been achieved in the sport before.**

**R4s allowed: stairway to WRC**



In gravel and tarmac rallying, the R4-Kit category (to become Rally 2-Kit category in 2020) aims to offer cost-efficient access for competitors worldwide who are willing to grow and progress, regardless of their profile, be they junior or gentleman drivers.

Eligible for all regional rally championships since June 2018, **cars fitted with the R4-Kit (soon Rally 2-Kit) will be allowed from 2020 to compete within WRC's RC2 class** in order to bolster the number of local entries during rounds of the championship and increase the variety of 4 wheel-drive models running. Oreca will remain the exclusive supplier of the kit until the end of the 2020 season.

### Clarified safety procedure following on-stage incidents



Safety comes first, and following recent situations, the members of the WRC and Rally Commissions have decided to **clarify the procedure to follow when there is an incident on a special stage.**

In brief, competitors are now required to stop immediately and without exception at an accident to render assistance if they do not see an OK sign or a clear signal from the driver or co-driver, even if the "SOS" display isn't shown. All following cars are required to stop as well.

Furthermore, the crew should always display the red warning triangle as soon as possible in a clearly visible place at least 50 metres before the car's position, in order to warn following drivers, even if the car is off the road.

The related article is now in use for all of the FIA rally championships.

## REGIONAL RALLY

### The new regional rally car group names explained



In an effort to harmonise the numbering of classes and groups and bring the hierarchy into line with the global FIA pyramid and group namings in the different disciplines such as Formula One or WEC, **the cars eligible to enter FIA regional championship rallies will be assigned new names.**

From the bottom upwards, R1 cars will become Rally 5, while R2 cars will now be called Rally 4 cars. Within the RC2 class, the R5 group will be renamed Rally 2 and the R4-Kit will logically become Rally 2 Kit.

A useful mnemonic: the number of the car group now corresponds to the number of the class. For example, RC5 class = Rally 5 group. Easy!

With the renaming, **the regulations will also be simplified through the removal of obsolete categories.**

## African Rally Championship: revamp work in progress



The FIA has been working closely with the African ASNs and event organisers in recent months to bring about a number of evolutions, designed to reinvigorate the FIA African Rally Championship.

This collaboration has led to a change of format for the championship with a **modification of the titles awarded**. In essence, the creation of an ARC2 title for Drivers and Co-drivers should encourage the entry of Group N cars by offering them a dedicated playground, separate from the R5 battle.

**The participation of young drivers will also be supported through two measures:** the creation of an ARC Junior Championship title for Drivers under 28 years old and the renaming of the ARC Cup for Drivers and Co-drivers using 2WD, normally aspirated cars of maximum 1600cc to ARC3 for Drivers and Co-drivers using 2WD cars.

Additionally, **changes to the event characteristics** should have a positive effect for both the organisers and competitors, including a reduction of costs. The duration of a rally will be limited to four days (including reconnaissance), with a plan to encourage a single pass recce - a mandatory requirement from 2021 - and authorise three runs per special stage, contingent upon the type of terrain and number of cars.

"It was high time for the African Rally Championship to have a strategic revamp to ensure its sustainability and we are confident that, by introducing the ARC Junior Championship, it will attract more youngsters and a great audience," commented Christian Gakwaya, President of the Rwanda Automobile Club and member of the FIA Rally Commission. "Also, ARC2 will strengthen the competition among group N cars by being a recognised title on its own and this will solve the transition crisis from Group N to R5, considering the higher number of Group N cars already on the continent."

The progress made on the FIA African Rally Championship has led to a **new event format, inspired by that of the ERC, which now includes a qualifying**

**stage** to define the starting order of the first leg.

“The new format with a qualification stage will have double impact: primarily, it will allow the drivers to battle for their starting position. Secondly - and as a very important asset for the championship - the qualifying stage will serve as a commercial platform for our sponsors and partners to maximise visibility,” Gakwaya added.

Following these first steps of a constructive overhaul, there is more good news to come for the African Rally Championship. Stay tuned!

## Changes to the technical and homologation regulations



The Council approved proposals of the Rally Technical Group, presenting **clarifications or minor modifications to the regional rally regulations** in line with cost control. These include:

- **Clutch pedal:** the addition of a clutch pedal and the necessary modifications to its assembly for car series equipped with an automatic or semi-automatic gearbox will be authorised. The clutch pedal must come from a model of automobile that a manufacturer has produced in a quantity of more than 2500 units. This decision aims to adapt the regulation for R1 and R2 to series cars.
- **Evolution of the engine regulations to allow three cylinders:** within the R5 regulations, engines with less than four cylinders will now be accepted, in order to allow manufacturers to follow the evolution of series engines.

CROSS-COUNTRY

## Promoter tender for Cross-Country Rallies



The FIA World Cup for Cross-Country Rallies continues to go from strength to strength. **The discipline has enormous untapped promotional potential:** the imagery is exceptional; it showcases vast, remote and extraordinary landscapes around the world and, as a consequence, the skill of the driver and navigator. Also the remote nature of cross-country adds another dimension to its visual appeal, embodying the spirit of adventure.

**As part of a long-term strategic plan, the FIA is poised to issue a tender for the appointment of a Promoter to take cross-country to the next level.**