



Dear Rally family, dear friends,

On behalf of the FIA Rally Department, a warm welcome to issue 1/2021 of the FIA Rally Newsletter, which is published amid an air of cautious optimism.

Thanks to the tireless work and commitment of the entire FIA Rally family, we were very heartened when the 2021 FIA World Rally Championship got underway on Rallye Monte-Carlo in January and then continued with Arctic Rally Finland, a brand-new event that proved a big success last month.

But we also saw the FIA Middle East Rally Championship begin in Qatar and the FIA World Cup for Cross-Country Bajas start in Dubai, further proof that by applying the protocols of Appendix S of the International Sporting Code, events can take place in a safe and secure manner.

Of course, we still face an extremely challenging period, especially when we consider the ongoing national restrictions that rightly remain in place to control the spread of COVID-19. But the rollout of the vaccine provides hope and it's clear the appetite from drivers and teams to go rallying – and for organisers to put events on – remains strong.

There are other reasons to remain positive. The Rally1 regulations have now been approved by the FIA World Motor Sport Council and soon we will see the initial testing phase begin, which is a significant moment in the history of our sport.

The FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid provides a clear pathway of progression in the ERC and the WRC that's easy to understand both within the sport and for the fans. And for the ERC, it provides clarity on its positioning, not only as a feeder to the WRC, but as a goal in itself. More details are included later in this edition of the FIA Rally Newsletter.

In Cross-Country, we can look forward to an exciting future with a strategy that will include sustainable or low-emission vehicles and regional championships under a Sporting Pyramid.

Gradually, we are able to take small steps to return to a life approaching normal. But, of course, it's a long road ahead and we must continue to stay safe and follow all the guidelines for the health and safety of all, and to ensure the planned events take place.

I sign off by paying tribute to Hannu Mikkola, a true gentleman and legend of the sport who passed away last month. As FIA President Jean Todt rightly emphasised, Hannu was an outstanding driver who achieved so much. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.

With best wishes,

Yves Matton, FIA Rally Director

Q&A Yves Matton on the 2021 start and the season ahead

With the 2021 season underway, FIA Rally Director Yves Matton reflects on how the rallying community continues to overcome the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and why there's a flicker of light at the end of the tunnel.

What's your assessment of the current situation in rally and the achievements so far in 2021?



"We are still in a very challenging moment but thanks to the efforts and support from so many people, we were able to start different championships. It also shows that, in this difficult period, we have been able to create opportunities, such as Arctic Rally Finland, a brand-new event in an area new to the WRC. We have been struggling for snow on Rally Sweden each year but going to Lapland meant we had proper conditions for a winter event. Based on the commitment from all parties, we have been able to achieve great things."

How important is Appendix S of the FIA International Sporting Code in ensuring events can go ahead?

"The regulations are different in every country, but the fact the FIA was the leader in restarting events at world level with Formula 1, and afterwards the WRC, showcased to governments that it's possible to do something if we have a proper process that's working. Although we have to adapt what we do on a case-by-case basis, country by country, Appendix S provides a very good base to work closely with the governments and the local ministries to allow events to be run."

What role will the vaccine rollout play in terms of the safeguarding of events?

"I am confident we will have a 12-event calendar in WRC this year because we organised the calendar in the way that we have some spare events and arrangements are in place to be able to achieve a full calendar. It will not be easy but I think the vaccine will allow, step by step, fans to watch live. But the vaccine is in addition to what we have already put in place with Appendix S."

Entry numbers have been strong on the opening events of the season. What does this tell you about the commitment from the drivers and teams?

"It shows rally is still very popular because when you have no events, like we did during the first wave of COVID-19 infections, the minds of people may change. But you can still see people are interested and it's the best proof that there is a future for rally. We also have to remember people need an outlet to escape from the constraints of the pandemic, something fun, a hobby or a distraction. For sure society has been impacted by the crisis so we have had to adapt ourselves and show a lot of flexibility. But it's a good signal that, when we have events, the entries are there."

Looking ahead, the Rally1 technical regulations have now been approved. How satisfying is that given all the work that's gone in behind the scenes?

"This was the final point because the main steps have already been done thanks to the great work that the engineers from the FIA and the manufacturers have done together to finalise the regulations. The next big step will be to see these Rally1 cars in action for the first time."

Another exciting development is the unveiling of the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid for ERC and WRC for 2022. What was the thinking behind this key development?

"It's the last stage of a process that started two years ago when we created the FIA Rally Cars Pyramid. Some categories were beginning to disappear, like Group N for example, some categories were at the same level, like the old R2 and R3 categories, and now we have Rally3 coming in. From 2022, there is a pathway from the lowest level to the highest that's easy to understand. It will also allow each championship to have its own personality. With a Rally2 car, you can win the ERC and it can be your goal, but with the same car, the same driver can go to FIA WRC2, try to win the championship and then grow further as a professional driver in the future. Each championship will have the same names for the car groups and the categories within them to make things much more obvious and easily understandable for everyone. It has not been possible to do it before but now, we are at the final step of this process."

The FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid provides clarity for the ERC and how it's positioned. How important is that for the ongoing success of this championship?

"As you can see from the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid, while they will be able to compete on all rallies, we won't have a specific category for two-wheel-drive cars in the WRC framework. With a championship that's mainly based on gravel and with the new Rally1 cars, it will be difficult for these kinds of cars to compete consistently on the same events. But in the European championship, where you have more Tarmac events and more accessible categories for Rally5 or Rally4 cars, this championship is perfect for these cars and it really makes sense. We believe both championships should be equally strong."

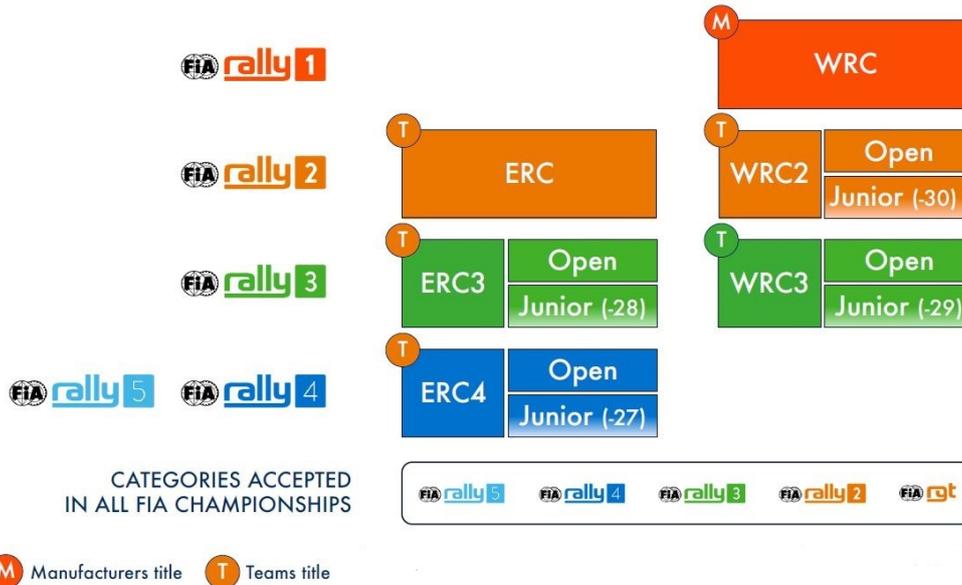
Can the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid be applied to other regional championships, such as the Asia-Pacific or Middle East championships?

"The idea in the future is to try to have it everywhere in the world so it will be the same logic in every FIA championship. But I do believe that in some championships, Rally3 cars will be the right level as the top category, you don't need more."

FIA RALLY SPORTING PYRAMID

**FIA Sporting Pyramid delivers clear and structured path
of progression in ERC and WRC**

FIA WRC & ERC SPORTING PYRAMID



The path of progression from national events to the top of the FIA European Rally Championship and the FIA World Rally Championship has been set out in the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid, which comes on stream from 2022.

For the first time, the route a driver can take as he or she rises up the ranks in international rallying has been clearly defined, while the titles of the various categories within the ERC and WRC have also been aligned to improve understanding and make the sport easier to follow.

Central to the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid are six challenges the FIA Rally Department is aiming to overcome between now and the start of next season. They are:

- Align the FIA Sporting Pyramid with the Rally Cars Pyramid (see separate section for details)
- Match the championship names with the group names (for example WRC3 is for Rally3 cars)
- Make the sporting pathway more understandable
- Increase accessibility with different categories to suit different customer requirements
- Award titles only if they provide a proper sporting value based on participant numbers
- Ensure the ERC is both a feeder to the WRC and a goal in itself for drivers and teams

The FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid begins with the new ERC4 category as the starting point with drivers able to compete in Rally4 or Rally5 cars.

ERC4 is divided into an Open class with no maximum age limit and a Junior class for drivers 27 or under at the start of each season.

From ERC4, a driver progresses to ERC3 for Rally3 cars. Again, there's an Open class with no maximum age limit and a Junior class for drivers 28 or under at the start of each season.

At this stage, a driver can continue their pursuit of success and experience gaining in the ERC by stepping up to the ERC class for Rally2 cars, or they can step sideways to WRC3 for Rally3 cars where an Open and Junior class (for drivers 28 or under at the start of each season) is run.

From there, the route can take them to the Rally2-based WRC2, where an Open class and Junior class, for drivers 30 and under at the start of the season, exist. Or they can switch to the ERC and progress to Rally2 machinery.

The WRC category for Rally1 cars sits at the top of the pyramid with a Drivers' and Manufacturers' title up for grabs. Titles for Teams will be awarded in ERC, WRC3 and WRC2.

In addition, the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid details the groups of cars that will be accepted, namely, Rally1, Rally2, Rally3, Rally4, Rally5 and RGT.

By unveiling the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid so far in advance of the 2022 season, the FIA Rally Department is encouraging feedback from ASNs, event organisers and other stakeholders, while work continues to finalise the precise regulations for both championships.

Criteria updated and new awards up for grabs through the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid



Delivering the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid from 2022 provides an opportunity for the FIA Rally Department to update several criteria.

Junior championships will also be based on experience, not age alone. As a result, former champions will not be able to compete again in the same series, while drivers holding Manufacturer P1 status in the previous five seasons will also not be eligible. Other criteria are in the process of being finalised with the intention of encouraging more new recruits to take part, while also providing them with a greater level playing field.

Rookie awards will be introduced in ERC and WRC. Drivers with experience of no more than three events in the championship they're taking part in will be permitted to score points.

Competitors over the age of 40 not appearing on the FIA Priority list of drivers will contest new Masters awards in ERC and WRC.

From 2022, entrants must have a minimum of two cars to be eligible for Teams' championships in ERC and WRC. Furthermore, titles will only be awarded if a minimum number of drivers take part and contest a certain number of events.

New FIA Rally Cars Pyramid brochure a one-stop-shop for understanding car groups



FIA rally 4 The best of two-wheel drive

Group Rally4 incorporates the highest-performance front-wheel drive cars, previously called R2s. On tarmac as well as dirt, they perform at a high level.



CLASS	R2s
FIA REGULATIONS	Appendix J - Article 260
TRANSMISSION	Two-wheel drive
ENGINE CAPACITY	From 1,390 to 2,000 cm ³ naturally aspirated From 927 to 1,333 cm ³ turbo with 30 mm restrictor
MINIMUM WEIGHT	1,080 kg
POWER TO WEIGHT RATIO	5.1 kg/hp
MAXIMUM PRICE	Approximately €70,000 excl. tax
PRICE CAP	Regulations include price caps for spare parts

Apart from the roof hatch and openings on the bonnet, the Rally4 retains the look of a production car. Under the bonnet, however, it is a proper competition car, with a sequential gearbox and an engine tuned to develop 210 hp. From 2021, all the Rally4 cars, whatever their engine capacity, will share the same characteristics for better sporting equity: 30 mm turbo restrictor, weight set at 1,080 kg, 330 mm disk brakes and 17-inch wheels on tarmac.

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2021 FIA RALLY CAR PYRAMID

Publication of the FIA Rally Cars Pyramid brochure will provide ASNs around the world with a clear understanding of the types of cars that can compete in FIA rally championships and how they are grouped.

Although the FIA Rally Cars Pyramid, which complements the FIA Rally Sporting Pyramid, has been in existence since June 2018, when it was approved by the FIA World Motor Sport Council, the brochure serves as a refresher as well as detailing each group through various visuals and images.

The brochure also includes a handy list of key contacts and is available [here](#).

WRC

Rally1 cars get ready for rollout



With the final Rally1 technical regulations ratified by the FIA World Motor Sport Council during its online gathering last Friday, the stage is set for the rollout of the FIA World Rally Championship's exciting new era.

Extensive work by the FIA Technical Department, Compact Dynamics, the exclusive supplier of the hybrid kit to the WRC from 2022-2024, and the WRC's three existing manufacturers, Hyundai, M-Sport Ford and Toyota has resulted in the components being delivered in preparation for their use at the highest level of the sport from next season.

And with the kits now available, initial testing of the new-generation Rally1 machinery is expected to begin by the end of March.

REGIONAL RALLY



Calendar changes to the Regional Rally Championships

Changes to the 2021 FIA Regional Rally Championships calendars due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic were approved by the World Motor Sport Council last Friday.

The revised schedules are as

follows, while the other calendars remain unchanged.

For more info, please visit the [Rally section](#) on the FIA website.

FIA European Rally Championship

06-08 May (initially 25-27 March)	Portugal	Azores Rallye
18-20 June	Poland	78 Rally Poland ¹
01-03 July	Latvia	Rally Liepaja ¹
23-25 July	Italy	Rally di Roma Capitale ¹
27-29 August	Czech Rep.	Barum Czech Rally Zlin ¹
24-26 Sept. (initially 12-14 March)	Portugal	Rallye Fafe
22-24 October	Hungary	Rally Hungary ¹
18-20 November (initially 06-08 May)	Spain	Rally Islas Canarias ¹

¹ Round of the FIA ERC Junior Championship

FIA European Rally Trophy – Benelux Rally Trophy

09-10 July	Luxembourg	Rallye Lëtzebuerg
28-29 August	Belgium	Aarova Rally
05-07 November	Belgium	Rallye du Condroz

FIA European Rally Trophy – Celtic Rally Trophy

18-20 June	Ireland	Donegal International Rally
25-26 September	Ireland	Cork 20 International Rally
19-20 Nov. (initially 20-21 August)	Great Britain	Ulster International Rally

FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship – Asia Cup

23-25 April (initially 26-28 March)	India	South Inda Rally
10-12 September	Japan	Rally Hokkaido
22-24 October	China	Rally Longyou

FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship – Pacific Cup

15-17 October	Australia	Adelaide Hills Rally
27-28 November (initially 20-21 Nov.)	Australia	Coffs Harbour Rally

FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship – Final

27-28 November (initially 20-21 Nov.)	Australia	Coffs Harbour Rally
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FIA Middle East Rally Championship

28-30 January	Qatar	Manateq Qatar International Rally
20-22 May	Jordan	Jordan Rally
03-05 September	Lebanon	Rally of Lebanon
24-26 September	Cyprus	Cyprus Rally
04-06 November	Kuwait	Rally of Kuwait
TBA (initially 18-20 February)	Oman	Rally of Oman

FIA African Rally Championship

23-25 April	Kenya	Equator Rally Kenya
25-26 July	Tanzania	Rally of Tanzania

20-22 August	Uganda	Pearl of Africa Uganda Rally
24-26 September	Zambia	Zambia International Rally
05-06 November	South Africa	Rally of South Africa
TBA (initially 19-21 March)	Rwanda	Rwanda Mountain Gorilla Rally

FIA NACAM Rally Championship

19-20 March (initially 12-13 March)	Mexico	Rally Colima
02-04 July	Canada	Rallye Int. Baie des Chaleurs
13-14 August	Mexico	Rally Guanajuato
03-04 Sept. (initially 26-28 August)	Mexico	Rally Sierra Juarez
25-26 Sept. (initially 28-30 May)	Barbados	Rally Barbados
27-28 November	Mexico	Rally Montanas

FIA RGT Cup

21-24 January	Monaco	Rallye Monte-Carlo
07-09 May	France	Rallye Ain Jura
23-25 July	Italy	Rally di Roma Capitale
13-15 August (initially 25-26 June)	Belgium	Ypres Rally
14-17 October	Spain	RallyRACC Catalunya

OTHER RALLY NEWS

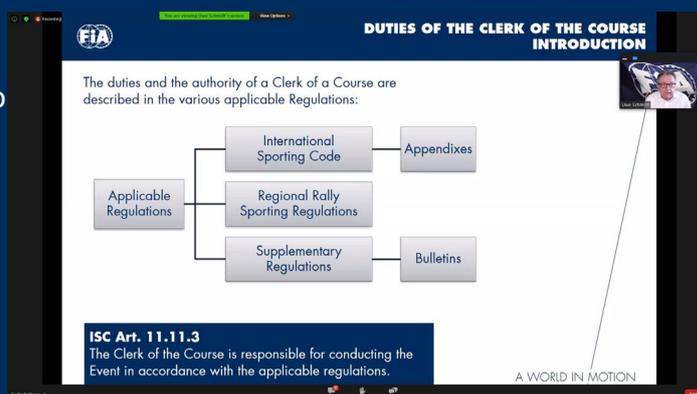
First FIA Rally Officials Webinar a major success as 500 delegates follow online

The annual FIA Rally Officials Seminar switched to a virtual format in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in January and proved a big success with more than 500 delegates from 80 countries following online.

Made up of stewards, clerks of the course, and event organisers, the delegates were invited to follow three sessions: Regulation changes, Rally Safety updates and the Role and Duties of the Clerk of the Course and Stewards on events.

The effectiveness of the event was demonstrated when, during discussions, it was highlighted that in the FIA International Sporting Code, it states that only stewards can make a decision, not the Clerk of the Course. Therefore, a joint proposal from the FIA Rally and WRC Commissions was submitted to the FIA World Motor Sport Council, and subsequently approved, to change Clerk of the Course Decision to Clerk of the Course Notification.

Summarising the event, FIA Rally Director Yves Matton said: "It was a very



successful webinar and obviously a new experience to organise this annual event virtually. While the preference is always for delegates to meet together in person, the restrictions brought about by COVID-19 obviously make that impossible. However, there is clearly a benefit of organising this event online as nearly 500 people from 80 countries were able to take part, which is an unprecedented number of participants. There were about 200 delegates from 48 countries last year.”

As an illustration of this, 26 attendees joined online from New Zealand, when it is normally not possible for them to travel due to obvious time and costs reasons.

The event concluded with organisers of FIA European Rally Championship events gathering online for their traditional pre-season overview meeting.

Momentum builds as FIA Rally Star national selections and #RallyAtHome events begin



The FIA Rally Star’s first national selection events have taken place in Finland and Georgia, while it’s now possible for gamers to embark on a journey to become FIA World Rally Championship drivers for approximately €60.

A new route into the FIA Rally Star talent detection programme has been introduced to run alongside the ongoing national selections organised either as a digital motor sport contest or slalom. Twelve #RallyAtHome events are being run between now and August 26; they will be open to drivers aged 17 to 26 using WRC 9, the official video game of the FIA World Rally Championship from NACON and KT Racing. The 12 winners will qualify for one of the six continental finals depending on where they live.

Spain's Alejandro Aroca aka Billy Cherokee was the first participant to secure his spot for the European Continental Final on March 5, taking a close win of the inaugural #RallyAtHome Challenge by only 0.018 of a second. The young content creator from Madrid said: "This is the biggest opportunity in virtual rally!"



WRC 9, which is available for PlayStation, Xbox and PC, retails at approximately €45.00, while the FIA Rally Star DLC costs €9.99.

Jérôme Roussel, Category Manager – FIA Regional Rally, who heads up the FIA Rally Star programme, said: "The new level of realism in WRC 9 gives us the opportunity to propose this challenge to all of the sport's fans around the world. The next Sébastien Loeb, Ott Tänak or Sébastien Ogier may well already be practising on their console or PC. We just need to find them."

Seven drivers (six continental final winners plus the top female from a women-only shootout) will form the first FIA Rally Star intake. They receive a year of coaching and testing, plus a minimum of six national events in a four-wheel-drive Rally3 car in 2022.

A panel of judges will then select the best four drivers for a fully-funded FIA Junior WRC campaign in 2023, by which time the Junior series is set to use the Fiesta Rally3, subject to approval.

For more information go to: www.fiarallystar.com.

All-new Fiesta Rally3 on track in Poland and Finland



The fun-to-drive and accessible nature of FIA Rally3 machinery was demonstrated when M-Sport Poland hosted a try-out event for potential customers last month.

M-Sport Poland's Ford Fiesta Rally3 is the first car

conforming to the FIA Rally3 regulations to break cover.

Ken Torn, the FIA ERC3 Junior champion from 2020, who will drive a Fiesta Rally3 in ERC Junior this season, joined last year's FIA Junior WRC title winner, Tom Kristensson, at the event held at the Silesia Ring complex in southern Poland.

Torn gave passenger rides to potential Fiesta Rally3 customers on a gravel stage, while Kristensson co-drove a Tarmac-specification Fiesta Rally3 on the venue's racing circuit.

Stringent COVID-19 protocols were followed at all times with customers put into bubbles and rigorous sanitisation carried out inside the cars between each run.

Jon Armstrong, who has driven in ERC Junior and Junior WRC, said: "It's really good for Junior drivers. It was very driveable. When you get it sideways it felt very easy to control."

Maciej Woda, Director, M-Sport Poland, said: "I'm really happy with the feedback we received from our guests and it's helped to confirm that we have gone in the right direction with the Fiesta Rally3 and that Rally3 itself has a lot of interest."

Yves Matton, FIA Rally Director, added: "We believe very strongly in the Rally3 concept but when people start to drive these cars and realise how affordable and how fun to drive they are it's a good thing."

Following its homologation at the beginning of March, the Fiesta Rally3 made its competitive debut with strong results in Finland last week-end, going off to a flying start in the hands of Ken Torn on the 16th SM O.K. Auto-Ralli, a round of the national championship. More successes to follow!

CROSS COUNTRY

Calendar changes



Due to the implementation of further COVID-19 restrictions, the BP Ultimate Portugal Cross-Country Rally, previously the opening round of the World Cup for Cross-Country Rallies, will now take place from September 16-21.

The Hungarian Baja, a qualifying round of the World Cup for Cross-Country Bajas and the newly introduced European Cup for Cross-Country Bajas, has been moved to

August 5-8 for operational reasons.

The revised calendars are as follows:

FIA World Cup for Cross-Country Rallies

12-16 May	Spain	Andalucía Rally
07-13 June	Kazakhstan	Rally Kazakhstan
30 June - 11 July	RAF	Silk Way Rally
16-21 September	Portugal	BP Ultimate Portugal Cross-Country Rally
08-13 October	Morocco	Rallye du Maroc
06-12 November	United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge
28 November - 03 December	Saudi Arabia	Hail Rally

FIA World Cup for Cross-Country Bajas

04-07 February	RAF	Baja Northern Forest
18-20 February	United Arab Emirates	Dubai International Baja
04-06 March	Saudi Arabia	Sharqiyah Baja
18-20 March	Jordan	Jordan Baja
23-25 July	Spain	Baja Spain
05-08 August	Hungary	Hungarian Baja
26-29 August	Poland	Baja Poland
09-12 September	Italy	Italian Baja
28-30 October	Portugal	Baja Portalegre

FIA European Cup for Cross-Country Bajas

23-25 July	Spain	Baja Spain
05-08 August	Hungary	Hungarian Baja
26-29 August	Poland	Baja Poland
09-12 September	Italy	Italian Baja
28-30 October	Portugal	Baja Portalegre

Cross-Country regulations

As part of a modification to the existing regulation, it is clarified that any competitor failing to have a medical and survival kit will be reported to the Stewards, who may, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer, apply a penalty.

The maximum speed of the T5 trucks has been increased from 130 to 140 kph, to enable competitors to safely overtake. The maximum speed for all categories is as follows:



Group	Maximum Speed
T1	180 kph
T2	180 kph
T3	130 kph
T4	130 kph
T5	140 kph

Group T4 vehicles have been renamed and will now be referred to as Modified Production Cross-Country Side-by-Side vehicles

In the quest for ever improved safety, the new FIA 8855-2021 seats will become compulsory for Group T1 from 2023, and from 2024 for Groups T2, T3 and T4.

Delegates united in the first Cross-Country Officials Webinar

A few weeks after the online gathering of Rally delegates, the annual Cross-Country Officials Seminar took place on February 9th with about 100 registrants from around the world joining online.

Welcoming Stewards, Clerks of the Course and event organisers, the delegates were invited to attend three sessions dedicated to discussing the future development of cross-country rallies and bajas, updates on the International Sporting Code and Cross-Country Rally Supplementary Regulations, and the role and duties of the Clerk of the Course and Stewards on event.

The pyramid of the future was also presented. Beneath the top level, the current FIA World Cup for Cross-Country Bajas will remain, with newly introduced Regional Cups forming the third level of the pyramid. The first of these, the FIA European Cup for Cross-Country Bajas, will run in 2021 with plans underway to add additional regions next year. The intention is to not only promote the discipline but also provide a cost-effective platform for entrants to compete for a dedicated FIA title. The entry level, four, for the discipline continues to be the rally and baja events and championships run at national level.

Read the full story [here](#).

